



## **New Moreton Hall Pre-school**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	251578
<b>Inspection date</b>	06 June 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Susan Elizabeth Warren
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<b>Registered person</b>	New Moreton Hall Pre School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care, Out of School care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

New Moreton Hall Pre-school opened in 1992 and operates from a room in the children's centre within the grounds of a primary school on the outskirts of Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:00 to 15:15 during school term times, children attend for a variety of sessions.

Additionally children aged four and above can attend an after school session until

18:00. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 125 children from 2 to 8 years on roll. Of these 50 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come mainly from the local area. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs.

The pre-school employs ten staff. Four of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school receives support from the Local Authority and the Pre School Learning Alliance.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are kept healthy at the setting as staff observe policies and procedures regarding hygiene and help the children to be aware of basic personal care. For example, they can take and use a tissue, disposing of it properly, and use the toilet and hand washing facilities independently or with help if needed. Children who require nappies or pull-ups changing are discreetly dealt with and correct hygiene procedures followed. Nappies are disposed of appropriately and changes of clothes are available for any child needing them. Parents are aware that children who are ill or infectious must not attend and those who become poorly whilst at pre-school are kept comfortable until they can be collected.

Children needing first aid are treated by trained staff; all injuries and accidents are recorded and signed by a parent or carer. Any medication needed is stored safely out of children's reach, again the doses are recorded and signed off. There is a sun safety policy in place and whilst this advises parents to supply a hat and apply sun cream to children it is not wholly effective in ensuring that all children can play safely in the sun.

Children have a snack mid-session comprising a variety of nutritious foods such as toast and raisins. Normally some fruit or vegetable choices are offered but these are not always available. A choice of healthy drinks is offered and some children pour their own. Staff sit at the tables during snack time and promote good behaviour, conversing with the children about their likes and dislikes and foods they have tried at home. All children's dietary requirements and allergies are known to staff so that no unsuitable foods are offered.

A lunch club gives children the chance to experience having a packed lunch in the setting and is offered as an optional extra. The lunches are stored in a fridge until needed. Staff again help children with their food but miss some opportunities to develop children's independence by allowing them to complete tasks themselves, such as opening their lunch boxes and selecting the foods. Children can have a drink of water at any time.

The excellent outdoor area offers children very good opportunities for physical development. They can run and move freely in the fresh air, and, as both hard and

grassed surfaces are available a wide variety of activities can be offered. Shared resources with the adjacent nursery class mean that access to an exciting range of wheeled toys, balancing equipment and small equipment for catching and throwing are always to hand. Currently, no climbing equipment is in place. Children develop manipulative skills using sand and water, with a choice of containers for filling and emptying. They paint on the ground with water and brushes, and use chalks to make marks. Indoors, crafts and puzzles, construction kits and everyday technology items all help with hand to eye coordination and fine motor skills.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

The children are cared for in purpose-built, well-designed premises with an attached outdoor play area. The main playroom is light and airy, well-ventilated and with under floor heating which can be monitored, so children always have an ambient temperature in which to play and work. The playroom is effectively set out for different activities; each area has suitable furniture and storage enabling children to access activities and equipment easily. The room is made visually stimulating by colourful displays using children's work, such as the traffic light handprints and ladybirds marching across the ceiling with various patterns of spots to compare. Children have space for their personal belongings helping them to feel at home. Toys and furniture are subject to safety and cleanliness checks, making sure that they remain in safe and hygienic condition for children's use.

Children are kept safe by taking part in regular fire drills. The current practice of coordinating these with the drills held by the school does not ensure that all children will experience a fire drill, as children do not all attend full time and may be absent on the day of a scheduled evacuation practice. Fire safety equipment is maintained and checked regularly and staff are clear of what to do in an emergency. Access to the provision is carefully monitored by a bell entry system and staff can screen all visitors on arrival thereby keeping children safe from unwanted visitors. Children cannot leave the premises unseen.

Children's welfare is considered, and concerns are noted and carried forward, but the current child protection statement is out of date and does not reflect the latest information from the Local Safeguarding Children Board. No information is readily available to parents informing them of the group's approach and responsibilities before their child begins attending, in line with National Standards guidance for day care. No member of staff, including the designated person with responsibility for child protection has received recent training.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

A programme of activities is planned which meets children's needs and is used to stimulate progression; core activities are well provided for and there is a good balance of active, quiet and outdoors times with both child initiated and adult led

activities. Children make choices about what they do; there is lots of free choice including free flow indoor and outdoor play time. Crafts, the computer, role play, and sand and or water are offered each day. Equipment is rotated to prevent boredom and to offer maximum choice for children.

Relationships are warm and friendly between children and the adults around them, and the children are able to form friendships. Staff sit with the children at snack time, talking about what they do at home, and what foods they like. If children need to sleep or rest, provision can be made in a quiet corner with a sleep mat and light cover, though as most children attend for half a day only this is seldom necessary.

Praise and encouragement are used freely to promote positive behaviour, such as when washing hands, sitting on the floor attentively and sharing toys or equipment.

Children aged under three are cared for as part of the whole group. Staff are beginning to be aware of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and how this may inform the care and educational provision for the youngest children attending. A leaflet with headings relating to the areas of development has been prepared, to be shared with parents. This will form the basis of a record for children aged under three years.

Children attending the out of school club have use of most of the equipment and facilities in use by the pre-school. They can play in the role play areas, use art and craft materials and model with recycled materials. They have good opportunities to move freely in the outdoor area, and enjoy using some of the small equipment. There is a relaxed atmosphere and children relate well to staff, cooperating at snack time and helping to set out and put away resources. They can ask for what they want and their wishes are met if possible.

### Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

Staff have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. Few staff have received formal or recent training to enable them to acquire a full working knowledge of all aspects of the Foundation Stage including how children learn. Activities are planned to link with topic themes and cover most areas of learning, however there are some gaps, such as certain aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world, in which staff are less secure and do not plan sufficient activities to maximise the children's learning opportunities.

Activities are aimed at the whole group and differentiated by outcome, with children's participation noted and entered into their personal records. Evaluation of activities does not always link to the learning intentions. The provision of core activities is good and enables children to freely choose for a large part of each session. They can sustain their interest and develop imaginative play scenarios such as when in the 'travel shop' or choose a book to look at alone or with a staff member. Children's behaviour is good, with little adverse behaviour reported. They respond to consistent management by staff and a calm approach to dealing with potential conflict situations.

The use of time and resources is generally good, with active and quiet times, and a balance of free choice and more structured activities for children. The free flow approach maximises children's choices and allows them to persevere and concentrate at activities.

Support for children needing additional help is in place, and staff work in partnership with parents and outside professionals to ensure that children are included and can make good progress.

Children's progress through the stepping stones is recorded, and a 'next steps' leaflet shows what they need to do next. However, children do not have a key worker with overall responsibility for ensuring their record is up to date and that parents are informed of what their child has done. This is currently managed on an informal basis.

Children's communication, language and literacy skills are promoted through the provision of activities designed to help them listen and respond, and express themselves through speech and mark making. They enjoy a story with supporting props, and also like to share a favourite book with a staff member. They can listen to a story through headphones in the listening corner. The role play areas develop language skills along with creative expression; children can dress up to play a part and admire themselves in a full length mirror. They take bookings of holidays or make notes about a construction wearing a hard hat and tabard. Children have a variety of mark making opportunities including paint, pens and crayons. They practise writing a postcard but staff do not provide all children with the teaching aids, such as name cards, to encourage them to recognise and write their own names on their work.

Mathematical development takes place within children's free play with sand and water, where they can pour and fill containers, learning about concepts such as empty and full and comparing weight and volume. These ideas are carried forward in a practical context during cooking activities. Children are introduced to ideas of comparative size through a planned activity making small, medium and large sized boats. They have free use of equipment for matching and sorting and can begin early calculation using the compare bears and other equipment. Staff do not always make use of daily routines such as snack time to develop calculation skills in a practical way, such as allowing the children to choose cups and plates for the number of children at their table.

Children have use of a range of everyday technology and information technology throughout the setting. They can use a computer to support learning with a variety of programmes. A digital camera is used to record their activities and the photographs shared at snack time for all to see. They use headphones and tapes in the listening corner. The outside area can be used for observing plants and nature, such as minibeasts, but few activities are planned to take advantage of this. There is a nearby wooded area for nature walks where children can observe the changing seasons and collect specimens. Visitors to the pre-school come to talk about their jobs to introduce children to the wider world around them. They celebrate some festivals and cultural events with crafts and artwork, but have few day to day positive images or resources depicting diverse cultures. Resources for designing and modelling, using

found and recycled materials are freely available.

Creative opportunities include role play and small world play, for which a wide choice of resources is available. Children also have free and guided art and craft activities exploring colour and texture and their work is valued and displayed effectively. Singing sessions each day allow children to join in with known songs, some with actions. They may sing to the group as well if they have the confidence to do so. Stories use puppets and props to good effect, and occasionally drama to make a story come to life.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual needs are noted on the registration forms, which are updated regularly with any changes of contact number or named carer noted. All children are included and those needing additional help are well provided for, with specialist resources provided to help them be comfortable and take a full part in all activities. The named special educational needs coordinator has attended some training and works closely with the local authority to set up individual programmes for children who need them.

Children are taught to have regard for the feelings of others and to take turns and share resources. They are generally helpful and polite, and have warm and friendly relationships with the staff, who strive to be approachable. They are confident and at home in the setting, enabling them to make the most of their time and enjoy the full range of play and learning activities offered. They understand daily routines well and can explain what will happen next. They move about in an orderly fashion and have regard for the space of others such as when lining up to go and play outside, or to wash their hands before snack.

Children's behaviour is good. They respond to reward systems such as stickers for exceptional effort or achievement, in this way positive behaviour is promoted. They receive praise and encouragement and gentle reminders to say please and thank you. The behaviour policy is available to parents if they ask to see it. Any issues are discussed before they become a problem.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Some useful information such as staff teams, child protection information and other general information is not readily accessible to parents, though it is available on request. They do have newsletters with details of topics and forthcoming events such as sports day, or any outings. The operational plan is in place but does not contain copies of policies; it is available on request. There is no key worker system in place but a parent may approach any member of staff to discuss an issue or concern, this means that some issues regarding the care and welfare of children may go unresolved if a parent is unsure of who to turn to.

Parents are given information about the educational programme via the prospectus and regular newsletters. The areas of learning are outlined along with the group's approach. Children's developmental records are offered to parents to view every

term, and they can make comments if they wish; staff do not routinely talk through the records or explain the next steps sheets which are included. Parents comments are taken into account and acted upon where appropriate. Parents are involved in their child's learning by attending open days and special events such as the nativity play and sports day. Parents are also invited to talk about their jobs, such as a policeman, as part of the children's educational programme.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

They are encouraged to have regard for one another's feelings and to respect differences.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Overall, the needs of children are met.

Children are cared for by staff who have undergone checks and are vetted to ensure their suitability to work with children. Volunteers and students on placement are advised that their role does not allow them to have unsupervised access to children. The minimum qualifications standards are met and no staff member is attending a training course at the present time.

Attendance records are maintained, showing arrival and departure times of staff and children and any visitors to the setting. Children's details are held and stored confidentially, including emergency contacts and any relevant health information. Other documentation required to support children's care and welfare, such as policies and procedures, are in place, however, some of these are out of date and do not reflect the latest guidance. In some cases this compromises children's welfare and safety.

The pre-school children are cared for in one group, no key worker system is in place. This is a requirement under the National Standards for day care. Staff ratios are understood and adhered to at all times.

Leadership and management (nursery education) is satisfactory.

Staff work as a team to provide the educational programme. They are positive and enjoy their contact with the children. Whilst they have many years of experience between them, staff qualification levels are at a minimum overall. No staff member is attending training nor has any plan to do so. To date, appraisals have not been part of the routine management duties therefore little consideration of individual staff's professional development or training needs has occurred. As a result, the workload is uneven, with responsibility for planning and areas of responsibility falling upon the few qualified staff, mainly the supervisor and deputy.

Internal monitoring and evaluation of the educational programme is satisfactory only, as a result some areas of learning for children are less well represented and some opportunities are missed. The lack of a key worker system has a negative effect

overall on the recording and monitoring of children's progress and development, and the partnership with parents.

The group is aware of some areas for development and has a forward looking approach to continuing improvement in terms of provision of resources and seeking new ideas. However, some elements of the national Standards requirements including recent changes are not well known or understood, with the result that aspects of children's care and education are compromised.

They actively welcome advice and guidance from the local authority, and continue to build links with the school, notably the adjacent nursery class with whom they share the outdoor area.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the group was asked to review and update documentation including the child protection policy, the complaints procedure, the policy for sick children and the attendance record to make sure they are in line with National Standards requirements.

The group was asked to review hand washing procedures to help prevent the risk of spread of infection, and to review snack time to provide more opportunities for children to develop independence.

The child protection policy is still out of date and does not reflect current guidance in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board. The complaints policy is also out of date and does not take account of the latest guidance regarding a complaints log to be kept and shared with parents and carers, as outlined in the addendum of October 2005. The attendance record is accurately maintained.

Children now have access to running water and individual paper towels, thus reducing the risk of spread of infection. Shared water for handwashing is occasionally still used as students supervising painting are unaware that children should not do this. Snack time has been reorganised and now allows children to participate more, however, some opportunities for developing their independence are overlooked.

As a result of these improvements children's care and welfare are enhanced in part. Further improvement is needed to meet the recommendations set.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

#### The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- improve the partnership with parents by the introduction of a key worker system in line with National Standards requirements and making sure parents have access to information regarding the care and welfare of children
- ensure that policies and procedures are in place and adhered to in order to protect children and keep them healthy, for example the sun safety policy and child protection policy.

#### The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- show how staff's professional development needs are met through a system of appraisal, indicating training and development needs, and how these are met
- improve development of children's independence through everyday routines such as snack time and registration.

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