

Matlock Pre-School Playgroup

Unique reference number (URN): 2740083

Address: 50 Woolley Road, Matlock, DE4 3HU


Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registered with Ofsted: 03/08/2023

Registers: EYR

Registered person: Matlock Pre-School Playgroup Association

Inspection report: 13 November 2025

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, children are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect settings for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met: The setting has an open and positive culture of safeguarding.
- Not met: The setting has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Children grasp new knowledge and skills quickly, so they progress well through the curriculum. Children are confident and capable communicators. They develop a wide and expressive vocabulary as they extend their language skills so that they successfully share their thoughts and ideas.

Children develop positive social skills. They actively seek out others to play with collaboratively on joint tasks, knowing that their contributions are valued. Any children who experience speech delays are swiftly supported by staff and professionals who put precise and appropriate plans in place. This effectively supports children to catch up quickly and achieve well from their starting points.

Children develop coordination and strength in their hands as they access a rich variety of activities that help children refine these physical skills. As children secure these skills, they successfully move on to making marks as they paint and draw.

Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines

Strong standard ●

Leaders and staff create an environment where everyone feels valued, respected and encouraged to contribute. They set clear expectations for behaviour which they help children to understand and follow. Consequently, children are kind, helpful and respectful. Children show empathy to their friends. They consider how they could help, for example, by offering a favourite toy. Staff praise these thoughtful gestures.

Children have ample opportunity to work collaboratively with their peers as they design circuits outside for wheeled toys. They take turns to stop at the petrol pump to refuel their vehicles, sharing their knowledge of different types of cars with one another.

Well-established and embedded daily routines, help all children to understand expectations and feel secure throughout the day, as they know what they need to do and what happens next. Staff understand and are sensitive to children's individual needs. They carefully adapt the support they provide and the way they communicate when asking questions and giving explanations. This enables all children to participate in the full range of activities and engage positively in their learning and play.

Leaders have clear expectations for children's attendance and share the many benefits for children of regularly accessing their early education with parents.

Children's welfare and wellbeing

Strong standard 

Staff show the utmost respect for children when carrying out care routines. They consider children's privacy and dignity when completing nappy changes with younger children. Staff ensure that older children feel supported when using the toilet, while also promoting their independence skills.

Children learn to take care of their own safety and that of others. For example, when playing inside, they learn to walk and move carefully around the furniture to prevent accidents. Children's emotional safety is a high priority for staff. Their insightful knowledge of children's needs and preferences supports the development of positive and compassionate relationships with others.

Staff give children's physical development high attention. Children delight in spending sustained periods of time outside and confidently use equipment to practise and extend their whole-body movements, including climbing and balancing.

Staff work closely with families to gather and share information about children's health and care routines. This helps staff to understand how they can best support children to thrive and enjoy their time at the setting. Staff provide regular updates for parents and carers to promote the best outcomes for children. For example, they provide information about healthy eating and help children to develop good oral hygiene routines.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard 

Children benefit from a stimulating and well-planned curriculum that motivates them to learn and enables all children to gain the most from the exciting play experiences. Leaders have embedded a highly effective assessment process that allows staff to continually review children's progress. In turn, leaders and staff persistently review and refine purposeful and ambitious learning experiences which help all children to thrive.

Staff consistently foster children's communication and language skills by engaging them effectively in conversation, asking relevant questions and introducing new vocabulary. This ignites children's understanding of and interest in words as they talk with enthusiasm about different types of food they like. They recall new words, such as 'spaghetti', and they have fun as they repeat 'ravioli' which broadens their vocabulary.

Staff skilfully draw children in, playing alongside them and modelling new skills, such as different techniques to roll dough to extend children's physical and creative skills. Staff successfully promote children's mathematical language through play as they count objects, compare sizes and talk about shapes and patterns.

Highly effective storytelling promotes a deep love of books and reading from a young age. Children develop positive relationships with one another because staff prioritise opportunities which teach appropriate social skills.

Inclusion

Strong standard 

Leaders and staff work in partnership with families to ensure that every child achieves and makes the progress they are capable of. Staff continuously undertake observations which help them to build an accurate picture of children's learning and skills. Consequently, staff have a deep understanding of children's individual needs.

Staff consistently ensure that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with barriers to their learning get off to a flying start. They implement purposeful plans that support all children to move on in their learning. Leaders have robust systems in place to support all staff to develop a secure understanding of the graduated approach. Staff swiftly involve other professionals when necessary. They incorporate a wide range of highly effective strategies to ensure all children are fully included and effectively supported to make rapid progress.

Leaders and managers ensure that additional funding is used effectively to support children's specific needs. For example, well-considered resources have been purchased to support specific aspects of children's physical development. Inviting areas have been carefully developed to help children to manage their emotions and extend their sensory play. Regular review meetings help parents to understand the impact that interventions are having on their children's progress.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard 

Leaders have a thorough and precise overview of the provision. Their regular reviews are highly successful in identifying areas for further improvement. For example, in consultation with staff and trustees, leaders identified that some information could be made clearer for parents about the key-person system and the curriculum. Parents comment that they feel reassured by regular progress updates and talk confidently about what children are learning. This strengthening of parent partnerships ensures that families are fully involved and are supported to extend children's learning at home.

Staff report feeling fully supported in their roles and that leaders value their work and give high regard to their wellbeing. Leaders have deeply embedded systems that support ongoing professional development. These enhance staff teaching skills further and ensure high-quality interactions with children. For example, staff attend training events, have regular supervision sessions and work collaboratively with other professionals to further their expertise.

Staff demonstrate high levels of commitment to enabling all children to achieve the best start in life. They strive to ensure that all children benefit from an ambitious curriculum that

provides a secure foundation in all areas of learning. This helps to equip children as they move on to the next stage in their education journey.

What it's like to be a child at this setting

Children beam with joy and show excitement as they enter the setting. They warmly greet staff and their friends as they find their coat pegs and hang up their belongings. Children show they feel safe and secure within well-established routines as they recognise their name cards and independently register their attendance. They eagerly engage with the wide range of stimulating activities available. Children become engrossed in their learning as they explore, experiment and solve problems. For example, children persevere as they construct a train track, working collaboratively to find which pieces fit together. They show fascination in their work and proudly describe the lines and shapes they have created. Staff carefully observe children as they play and consistently give them praise and encouragement. This helps to foster children's positive self-esteem.

Staff provide high levels of supervision as children move freely between indoor and outdoor activities. They give high regard to children's safety and wellbeing as they sensitively offer support and show children how to use equipment and tools safely. As a result, children quickly master the use of scissors and use a variety of tools such as play-dough cutters, paintbrushes and glue sticks as they develop creativity. The setting establishes strong partnerships with parents and carers. Staff gather detailed information about children's starting points, which they use to create a thoughtful and well-sequenced curriculum. Staff know children extremely well and this enables them to adapt their teaching skills and provide experiences that help every child to flourish, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff are highly responsive and are on-hand to help children overcome any issues. For example, when they notice children struggling with their emotions, they offer reassurance quickly and skilfully steer them to activities that interest and motivate them. This enables children to quickly reconnect with their learning and heightens their enjoyment.

About this inspection

The inspector spoke with the manager, the special educational needs coordinator, staff and parents during the inspection.

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

A quality assurance visit by an additional inspector was carried out at this inspection.

Inspector:

Kate Scheel

About this setting

Unique reference number (URN): 2740083

Address:

50 Woolley Road
Matlock
DE4 3HU

Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registration date: 03/08/2023

Registered person: Matlock Pre-School Playgroup Association


Register(s): EYR

Operating hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday : 08:50 - 15:20

Local authority: Derbyshire

Facts and figures used on inspection

This data was available to the inspector at the time of the inspection.

 This data is from 13 November 2025

Children numbers

Age range of children at the time of inspection

2 to 4

Total number of places

32

Our grades explained

Exceptional 

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other settings can learn from it.

Strong standard 

The setting reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard 

The setting is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention 

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement 

The setting needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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