



St Mark's Mini Mice Pre-School Limited

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY319500
Inspection date	13 June 2006
Inspector	Lorraine Sparey
Setting Address	7 Alton Road, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH10 4AA
Telephone number	07977141675
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Registered person	St Mark's Mini Mice Pre-School Limited
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Sessional 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.

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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St. Mark's Mini Mice Pre-school originally opened in 1987. It became a privately owned group with the current owners in 2006. It operates from a church hall in Talbot Village, Bournemouth. There are several schools and amenities within walking distance. The pre-school serves the local area and children attend for a variety of sessions. There is a fenced area for outdoor play.

A maximum of 26 children may attend, there are currently 39 children on roll, of these

38 are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and for whom English is an additional language. The pre-school opens four days a week, excluding Wednesdays during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15 until 12:00 with an additional lunch club on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays. There is an afternoon session from 13:00 until 15:30 every Monday. There are six staff who work directly with the children, three of whom hold relevant early years qualifications. The pre-school receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's understanding and awareness of maintaining healthy lifestyles is well promoted. Children know when and why they wash their hands, a child tells the adult 'we wash hands to stop germs going into our tummies'. Children automatically put their hands over their mouths as they cough to limit the spread of infection. However, the hand washing routines after creative activities are not always effective as the bowl of water becomes dirty quickly. Their health is further promoted as staff implement effective procedures. Children with dietary requirements or allergies are well supported. The majority of staff have attended specific training on administering epipens. Children who have minor accidents are effectively supported by staff who are trained in administering first aid. Children learn about sun safety through themes and projects. An adult asks the group of children how they can protect themselves from the sun whilst playing outside. Several children reply 'putting on our hats'. The adult congratulates them for remembering.

Children enjoy a variety of fresh fruit and vegetables at snack time. They can choose freely when they would like to have their snack during the morning. An adult prepares the children's food as they request it to ensure that it keeps fresh. Children can access water throughout the session from the water dispenser. They can choose between milk or water with their food. This means children are never thirsty. Staff increase children's awareness through discussion and posters which display food that is good for us. Children also have excellent opportunities to learn about healthy options through growing their own fruit and vegetables at the group's allotment. They observe growth and have the opportunity to experience digging up the potatoes, preparing them and eating them. This increases children's awareness of how their food grows. The setting is developing the idea of healthy lifestyles through joining the 'healthy early years' project.

Children have good opportunities to experience the fresh air. They go on frequent walks in the community, including local woods. They benefit from being able to play outside in the secure area using a variety of resources such as bicycles and bubble machines. Children confidently pedal forwards and backwards negotiating space particularly well. They confidently climb, moving over and under on the climbing frame. Children use a wide range of tools with increasing skill, such as scissors, rollers and cutters. They move, demonstrating good coordination, to a 'sticky kids' exercise tape, stopping and starting with increased control.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and safe environment. Staff implement comprehensive risk assessments to ensure that children can safely explore both inside and outdoors. The doors and gates are secure, visitors are required to sign in to ensure staff are aware of who is on the premises at all times. Children are kept safe on outings through clear procedures, such as additional adults directly supervising the children. They are familiar with the evacuation procedures which means that they can exit the building quickly in the event of an emergency.

Children choose from a broad range of quality toys and equipment. They are beginning to take responsibility for their own safety, particularly when using larger pieces of equipment, such as the climbing frame and trampoline. At registration an adult asks them if they can remember the rules to help them keep safe whilst using the climbing frame. Several children answer with various rules, for example, no shoes or dressing up clothes, and an adult must be by the climbing frame. The adult congratulates them and makes sure that all children know the expectations.

Children are protected from harm and neglect because the staff have a good understanding of child protection. There are a clear procedures to follow if they are concerned about a child, these include staff attending training on a rolling basis. The policy is shared with parents to ensure they are fully aware of the staff's roles and responsibilities in this area.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and settled, developing good relationships with their peers and the staff. They benefit from the quality interaction from the committed staff. Children's interest is maintained by staff organising the play room in a variety of ways. Children choose freely from a broad range of quality toys and resources available each day.

Nursery Education

Quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff demonstrate a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The detailed plans ensure that children cover all areas of learning. All staff contribute their ideas, providing stimulating activities to enhance children's progress in their learning. For example, children enjoy making pastry and creating food for their role play cafe. Comprehensive assessments and observations of the children identify any areas in their learning which require development. These are incorporated into the plans. Staff use a wide variety of teaching methods to keep children's interest, ensuring that they progress well in their learning. For example, an adult uses a wiggle rhyme to settle the children before she takes the register and explains the activities the children. They respond enthusiastically during the rhyme and settle quickly sitting quietly listening for their names. There are effective procedures in place to support children

with disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language, such as dual language posters.

Children develop good relationships with their peers and the adults. They often seek out their friends to join in their play. They show consideration to others. Several children were talking about how many friends they have at preschool. One child said 'I only have one friend' another child says 'no you have lots of friends because we are all your friends'. Children confidently separate from their parents and carers and quickly become involved in their chosen activity. They are keen to show objects they have brought from home relating to the letters of the week or the theme. Children bring in their umbrellas to link with the letter U and excitedly show the various designs. Children are independent in their personal care and dress themselves during the role play selecting the costumes of their choice.

Children are confident speakers both on an individual basis and with large groups. They confidently talk about things that interest them. Children enjoy using books for reference as well as reading stories. They look at pictures of bees and learn how they make honeycomb to store their honey. They make their own honeycombs from sugar paper. Children recognise their own names as they self register and choose when they would like their snack. They are able to write their own names on their creative work. Children enjoy listening to stories and acting them out. For example, the Three Billy Goats Gruff. They enjoyed being the Billy goats with their horns and the troll hiding under the bridge.

Children have excellent opportunities to use the technology. They have daily opportunities to use the two computers with a wide variety of programs. Children use the mouse and arrow keys, with good control, operating simple programs. They confidently use the tape recorder to listen to stories and music. They enjoy using a remote control bee manoeuvring it around a track. Children benefit from a range of visitors to the group, such as the local police and firemen. They learn about road and fire safety through play. Children learn about the natural world through projects, such as mini beasts. Children use microscopes and magnifying glasses to view spiders and ants. They have good opportunities to develop their own ideas as they construct with a variety of commercially purchased resources and recyclable materials.

Children enjoy singing familiar songs. They anticipate the next verse as they listen and sing along with the CD. Children are encouraged to develop their own creative ideas using their imagination. They enjoy lots of opportunity to paint, through free style painting and still life painting, such as bowls of fruit. Children engage in role play using well resourced areas which are changed frequently, often linked to the themes such as hairdressers, cafe and hospital. They are opportunities to taste different foods from around the world exploring the textures and tastes, such as pizza which they made themselves.

Children confidently count and use numbers in their play. They are able to recognise when they have the same number and solve simple problems such as one more or one less. For example, during the story children immediately identified how many goats had crossed the bridge and how many were left on the other side. Children recognise shapes and are able to make patterns using shapes. They can recognise shapes within the environment such as the clock is a circle.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are developing a strong sense of belonging to the group. Their creative achievements are valued and displayed on the walls. Their confidence and self esteem develops through being able to see photographs of themselves involved in activities. For example, celebrating the Persian New Year and being visited by an African drummer. Children's parents are encouraged to help staff promote individual children's cultures and beliefs, such as providing music that the children can listen and dance to. Children have lots of opportunities to develop links with their local community, visiting the local school, allotments and church. They are currently fundraising for a new church roof which promotes their sense of community. Children's understanding of the wider world is increased through projects and using the broad range of resources that promote our diverse society. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are well-behaved. They are polite, well mannered and considerate to their peers. Children work cooperatively to tidy away the toys. They benefit from the staff being positive role models. An adult thanks each child as they respond to their name during registration.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. They receive a detailed prospectus that covers all aspects of the preschool. It provides comprehensive information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and the areas of learning. Staff provide additional information on themes and activities that parents and carers can follow through at home with the children. However, the procedures to share children's progress records are not always effective. Parents comment about how supportive and friendly the staff are. They are impressed by the high levels of support their children receive.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are well supported by the high ratio of staff. They show genuine interest in the children's play and join in whilst allowing children to develop their own ideas. Several of the staff are qualified and all staff are encouraged to develop their knowledge and understanding through training both in-house and external. The robust recruitment and vetting procedures means that children are cared for by suitable adults. They work hard to provide a stimulating and interesting learning environment for all children.

Staff have devised a range of policies and procedures to support them in promoting positive outcomes for children. However, hand washing practices after creative play are not always managed well. The bowl of water is not always changed sufficiently to ensure clean water.

Leadership and management is good. Staff work well together as a team and benefit from being effectively led by the two managers. They are clear on their roles and responsibilities within the setting. There are effective procedures in place to monitor

the provision of nursery education these included attending cluster groups, regular staff meetings and discussions with the advisory teacher. Staff receive a comprehensive induction and annual appraisals to support them in delivering quality provision. The setting is very committed to providing the best for the children attending.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

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.

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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 hand washing practices after creative activities

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):

- continue to develop and improve procedures to share children's progress in their learning

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk