



St Margarets Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	205579
Inspection date	12 October 2006
Inspector	Kathryn Margaret Clayton
Setting Address	The Church Hall, Grimsby Road, Laceby, Grimsby, North East Lincolnshire, DN37 7DB
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Registered person	St Margarets Pre School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of 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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St Margarets Pre-school was first registered in 1983. It is run by a voluntary committee and operates from the church hall in the village of Laceby. The pre-school serves the local community. There is one main playroom and a small enclosed grassed and soft surfaced area available for outdoor play. The pre-school has places for 26 children aged from two to five years. There are currently 33 children on roll including 21 in receipt of nursery education funding.

The pre-school is open from 09:00 to 12:00 on Monday to Friday for older children and from 13:15 until 15:15 every afternoon, except Wednesday, for the younger children, during term time only. There are eight full and part-time staff employed, of whom six hold a relevant childcare qualification. The pre-school receives the support of the North East Lincolnshire local authority and is a Pre-school Learning Alliance accredited setting.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children remain healthy because the pre-school staff use good hygiene routines. For example, snack tables are prepared using antibacterial liquid and there is a clear staff cleaning rota for the toilet area. Children start to learn about the importance of personal hygiene with sensitive reminders from staff. There are attractive child friendly notices within the toilet area to encourage children to wash their hands after going to the toilet and children start to learn about why this is important. Children learn about the benefits of an active lifestyle as they have good opportunities for physical play. They enjoy daily opportunities to use the outdoor space where they can access a good range of equipment, such as scooters, wheeled toys, scoops, balls, bouncers and stilts. There are also regular opportunities to be active indoors, for example, by using a large climbing frame. Activities, such as taking part in a sports day further help to promote children's health.

Children become aware of the benefits of eating a healthy diet as they enjoy varied and nutritious snacks throughout the week. These include foods, such as bread sticks, fruit, toast, raisins, cucumber and carrots. Children enjoy drinking fresh milk and always have access to water within the playroom, therefore they start to learn about the importance of drinking regularly. Children are protected because staff maintain a current understanding of first aid procedures and understand how to correctly deal with minor accidents and record any medication that is administered.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment that is maintained to a good standard, with the exception of the toilet walls which are in a poor state of repair. The main play area is made attractive to children with colourful displays and posters. Children are very interested in playing with good quality toys, such as a train set, dolls house and fire station. A good range of equipment, for example, two computers, supports children's learning and enjoyment. Staff use effective systems to check that all toys and equipment are safe for children to use.

Children remain safe in the setting because staff skilfully identify any potential risks or dangers. The areas used are carefully risk assessed everyday and staff are extremely vigilant about the arrival and departure of children. There is a clear system in place to identify who will collect children. Children start to gain some early understanding of maintaining their own safety as they are involved in the regular evacuation of the premises. Children are safeguarded because there are clear procedures to follow should there be any concerns about a child. Staff have attended training and have a good understanding of who to contact should they need to.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are settled at the pre-school and respond well to their carers. Many children persevere for some time and enjoy playing alongside each other, for example, as they carefully pour sand into containers. Staff make suitable assessments of children's progress using the Birth to three matters framework and meet regularly to discuss how individual children can be encouraged to progress in their development and learning. Young children enjoy free choice in play and suitable opportunities to rest or sleep on a small bed should they need to.

Children's social skills are appropriately encouraged as they are involved in small group activities, such as snack time. All children are fully included as the setting make suitable adjustments for children with learning difficulties or disabilities. All children, including those in receipt of nursery education funding, have good opportunities to learn about their local environment through visits to the local church, library, school and post office. They learn about the natural world when taking part in activities, such as planting and growing flowers, herbs and beans.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and children make steady progress towards the early learning goals. Staff plan an appropriate learning programme and understand what children will learn from the activities provided. The assessment of children's progress using an individual learning journey is in the early stages of development. However, staff meet on a regular basis to discuss individual children's attainment, therefore this helps them to identify the next step in their learning.

Many children are independent in the pre-school with tasks, such as finding their own milk at snack time and going to the toilet. There are times during free play sessions when not all children are actively engaged in activities. Many children recognise their own name and there are good opportunities for them to do so, for example, at the mark making table, on their coats and at the snack table. Many children talk confidently and clearly and handle books correctly. Staff are effective in using appropriate times to encourage children to learn letter sounds. However, children do not always listen attentively at group times, for example, when completing the weather chart or listening to a story, and staff do not always fully engage their interest.

Children count confidently to 10 and beyond, for example, the chairs at circle time and items from a story about numbers. They use the language of size correctly when filling containers with sand. Children are aware when the container is full and empty. They show an interest in shape as they complete challenging puzzles. Many children can recognise basic shapes and use them appropriately in collage activity, for example, when making a hedgehog. Children are interested in attractive displays, such as an autumn display, and enjoy looking closely at items. They show good skill when completing construction activity and have many opportunities to find out about the local community.

Children have suitable planned opportunities to develop skills when using small equipment such as skittles, bean bags, hoops and balls. They use equipment such as scissors and glue sticks correctly; they confidently use rollers and cutters and can skilfully manipulate dough.

Children enjoy very interesting musical experiences. Their enjoyment is enhanced as the setting arrange opportunities for them to explore music with the help of an expert. Many children enjoy singing in a group. They sing familiar songs, for example, 'baa baa black sheep' and enjoy taking part in action rhymes, such as 'Incey Wincey spider'. Children enjoy imaginative play when dressing up or playing with small world equipment. They are able to independently select resources. This allow them to explore colour and texture appropriately through collage making and painting without having to produce a finished product.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an atmosphere where they are known and valued as individuals. The caring staff group develop good relationships with children. They are sensitive to the needs of all children including those for whom English is an additional language. Parents are encouraged to stay with their children when they first start to attend, therefore children settle more easily. Children enjoy good opportunities to learn about other cultures as they celebrate festivals such as Chinese New Year and undertake interesting activities, for example, food tasting and making masks. The pre-school provide resources that reflect a diverse society, for example, posters and signs in different languages. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children generally behave well because staff give sensitive and timely reminders regarding acceptable behaviour and reward them with stickers for achievement. The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive good information about the Foundation Stage curriculum in a welcome booklet. They benefit because they are kept well informed about what their child is doing. They receive regular newsletters and there is a wealth of information around the setting including information about the activities available throughout the week. At enrolment parents are asked about what their children can do at home, therefore this gives staff a starting point with regard to planning for children's learning. Parents are actively encouraged to be involved by helping at the pre-school and sending in items to support the theme.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit by being cared for by an experienced and well qualified staff group who are committed to ongoing training and development. All staff undertake additional training to help to improve practice. The organisation of the space is effective in enhancing children's enjoyment. They have good space to play and direct access to an outdoor area. There are good systems for the appointment of new staff, therefore children are safeguarded. All documentation is very well organised and understood by staff.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. Management are good role models who support staff through having a thorough induction process and regular meetings. The organisation of the pre-school sessions are not always effective in supporting children's learning, for example, large group activities last for some time and not all children remain interested in what is

happening. Staff work closely with support services to ensure ongoing improvement. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

A number of actions and key issues were raised at the last inspection, relating to record keeping, improving the opportunities for children to explore creatively and engaging the interest of more able children. Since the last inspection children's health and safety has improved as there is a clear policy to follow should a child be lost and staff are fully aware that parents should sign to acknowledge when medication has been administered. Children receive some challenge in play, for example, by completing activities such as more complex computer games and more intricate puzzles, although at times some children are not actively engaged in activities.

Complaints since the last inspection

A concern was raised against National Standard 4, Physical Environment. An Ofsted childcare inspector visited the provision to investigate the complaint. Actions were raised against National Standard 6, to ensure there is no risk to children from heaters, and National Standard 4, to ensure that the playroom is maintained at an adequate temperature. The actions have been met and the provision continues to be registered. 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

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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):

- ensure the toilet walls are in a good state of repair.

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):

- consider ways to encourage children to listen attentively and be actively engaged in 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