



## St Marys Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY259279
<b>Inspection date</b>	14 November 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Helen Ann Woods
<b>Setting Address</b>	Church Rooms, Church Street, Chesham, Buckinghamshire, HP5 1HY
<b>Telephone number</b>	
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	St Marys Pre School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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 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 Mary's Pre-school operates from St Mary's Church hall in Chesham town centre and has been registered for many years. The pre-school serves the local area and is registered to take 36 children aged between two to five years. There are currently 46 children from two to five years on roll, of whom 31 are in receipt of funding for early education. The setting currently supports a small number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five mornings a week during school term times from 09:30 until 12:15. There is a lunch club on two mornings a week from 12:15 until 13:15 for children that are settled at the pre-school. The children attend a variety of sessions.

Ten part time staff work with the children and there is an administrator. The group operates a key worker system. Over half of the staff hold a recognised level 2 child care qualification, one has a level 3 and half hold a current first aid qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Effective hygiene procedures promote children's good health and minimise the risk of infection across the provision. Children have good appetites and enjoy a variety of healthy snacks, for example apples, grapes, bananas, pineapple and some cheese cubes. Their individual dietary needs are clearly known as details of children's allergies are printed on a list which is checked by the member of staff preparing snacks. Snack times are well organised and children sit in their key groups and eat in a relaxed and social atmosphere. Children increase their social skills by engaging in conversation with their peers and staff.

Children see and discuss with staff why efficient hygiene routines such as, wiping all the tables thoroughly after activities and before snack time, is carried out. Over half the staff have relevant first aid training and implement procedures such as the recording of accidents and administration of medication.

Children develop a positive attitude to exercise, which is enjoyed on a daily basis indoors through music and movement and having fun outside when running around freely in the garden. Here they can jump off old tree stumps and play hide-and-seek around the mature trees and shrubs. Children use a range of equipment to develop competent small motor control. They pour small quantities of water accurately, clear up any spills and use appropriate tools with the play dough during creative activities.

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

The provision is good.

The pre-school has systems for ensuring the safety of children and the premises at all times. Children practise emergency evacuation each term with the staff so they know what to do in the event of a fire. Children are protected in terms of security as the doors cannot be opened by children or intruders, and the outdoor play area has a secure fence and gate which are constantly supervised by staff. When out in the garden staff wear fluorescent jackets and count the children out and back in again. Staff talk to the children about being careful not to trip or bump into each other when running in the garden.

Children receive very good levels of supervision as correct ratios, and often above, are maintained at all times. They relax and play happily in an environment where staff have an excellent awareness of security. Space is well organised and used effectively to allow children opportunities to be active, engage in table top and floor activities. They enjoy opportunities to relax and share books in a very comfortable environment with child size tables, seating and cushions. Children play comfortably in the playroom because it is well laid out with activities, sufficiently spacious, light and airy.

Children's welfare in the pre-school is safeguarded by staff who are vetted and have a clear understanding of their role with regard to child protection issues. Implementation of some effective systems, such as the collection of children and recording of visitors, formal and informal risk assessments, contribute to ensuring children's safety. However, staff do not consistently record existing injuries that a child has. Staff are alert to potential hazards and risks are minimized. They conduct regular checks to ensure that the children can enjoy an environment with equipment that is well maintained.

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

The provision is good.

Children settle very well into the pre-school and are eager to join in the activities in their groups with their key worker. They interact well with practitioners and their peers, building positive relationships with them. Children gain much enjoyment as they create pictures and collages from a varied selection of materials such as coloured cello tape, glue and coloured paper. They benefit from the routine, allowing them to initiate their own ideas and make their own choices about their play. Children play well independently and with their peers, as well as enjoying opportunities to work more directly with practitioners through activities, such as cookery and playing organised games, group singing and music.

Younger children in the 'red ladybird group' are well supported as they acquire new skills and knowledge through planned activities as well as in their self-chosen play. Under threes play confidently with a good range of toys that encourage the use of all their senses. Practitioners encourage children to develop language skills by talking about different colours, textures and characters from books they read to them.

Children enjoy the balance of activities available to them which helps them progress in all areas of development. The children spend their time purposefully, for example, they use their imagination as they play in the space ship that has been created by the staff and make pictures of fireworks using paint, coloured chalks, glitter glue pens on black paper. They sit sensibly together as they listen animatedly to stories. Staff work together to plan activities which give all the children opportunities to develop their skills. Plans show how activities are successfully linked to the Foundation Stage curriculum and 'Birth to three matters'.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The setting provides a colourful and interesting environment where children quickly become involved in a range of activities and, as a result, they make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff plan well overall, to ensure that children are presented with a variety of activities that have regard for all areas of learning and which focus on specific outcomes. They collate information about the children's achievements, through observations and assessments, which they share with parents.

Children are very confident and self-assured. They form good relationships within the group, play well together and show care and consideration for others. They demonstrate good independence skills as they tidy away resources, select their own choice of implements such as 'the blue scissors' and 'green sticky tape' and pour their own drinks at snack time. Children

initiate their own learning, for example, they decide to go hunting for the paper cut out animals that they know staff have hidden in the trees and bushes. They confidently answer questions that staff ask them about the different animals they have found. Children select activities from available resources and concentrate well as they complete their chosen tasks. They are familiar with the daily routine and follow this well.

Children recognise their written names on magnetic cards that they take off the wall before going to sit with their key groups. Good use of labelling stimulates interest in early reading. They enjoy exploring books, both individually and in small groups throughout the session. The book area is very comfortable with rugs, cosy cushions and books displayed for easy self selection. Children explore mark-making as a writing and drawing activity at the table, or help themselves from the resources available in trays at the side of the tables. Some children can write their own names, whilst others receive the support of staff. However, children have limited opportunities to write for a purpose, for example, during role play.

Children's mathematical development is excellent. They are very confident with numbers and counting. They count confidently up to ten and over and staff reinforce children's counting skills as opportunities arise. Children understand the sequence of numbers and have excellent opportunities to develop their awareness of calculation, such as counting out pieces of fruit and the amount of cups needed at snack time. They sing number rhymes and talk about the time, day and month at circle time. They use comparative language appropriately, such as when comparing the size of the cars they play with to 'daddy's car'.

Children recognise colours and a variety of shapes as they cut out the 'black circles' and 'oval red poppy petals' when making their poppy pictures. They have opportunities to build and construct with a range of objects and materials such as junk modelling and with manufactured construction sets. Children are captivated during song time as they accompany themselves with musical instruments.

Children enthusiastically take part in physical activities in the natural spacious garden. They climb in the low shrubs, play hide-and-seek under and around the established willow tree and run with brightly coloured streamers.

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

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and relaxed within the pre-school where they have positive relationships with one another and staff. They feel good about themselves and staff sensitively support children to help them progress. Children celebrate each other's achievements and co-operate well. They develop an understanding of diversity through play with a variety of multicultural resources and planned topic work. Staff have experience of supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and work in close partnership with parents and outside agencies to meet individual needs. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's behaviour is excellent; they know what is expected of them and are clear about what is right and wrong. They listen to staff and respond positively to requests. They sit quietly at circle time, line up sensibly when getting ready to go out and come in. They have an excellent

understanding of the boundaries and behaviour expectations of the pre-school and share and take turns very well.

The partnership with parents and carers is good, and contributes significantly to children's learning and well-being in the pre-school. Children benefit enormously from the friendly interaction between staff and parents, which is enhanced by the key worker system. Parents' views about their child's needs and interests are actively sought before the child starts at the group. They are kept well informed about how their child is progressing and developing through verbal exchanges and through an open door policy.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children enjoy their time at the pre-school because practitioners have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities within the group and work well as a team to promote the outcomes for children. Deployment of staff is good ensuring all children are secure and happily engaged in activities.

Children's learning is promoted through good leadership and management of the care and nursery education. A clear and efficient staffing structure with established roles and responsibilities is in place. As a result, even though the group is without a manager at this time, the long established motivated staff team, including a very active committed chairperson, maintains the continued smooth running of the group.

Children are secure and happily settled at the pre-school as practitioners work with parents to ensure they have a good knowledge of children's individual needs. Documentation to support all areas of practice is well maintained. Policies and procedures work in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment and achievement to make a positive contribution.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. Children make very good progress towards the early learning goals. Practice is regularly monitored and evaluated and action plans are in place to show how the pre-school will put improvements in place. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

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

At the last inspection the pre-school was asked to ensure that a daily cleaning routine was established for the toilets, a record of accidents was maintained and signed by the parent, and at least one member of staff who is trained in the emergency administration of medication was present at each session.

Cleaning staff now carry out cleaning of the toilets every day, a record of accidents is kept and signed by the parent and at least half the staff are trained in paediatric first aid. This has ensured an improvement in children's health and well being.

In addition, the pre-school were also asked to maintain an accurate record of visitors at all times, and to make sure fire drills are carried out regularly. A visitors book is in place recording

all visitors to the premises and fire drills are carried out each term and logged. As a result, children's safety has been enhanced.

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

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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):

- ensure that any existing injuries are recorded separately and signed by parent

#### **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):

- provide materials for children to initiate the use of writing in their imaginative play.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)