



## St Mary's Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116672
<b>Inspection date</b>	30 January 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Margaret Moffat
<b>Setting Address</b>	141 Marow Bottom Road, Marlow, Buckinghamshire, SL7 3PJ
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<b>Registered person</b>	St Mary's 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 satisfactory. 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 has been open for over 30 years. It operates from St Mary's Church Hall in Marlow Bottom. The pre-school serves the local community. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.00 to 11.45 Monday to Friday and 12.30 to 15.00 on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, depending on demand.

There are currently 42 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 31 children receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The pre-school employs nine staff. Three of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. Another member of staff is working towards a qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well-organised activities and routines. They wash their hands at appropriate times and deal with their own personal needs. Staff reinforce and discuss with children the importance of hand washing and give good explanation about germs through discussion and topics. Most staff hold first aid certificates and attend training to keep these updated. They accurately record accidents and administration of medication and parents countersign completed documentation. This promotes children's welfare within the setting.

Children engage in a good range of physical activities that encourage a healthy lifestyle. They have opportunities to play both indoors and outdoors during sessions and activities are well planned and resourced. Children enjoy daily opportunities to develop their co-ordination and skills for example, on the balance beam, climbing frame and wheeled toys. They develop a good sense of space as they move confidently within their environment. Children access a good range of tools and equipment to develop their fine motor skills for example, rolling pins, cutters, scissors, paintbrushes and pencils.

Snack time is a social occasion. Children sit in small groups chatting to each other and staff sharing news and talking about everyday things. Children develop independence skills as they wait patiently for a space at the table and pour their own drinks. Children learn about healthy eating through topics and the range of healthy snacks available to them. These include fruit, vegetables, bread sticks, milk and water. However, children are not always offered an alternative snack if they do not like what is on offer. Staff work closely with parents to ensure children's preferences and dietary and cultural needs are met and take effective steps to ensure everyone in the setting are aware of these.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and secure environment. Staff provide chairs and a book rack in the entrance hall providing the children and parents the opportunity to read stories and look at books before the sessions begin. Children enjoy waiting in the area and greeting their friends as they arrive. Staff set up the hall with activities and resources before the children arrive and the good organisation of the areas means that children can move around safely and independently and choose what they wish to play with from the good selection of activities on offer. Toys and resources are stored at children's level and the wide range available helps them progress in all areas of learning.

The environment is safe and there is a good security system in place for the safe arrival and departure of children and to protect children from intruders. Staff are deployed at the door, at the beginning and end of the sessions to ensure no children leave the building unaccompanied. Parents are asked on a daily basis who will be picking up their children and this is recorded. There are effective procedures in place, such as fire evacuation and daily safety checks to ensure

children remain safe within the setting. Children develop an awareness of how to keep themselves safe through discussions about road safety before they go on outings. Staff encourage children to think about their own safety and ask questions to promote this, for example why it is important to have your shoe laces tied, children are aware they may fall over.

Staff demonstrate a appropriate understanding of the signs and symptoms that would alert them to child protection issues and the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a child. This supports children's welfare. However, it is unclear if the policy complies with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board as this document is not readily available.

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

The provision is good.

Children are excited and motivated to learn when they arrive at the setting. They are aware of the routine to collect their name plate from the table and hang it on a chair with their belongings, before they take part in the activities. Most children leave their main carer with ease and staff are on hand to encourage and support the children who need coaxing. Children are given good opportunities to initiate their own play. They enjoy each others company and play well together. Children under three are effectively integrated into the group and they play confidently with the other children. Parents have the opportunity to stay to settle their children and staff are deployed well to offer one to one support if needed. For example, staff distract children who are ready to go home before the end of the session, they explain to them the timetable until their parents arrive to collect them and actively engage with them in activities. This contributes to children remaining happy and gaining confidence in the pre-school.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and use this knowledge to plan a stimulating learning environment for the children. There are relevant resources to accompany themes and consolidate children's learning. For example, information books showing different buildings around the world and 'the house that jack built' game. Staff know the children well and use observations to complete children's assessments. However, staff do not clearly identify children's next steps in learning.

Children develop good relationships with each other and the staff. They confidently approach staff for help for example, when playing with large construction bricks they ask staff to hold the model and put other bricks on the top. Children play well together and allow others to join in their game of hide and seek, when asked. Children have good communication skills and talk confidently to each other in large and small groups. During large group time they join in enthusiastically, singing a selection of familiar songs and listen intently to the story of the five little ducks. Staff encourage children to participate in re-telling the stories. Children confidently use props to tell the story of the three little pigs. They independently choose books and sit and read them to themselves. Children are beginning to link sounds to letters and many children can recognise and write their own names. Children have opportunities to develop their creative skills through activities such as painting and making igloo jigsaws. Children recognise colours during painting activities and show delight when they mix pink and green together to make

brown, and pink and blue together to make purple. They use scissors with assurance as they cut out igloo shapes. They show good concentration as they complete the cutting task and try to put the pieces back together to make the jigsaw. Children can recognise numbers from one to nine in and out of sequence. They count confidently in everyday situations and are able to recognise simple shapes such as triangle and rectangle. Children have opportunities to develop their senses and explore other textures during their play such as wet sand, shaving foam and tea leaves. Children enjoy acting out scenarios in the outside play area as they play in the cafe. They order food from the menu and pay at the hatch. They use mobile phones to order pizza and some children serve the food to others sitting at the table. Children have fun and enjoy themselves during their time in the setting.

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

The provision is good.

Children gain an understanding of the wider world through planned themes and celebrating different festivals and traditions. They have access to a good range of toys and resources to reflect positive images. Visitors to the pre-school and outings in the local community help children develop a positive attitude and respect for others. Staff take time to get to know the children and good relationships are evident. Children are well behaved and respond positively to the consistent praise and encouragement they receive from the staff. Gentle reminders from staff to help tidy up develops children's awareness of what is expected of them. There are appropriate procedures in place to support children with learning difficulties. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered

Partnership with parents is good. They receive good information regarding the pre-school as policies and procedures are readily available to them and the notice board and newsletters ensure they are aware of the activities their children will be involved in. An effective communication system between staff and parents contributes to children's wellbeing within the pre-school. Parents exchange information with the child's key worker at the beginning of the placement. Parents are kept informed on how their children are progressing through written reports and regular daily feedback. Parents report they are very happy with the service provided.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting is in breach of regulations as they have not informed Ofsted of changes to the committee. All required documentation to support the care and well being of the children is in place. The environment is well organised and space both indoors and out is used appropriately to maximise the play opportunities for the children. Children are happy and settled within the setting and receive sufficient adult support to help them feel secure and confident.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Staff work well as a team and are aware of their roles and responsibilities. They have opportunities to extend their knowledge and learning through regular training within the setting and externally. Staff meetings ensure they have opportunities to be involved in the planning and evaluation of activities and show commitment to the continuous improvement of the nursery education. The supervisor is proactive

in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the pre-school through the self evaluation form and accreditation system. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

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

At the previous inspection the setting was asked to ensure all accident forms record all the required details and are signed by parents. Accident records have been updated to include relevant information and are signed by parents. This promotes the welfare of the children.

They were also asked to ensure written evaluations take place on activities offered to ensure they are suitable and help to move children onto the next stage. Activities are now well planned and resourced and staff evaluate them to ensure children are making progress.

### **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.

## **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 good.

### **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 the child protection procedure complies with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)
- improve knowledge and understanding of requirements set out in regulations and set in place a procedure to notify Ofsted of relevant changes.

#### **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):

- develop the assessment system to clearly identify children's next steps in learning.

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)