

St Josephs Pre-School GP

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109923
Inspection date	02 May 2007
Inspector	Louise, Caroline Bonney
Setting Address	St. Josephs Primary School, Bridge Road, Aldershot, Hampshire, GU11 3DD
Telephone number	01252 350583
E-mail	admin@st-josephs.hants.sch.uk
Registered person	St Josephs Pre-School GP
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Sessional care, Out of School 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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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. Joseph's Pre-school GP was registered in 1987, and is managed by the Board of Governors of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School. The registration has three provisions which are situated in the grounds of the school in Aldershot. They include a preschool providing 15 hours of funded nursery education and care and a nursery/crèche providing full day care. Out of school care includes holiday, breakfast and teatime clubs. Each provision has separate managers and base rooms, and all have access to outdoor play areas. They also use the school facilities including the hall, library and grounds. The provisions serve the local community as well as offering some out of catchments places.

Both the preschool and nursery/crèche are registered to provide care for up to 36 children each. Currently 72 children are on roll for the preschool for 15 hours and 40 children attend the nursery/crèche. Of these, a total of 56 preschool and 15 nursery children receive funded nursery education. Children are normally aged two years and nine months before attending preschool, and from six months at nursery. The out of school provision provides care for up to 72 children aged from four to 12 years at any one time, and numbers on roll vary.

The preschool and nursery/crèche are open five days a week term time only. Preschool sessions are from 08:45 until 11:45 and 12:15 until 15:15. The nursery/crèche is open from 08:00 until 17:00. The breakfast club is open from 08:00 until 08:30, and the teatime club from 15:15 until 17:30. The holiday club currently operates during the half-term and summer holidays.

The setting supports children with special educational needs, and children who speak English as an additional language.

The preschool and nursery employ a total of 18 staff, and the majority of staff have early years qualifications at Level 2 and above. No out of school club staff are currently qualified.

The provision places strong emphasis on its Catholic ethos.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff maintain good hygiene routines, such as cleaning tables before snack time, and the wearing of shoe covers in the nursery. Children develop awareness of how to maintain their own health and hygiene through established routines. They know to wear sunhats when playing outside. They wash their hands appropriately before eating, and older children independently look after their personal care.

Children enjoy nutritious snacks and meals, with good liaison between parents and staff as babies dietary needs develop. Older nursery and breakfast club children benefit from eating hot meals provided by school catering staff. At snack time children have healthy options such as fruit, vegetables and milk. In the nursery children have free access to water throughout the session. This helps them develop an understanding of how to eat and encourages them to take plenty of fluids to keep healthy.

Children benefit from sufficient opportunities to rest. Babies have their home routines adhered to around sleeps and feeds. They receive good emotional support from adults who provide plenty of cuddles and reassurance. This helps younger children thrive. There are good opportunities for energetic play outside. After school club play various team games on the playing field, preschool and nursery children access their attached outdoor areas and use slides and wheeled toys. This supports their health.

Children have their medical needs met through sufficient staff having appropriate first aid training. Staff seek information about allergies and dietary needs. However, some provision have a policy not to administer medication. This means staff are unable to fully support children's medical needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Preschool and nursery staff have clear understanding of child protection procedures. They share their policies with parents, and record existing injuries. Staff are committed to putting the needs of the child first, and display the procedure to follow should they have concerns about their safety.

However, the out-of-school provision does not have appropriate policies or methods to up-date staff's knowledge about safeguarding children. Although most of their staff have undergone suitable vetting procedures, some have recently been found not to have been vetted appropriately. This does not sufficiently safeguard the children.

Children play in safe and secure premises and staff effectively reduce hazards through risk assessment. Equipment is in good condition and age-appropriate for the children using it. Younger children freely and safely access boxes of clearly labelled resources from low storage units. Staff share collection procedures with parents, which supports the children's safety.

Children learn to be safe as they use tools with supervision, such as scissors or metal trowels. They practise the fire drill, and evaluations show they evacuate the building quickly and staff identify areas for improvement. Out of school club children know the clear boundaries for their activities, and ask permission before leaving their group. Preschool and nursery children participate in planned safety topics. They practise crossing quiet roads on site safely and bring in their cycle helmets to share at group time. Children have acceptable challenges. Babies have safe space to roll, crawl and toddle in and wheeled toys to push along. Older children use larger apparatus such as gym equipment in the school hall or climbing apparatus in the infant playground. This helps them learn to assess and control risk.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive happy and keen to attend the provision. They are made welcome by the friendly staff who greet them by name. Children enjoy a stimulating range of activities in all the provisions, and have access to a good range of equipment. They develop friendships with each other, and have good relationships with staff.

Children attending out of school clubs enjoy a good variety of activities. They learn to weave, sew and participate in sports activities. Breakfast club children form small groups to play board games, or do colouring and craft activities.

Babies are affirmed and valued by staff that are caring and attentive. They paint and play with water, and enjoy interacting with staff who provide plenty of cuddles and attention. They develop independence as staff encourage them to feed themselves, and toddlers freely access their resources as they choose their activities. Staff plan and assess toddlers and babies using newly developed planning and achievement records that reflect the Birth to three matters framework. This helps support the children's development.

Nursery Education

Teaching and Learning is good. Staff plan an exciting range of activities that children enjoy participating in. Most staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum, with support given to those with less secure knowledge. Planning covers all areas of the curriculum, and provides good opportunities for the children's development.

Staff effectively assess the preschool children's progress against the early learning goals' stepping stones. They effectively observe and monitor children's progress, and use these records to develop planning. This system has been newly introduced to the nursery. Observation rotas are not yet working effectively, and achievement records are in an early stage of completion.

This means nursery staff do not have secure knowledge of the children's next steps in learning to inform planning.

Preschool staff differentiate planning to ensure older or more able children have sufficient challenge. Staff plan a good balance of child and adult initiated activities. They interact with children during their activities, often helping them to extend and develop their thinking and communication skills. Children concentrate and persist at their tasks well, such as when cutting round shapes, or building a complicated railway layout. They independently initiate their own play and learning as they choose resources from low storage units. Preschool children move freely between indoors and the well-resourced outdoor area. This provides good opportunities for them to extend their play and learning.

Children develop awareness of number, shape and calculation during activities. They separate objects into groups, recognise shapes on the playground as they water-paint over them, and sing number songs. Children use books to promote role play, art and craft activities, and enjoy listening to stories in large groups and individually. Children sing songs together, and are confident enough to take turns to sing in front of their group. They experiment with sounds as they play instruments which staff have strung along the fence or during planned music activities. They use their imagination and communication skills as they organise their role play. Children reflect home experiences as they dress up for a wedding or look after their new baby. However, children still lack sufficient opportunities to freely access art and craft materials to develop their own ideas.

Children have opportunities to mark make. Some are beginning to use emergent writing and recognise their own names, and staff model writing for a purpose as they annotate children's pictures. However, staff do not sufficiently plan opportunities for children to write for a purpose during play activities to further develop their skills. Children with English as an additional language receive good support, such as through the use of visual aids. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities receive support through staff identifying any emerging needs quickly. They liaise closely with parents and other professionals to support the provision of suitable activities. Managers also liaise closely with the Early Years and Head Teacher to ensure appropriate support is available for the children when they transfer into the school.

Children develop awareness of communication technology. They adeptly use the computer mouse, changing programmes independently. They explore nature as they go on a bug hunt, closely examining insects in magnifying pots. They explore and show curiosity as they plant seeds and watch them grow, mix sand and water, handle ice and watch it melt. Children learn about diversity as they make Chinese dragons, taste food from around the world, and participate in topics such as Our World, when they look at other climates, buildings and people.

Children develop dexterity as they use tools such as scissors to cut round shapes, trowels to fill pots with sand, or presses to squeeze dough through. They develop new skills as they enjoy planned gym sessions in the school hall. They move in different ways as they enthusiastically join in action rhymes. Children develop awareness of space as they pedal and push wheeled toys in their outdoor play area, carefully avoiding obstacles.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is inadequate.

Parents find the staff friendly and approachable. In most provisions parents receive informative brochures and newsletters, and have access to policies and procedures. However, out of school

club policies and procedures are incomplete, and parents receive little written information about the provision. There is no complaints policy to share with parents. This is in breach of regulations. In other provisions they see colourful displays of children's work and planning for future activities. Parents share their children's records, and there is a good exchange of information at handover. This means they are well informed about most provisions. Staff seek information about new children's development and home routines. This helps staff settle children in effectively. All provisions seek feedback from parents and children, and act on any suggestions made. Children now have a quiet corner allocated during the after school club where they can do their homework, as requested.

Partnership with parents and carers of children receiving nursery education is good. Parents receive informative brochures and newsletters. They learn about the Foundation Stage curriculum through open days, displays of photographs showing how children's activities support the areas of learning and written information. They attend termly meetings with key workers to discuss their children's progress and achievement records, and preschool parents discuss children's future learning. Parents continue children's learning at home through their awareness of the activities children participate in and their development. Children bring resources from home to support topics and parents visit to share their knowledge and experiences. Some visit to talk about Germany, their job as a policeman, or to teach new skills such as knitting. This supports the children's learning.

Children show a sense of belonging as staff welcome them individually by name on arrival. They settle well and are familiar with the established routines. Children confidently ask staff to meet their needs, and staff show care and concern for their wellbeing. The breakfast club has a feeling of community as some parents and older siblings accompany the school children for breakfast.

Children learn to recognise and value differences in society through the provision of resources and planned topics, some of which reflect their home backgrounds. For instance, children wear their national dress to show others during the topic Around the World. In the role play area dressing up clothes, woks and Chinese bowls reflect diversity. Parents, the fire brigade and police officer visit to talk about their jobs. This raises the child's awareness of their community.

Children receive good support for their transition into school. Staff liaise with early years teachers prior to children leaving, and teachers visit them. Children use the infant playground. Older nursery children have lunch in the dining hall. Preschool children visit the library and carry out tasks around the school, and recently older children sang a song during assembly to the school children. This helps familiarise children with the school, and supports their ability to settle when they transfer.

Children who have English as an additional language receive appropriate support. Staff seek information from parents about children's language capabilities. Staff identify emerging learning difficulties and disabilities, and liaise closely with parents and therapists. They seek advice from the school special needs co-ordinator and access specialised resources, such as large peg puzzles. This supports the children's development well.

Children behave well. Young babies benefit from their home routines being maintained, which helps them cope well with their day. Young children show care and concern as they help each other with tasks, such as taking a friend to wash her hands. Staff are consistent in their management of the children, and effectively use praise to encourage children to behave appropriately. Children know the difference between right and wrong, and confidently remind

a child to share or to treat equipment carefully. Staff help children organise turn-taking by using a timer to good effect. Out of school care children help develop the rules for behaviour, and remind each other of them occasionally. This helps children develop awareness of appropriate behaviour. Children have quiet reflective moments when they lie down and listen to music and join in with prayers each day. Children's spiritual moral social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The out of school provision has no awareness of the National Standards. This means that suitable policies and procedures are not in place to ensure children's safety and welfare. Not all out of school care staff have undergone appropriate vetting procedures, and minimum training requirements are not met. There is no written procedure to follow if a child is lost. Records do not provide sufficient detail to show who is attending or their times of attendance, and records are not kept for the required length of time. There is no complaints procedure to share with parents reflecting the latest National Standard requirements. The child protection procedure does not include allegations made against staff. These are breaches of regulations.

The setting does not meet the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

The nursery and preschool have rigorous and effective recruitment procedures in place which protect the children's safety and welfare. Documentation, policies and procedures in the preschool and nursery are effectively implemented and well maintained. Records are shared with parents appropriately. Staff organise their provision well. They plan activities and provide suitable resources to support the children's care and learning. They deploy staff effectively to ensure children receive good support during their activities.

Leadership and management is good. Nursery and preschool managers monitor and evaluate their settings. The introduction of new strategies, such as methods to observe and record children's progress, are well established in the preschool. However, in the nursery they require more careful evaluation to ensure they are effective. Managers encourage staff to develop professionally through attending additional training. The introduction of peer-on-peer observations in preschool helps staff identify strengths and weaknesses. Managers provide staff with good opportunities to work together and develop strong teams. They attend planning meetings and preschool staff have time allocated to meet and exchange information, such as between morning and afternoon sessions. Staff observe children on a rota system, and all staff act as key worker for a small group of children. Staff maintain children's achievement records, and managers allocate time for them to share these records with parents each term.

Managers constantly evaluate the provision of nursery education. They develop action plans to support the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, the common assessment framework and the index for inclusion. The head teacher and managers maintain excellent links through daily informal exchanges of information and their attendance at management and governors meetings. Managers and teaching staff work together to ensure children transfer into school as easily as possible through frequent visits and exchange of information. All staff have regular appraisals, with the head teacher and governors appraising the managers. This supports the continual development of staff and the provision.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last Children Act inspection recommended that the preschool should increase the use of the computer, opportunities for free writing, and update documentation. Children now use the computer daily and confidently change the programme and manage the mouse. They use emergent writing as they access clip-boards and notepads. This improves opportunities for children to write freely and develop computer skills. Policies in the preschool have been up-dated to reflect current legislation. This protects the children's welfare.

The last Nursery Education inspection recommended that staff increase their knowledge of the Foundation Stage, improve planning and assessment records, and promote children's imagination through independent access to resources during craft activities. All staff have now received in-house training for the Foundation Stage. Planning includes how to extend activities and new systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning help staff develop more effective practise. Children access a trolley of various craft materials during planned activities which increases their opportunities for developing creativity. Preschool parents share children's achievement records during termly meetings, and discuss children's next steps in learning. This improves opportunities for children's learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- develop an action plan that sets out how staff training and qualification requirements will be met
- improve knowledge and understanding of the requirements set out in regulations
- ensure that the child protection procedure includes the procedure to follow in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer
- ensure that all records relating to day care activities are readily accessible and available for inspection at all times

- develop a procedure to be followed in the event of a parent failing to collect a child or of a child being lost
- make available to parents a written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint
- maintain a system for registering children and staff attendance on a daily basis, showing hours of attendance and retain for the minimum period set out in regulations

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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):

- evaluate the system for observing and recording nursery children's progress to support the identification of their next steps in learning
- provide frequent opportunities for children to freely initiate art and craft activities to develop their imagination and creativity
- develop children's use of writing for a purpose during free play activities.

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