

St Mary's Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109512
Inspection date	05 July 2007
Inspector	Fran Fielder
Setting Address	Chapel Green, Queen's Road, Crowborough, East Sussex, TN6 2LB
Telephone number	01892 611721
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Registered person	St Mary's Nursery School
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 satisfactory. 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 Mary's Nursery School operates in a mobile classroom on the school premises which are located at Chapel Green. The children have use of the school hall, playground and fields. It is a well established playgroup which opens Monday to Friday from 9.00 until 15.30 during term time.

The group is registered to care for 20 children at any one time and currently have 45 children on roll. There are 38 children who receive funding for nursery education. The group supports children with learning difficulties and makes provision for those who speak English as an additional language. There are facilities for children with disabilities.

There are nine members of staff who work with the children. Of these, five hold a relevant qualification. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a clean environment where they learn to follow good hygiene procedures. Staff encourage and remind children to wash hands after visiting the lavatory, before eating and after messy play. Throughout the day, staff clean as needed to ensure all areas are suitable. Staff follow appropriate procedures when children are sick and always act in the child's best interest. There is confusion over what to record in the accident book. Parents do not always sign to acknowledge accidents. This does not ensure continuity of care.

Mealtimes are social occasions and children enjoy sitting and eating together. Children learn how to look after their teeth and about healthy foods through planned activities and discussion. Parents supply packed lunches and these are stored appropriately to prevent spoiling. Staff offer fruit at snack time such as banana and orange but some children prefer biscuits.

Children have many opportunities for physical play that contributes towards their good health. They play in the school grounds where they practise climbing and balancing skills. They throw and catch balls and beanbags. These activities help develop good hand and eye co-ordination. Regular dancing and stretching ensures children have plenty of exercise to keep them healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a safe environment where they can move around easily. Daily checklists inside and out minimise hazards and ensure the safety of the children. The premises are secure and children cannot leave without an authorised adult. Staff and children practise fire drills regularly. This means they understand how to evacuate the premises quickly and safely. The outings procedure includes high adult to child ratios and ensures children's safety.

The room is welcoming for children with neat displays of their work. The well laid out environment allows children to rest or play in groups. Children use a range of toys and resources that are safe and suitable for the age of children attending. Resources are easy to access and encourage independent choice.

The child protection policy shows that staff are not expected to act independently if they have concerns. However, recent and ongoing training safeguards children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children arrive happily and quickly become involved in activities laid out by staff. Children play in a friendly environment where staff are caring and kind. Warm relationships and good interaction ensure children feel safe within the setting. Staff are responsive and make good eye contact with children. This makes children feel valued and promotes their self-esteem.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff plan a range of worthwhile activities that cover all areas of learning. The planning however, does not clearly show what the children will learn or how. Staff rely too heavily on their knowledge of the children so cannot guarantee

that learning needs are met. The planning does not include differentiation to ensure all children are challenged according to their needs.

Children are confident and put up their hands if they have something to say. Children are independent and make choices about the activities. Some children concentrate well. When staff show a red or green circle children respond by stopping or starting to play their musical instruments.

During circle time, children sing the alphabet together and recite numbers up to 20. At snack time children compare the number of cups with the number of children. During role-play children buy and sell food in the garage shop. When listening to stories staff ask questions and children make comments about the animals in the story. There are many labels and words around the room helping children understand that print carries meaning.

Children play with corn flour, ice and soap flakes and guess what is inside the 'feely' bags. Children learn the days of the week and discussion helps children understand about past and present. They have regular access to a computer and learn about different cultures.

Children enjoy painting and sponge printing when making their own toolbox. They have easy access to a range of materials to create their own collages. They love to play with musical instruments and learn to play loudly and softly. They sing songs such as 'Twinkle, Twinkle' and 'The Grand Old Duke of York' and can tap out the beat on percussion instruments.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff treat children with respect and gather relevant information regarding children's needs. An initial questionnaire ensures staff have information about individual likes, dislikes and ability. Children enjoy a range of activities that help them understand different ways of life. They look at different homes across the world and celebrate festivals such as Christmas, Divali and Chinese New Year. There are sufficient resources that reflect diversity including disability. There are good procedures to support children with learning difficulties. Staff liaise outside agencies and provide one to one support where needed.

Children behave well and staff are consistent in approach ensuring only positive strategies are used. Staff remind children at circle time of the need to be kind and play nicely together. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness is fostered appropriately.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. There is a parents' notice board that displays information about topics. Policies and procedures are not easily available to parents so they do not have a full understanding of how the setting operates. Staff hold an open day for new parents but also invite existing parents. Parents see a written report about their children which is then passed to the child's school before entry. There are no formal meetings to share children's progress. There are some opportunities for parents to become involved in their children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Staff show a clear understanding of their role. They work with the children giving good support to ensure children feel safe and secure within the setting. Recruitment procedures are

appropriate and ensure all adults working with children are suitable to do so. Most documentation is in place however, the policies and procedures do not reflect practice. Many are out of date and contain incorrect information. This means staff and parents do not have sufficient information about the way in which the nursery operates.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The supervisor works well to ensure the smooth running of the provision. Her communication skills are good and she keeps staff informed through regular meetings. Annual appraisals assess staff's ongoing suitability and identify their training needs. Staff attend training whenever possible. There is no clear way of evaluating and monitoring the provision for nursery education. The new committee have a greater involvement in the running of the nursery and are committed to improving the service. The provision meets the range of needs of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the nursery were asked to minimise the times when children were sitting doing nothing and to organise the resources to make them more readily available to children. They were also asked to ensure the child protection statement included procedures to follow if an allegation was made against staff.

Children are well occupied at all times and when they are getting ready to go out to play they sing songs or play 'Simon Says' while waiting for others. Most resources are in low level cupboards making it easy for children to self select. The procedures are clear if there is an allegation of abuse made against a member of staff. This safeguards children's welfare.

At the last education inspection, the nursery were asked to plan and provide opportunities for children to develop an understanding of calculation through every day practical activities. They were also asked to ensure the planning takes account of individual development and that there are extension activities to ensure all children are challenged.

During snack time, children count the number of cups and children. They also count the number of girls and boys and then count how many altogether. This helps children develop an understanding of early calculation.

Staff know the children well and rely on this to provide extension work for older or more able children. The planning does not include any differentiation and does not show how all children are challenged. This does not ensure all children achieve their full potential.

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 parents sign to acknowledge all accidents occurring on the premises
- ensure staff understand their responsibility regarding safeguarding children
- review and update all policies and procedures so they are in line with current requirements and share these with parents

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):

- use regular observations to identify children's achievements and their next steps for learning
- develop a manageable system of planning that clearly shows what children will learn and includes differentiation to ensure all children's learning needs are met
- introduce a rigorous system to monitor and evaluate the provision for nursery education

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