

St Marys Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	120236
Inspection date	09 January 2008
Inspector	Carol Patricia Willett
Setting Address	Park Road, Camberley, Surrey, GU15 2SR
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Registered person	The Trustees of St Marys Nursery
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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St Mary's Nursery was established in 1994. The nursery is run by a voluntary committee. It is based within a modern church which is located close to the towns of Frimley and Camberley. The group use a large hall with kitchen and toilets facilities. They have direct access to an enclosed outside play area. The nursery and the church have a close working relationship. The children come from the local community of Camberley.

The nursery is open Monday to Thursday from 09.15 to 13.00 and Friday from 09.15 to 12.00 during term times only. The nursery is registered to provide sessional day care for 26 children aged two to five years, though children generally do not attend until they are two years six months. Currently 45 children attend throughout the week, of these 32 are in receipt of the nursery grant funding. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

Six members of staff work with the children at the nursery, of which half hold childcare qualifications to National Vocational Qualification [NVQ] level 3 and one holds a level 2. Two of the staff are currently completing childcare foundation degrees and the supervisor is

completing a level 4 NVQ qualification. Most staff hold current first aid certificates. There are experienced bank staff available to cover staff absences. The nursery receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's stay healthy because staff who have a good understanding of health, hygiene and nutrition. Staff enable children to enjoy a good range of healthy snacks during the café style snack routine where the children can choose when they want to eat and drink. The staff talk to the children about healthy eating as they involve them in the preparation of the fruit and vegetables, which include grapes, carrots sticks, apples and bananas. The children help to cut up the banana into small pieces using appropriate safe tools. Snack times are very social occasions where staff develop children's independence skills as they select their own named placemat, bowl and cup. They choose the fruit they like and pour their own drinks from jugs of milk or water. Staff ensure children have free access to water throughout the session so they can drink plenty to ensure good health. Children's dietary needs are met because the staff have a good knowledge of individual needs as they seek relevant information from parents prior to the children starting at the nursery.

Children are protected from cross infection as the premises and facilities are clean and suitable for use and staff follow good hygiene practices. For example, when preparing food the tables are wiped with antibacterial spray before and after snacks and staff wear aprons. Staff ensure children use wipes for their hands before preparing snacks. Staff support children well so they are becoming independent in their self-care skills. Children routinely learn about personal hygiene and keeping healthy as they are encouraged to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet and painting and gluing activities. The children get tissues for their noses and put on aprons for painting activities and coats on for outside play. Well documented procedures are followed if children become ill. Most staff hold current first aid certificates so they can respond appropriately in the event of an accident and there is a program in place to ensure they are updated. There is a good range of documentation in place to enable staff to be aware of children's individual needs and parents' wishes. For example, in the event of an emergency, staff obtain written consent to seek emergency treatment or aid. Parents sign written records if their child has an accident whilst at the nursery.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities which contribute to their good health and which help them develop their physical skills. Children enjoy playing outside in the fresh air daily using the range of outdoor activities and resources planned by the staff. Children have further opportunities to develop their physical skills as staff plan for their development indoors using balance beams, parachutes games and music and movement sessions as the children match actions to words and music. Staff provide a wide range of tools and resources to enable children to develop manipulative skills such as construction toys, jigsaws and paint brushes scissors and playdough cutters and rollers, for example. Staff support children effectively and closely supervise them at all times, which develops children's confidence in using all the equipment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play and learn in a warm, safe environment where the spacious room is organised effectively by the staff to provide a welcoming environment and supports the children's development. The children have use of the large church hall which has lots of natural light and is decorated with children's individual work and group collages. This helps them develop their sense of belonging and self esteem. Staff set up the room prior to children's arrival and they and their parents are greeted as they enter, with children selecting their name labels for registration. The children stay safe as they use good quality furniture and equipment which is appropriate to their age and stage of development. Children develop independence skills as there is safe and easy access to a broad range of good quality well-maintained toys which are set up by staff on a planned daily basis. Children are able to self select and change some resources as staff provide low shelving units with labelled resources which develops children's independence and choice.

Children are developing good safety awareness as they learn rules for their own safety, for example not running indoors and being kind to others. They confidently ask for help, for example, when they need the sticky tape or the toilet, going to all staff as they know their needs will be met. Children's safety throughout the environment, both indoors and outside, is promoted by good safety procedures and practices and close supervision, for example, children are safely escorted to the toilets and the hall doors are kept locked. Regular risk assessments and daily checks are completed by staff to ensure the premises are safe. The staff take positive measures to ensure all hazards are removed and resources are safe for use, for example, heater grills are fitted with guards and a safety gate is in place in the toilet. The supervisor develops action plans to improve the provision, such as through the provision of a rubber safety surface in the outdoor play area.

Children stay safe in the nursery as they are cared for by staff who have been suitably vetted. Staff supervise children closely at all times and they have a good understanding of the policies and procedures in place to protect children, including safeguarding children. The door is kept locked and parents and visitors have access using a bell. Staff ensure there are good security systems in place so children are safe as they arrive and are collected. The children and staff practise regular fire drills to develop their confidence and awareness in an emergency.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are generally confident and happy and have fun in the nursery. They develop well and have their individual needs met as staff are kind, caring and attentive showing good interests in all the children say and do. Staff have a good knowledge of the children and their parents and they are warmly greeted each session as they find their names to self register as they arrive. Parents are able to discuss issues with the staff both at the beginning and end of the session. Children happily talk to staff about their experiences and their family life, such as when they have new babies and what happened in the car on the way to grandma's house. This enables children to be confident and secure and they settle quickly into the group. Children play busily throughout the session as they independently access the range of suitable age appropriate resource. Staff plan and provide an interesting range of activities and resources linked to the Foundation Stage curriculum to enable the children to make good progress in all areas of development. Staff listen well to the children and are responsive to them when they ask questions or for help. They discuss the children's interests at whole group times and at the

snack table for instance, which encourages and develops children's communication skills. Staff create an accessible learning environment so children have fun, play well and make good progress in their development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff develop good relationships with the children which ensures they are happy and secure in the nursery environment. The children busily occupy themselves seeking support from the staff as needed. They eagerly join in with activities, such as parachute games and sorting the rice krispies and cornflake cereals. They suggest to staff how they want to extend and develop the activity, such as getting the cooker from the home corner and having spoons and bowls. They show good concentration and perseverance with activities as they complete jigsaws and match and sort shapes. Children's social skills develop well as they form good relationships with staff and the other children. They show consideration and help one another to complete the sorting task, for example. Behaviour is good. Children are learning to be polite and staff develop their awareness of the 'golden rules' through daily routines so they become aware of their boundaries within the nursery. Children are encouraged to be independent as they attend to personal hygiene and put on their coats as they choose to play outside. They freely choose when to have their snack, selecting what they want and pouring their own drinks as staff maximise the use of this time. Children develop their communication skills as they chat freely to others. They listen with enjoyment to stories and join in well. Children have good opportunities for mark making and to practise emergent writing as they can freely access painting and the drawing table. Staff provide 'gloop' and shaving foam activities to further enhance these skills.

Children recognise and name colours and shapes through planned activities such as when children have to find the shape called out by the chosen leader. They spontaneously name shapes for example, one child points out that her slice of banana looks like a circle as she helps prepare the snack cutting up the bananas. Children are developing counting skills and gain confidence in using numbers and patterns as they take part in number songs and action rhymes and use mathematical resources such as peg boards for sorting and matching shapes. They confidently count the number of shapes in the line. Staff use opportunities within the daily routine and events that arise during the course of the session to reinforce children's mathematical awareness and develop their problem solving skills. For example, the children count how many cups are needed to fill a container in the water tray and are encouraged to guess and then check. Children confidently recall past events, such as what happened at the weekend, and learn about the wider world through visitors to the nursery and celebrating festivals such as Diwali. All children enjoy physical activity and have good opportunities to reinforce and develop skills using a range of equipment. They run around outside with good spatial awareness, and have fun playing group games, such as when using the parachute and finding the named shape. They confidently walk across the balance beam and change the layout to make it more interesting. Children's fine motor skills are also developing well as they competently use a range of tools which require hand-eye coordination, such as stencils, glue spreaders, paint brushes and scissors. They also use an interesting range of resources to put paint on paper which includes wide brushes, rollers and sponges to create differing effects. Staff plan a good range of craft activities to develop children's creative skills. However, some pre-prepared adult led creative activities such as the cut out people, do not always sufficiently challenge all children. Staff do not always plan and prepare the activity effectively for more able children. Children do not have free access to a wide range of creative media, materials, tools and joining materials to freely create using their imagination and develop props for their

role play. Children enjoy imaginative play with others in the home corner and use a good range of resources such as dressing up clothes, dolls and other props.

Children make good progress towards the early learning goals because most of the staff have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Staff have a good understanding of how children learn effectively and use a good balance of self-chosen play and adult led activities to extend their learning. Daily plans and written information put on activity tables show learning intentions, which enable staff to be clear about what children are expected to achieve. Weekly and long-term plans clearly show the links to the aspects of each area of learning, ensuring these are included sufficiently. Staff undertake observations of children's achievements. These are formally recorded and in most cases, provide information of how children are progressing through the stepping stones. However, not all staff have a clear understanding of the links between observations and how they are used to plan for children's next steps in learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met as staff have a good knowledge of the children and their family backgrounds. The staff seek a useful range of information prior to children starting at the nursery through the completion of 'about me' books. Staff are warm, kind and caring and treat children with concern and respect. They give children lots of praise and encouragement and display their artwork, both individual pieces and group collages around the nursery, which helps build children's self-esteem and an awareness that their efforts are valued. Children develop a sense of belonging as staff greet children warmly and develop trusting relationships with the children and their parents as they share informal information on a daily basis. All children can freely access all the activities and staff give support to their level of ability. For example, staff are close by to hold children's hands on the balancing apparatus as needed or help them wipe their noses. Staff are able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities as they develop close links with their parents and outside agencies to ensure their needs are fully met. They take additional training and seek advice and support from the area special needs coordinator.

Children generally behave well as staff have a positive attitude and give children lots of attention and support. They talk to the children with care and use affectionate terms so children feel valued and develop good self esteem. They use distraction well and give children clear explanations and lots of praise to encourage positive behaviour. For example, children are given stickers and staff tell parents as they collect the children to celebrate their achievements that they have sat nicely or been kind to a friend. Children are beginning to learn about the needs of others as they share and take turns and negotiate over the use of resources for instance as they build the railway track. They help pack away when they hear the music for packing up time. Staff act as good role models using please and thank-you when talking to the children and encouraging them to help with tidying up. This good use of praise and encouragement boosts children's confidence and self-esteem and contributes to a positive self-image. Children learn about the wider world and find out about the local community and other cultures as they access resources that reflect different aspects of diversity and positive images. Visitors into the group include the vicar, police officers and fire-fighters which enhance children's understanding of adult roles within the community. The nursery has close links with the church and the children say a simple prayer before they leave. The setting fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Partnerships with parents are good. Staff have good relationships with the parents, who speak highly about the group. They are positive about the recent changes under the new chair and supervisor valuing the friendly manner of the staff, the range of activities and open door policy to discuss their child's needs. A parent representative sits on the committee. Parents support children's learning as they have access to the policies and planning for nursery education which are displayed on the notice board. They have good opportunities to comment on the nursery provision through the suggestions box. Parents are well informed about the curriculum and activities their children are involved in each week through the welcome pack, information displayed on the notice board and regular newsletters. Parents have regular opportunities to meet with staff every term to discuss their child's progress and achievements. The staff ensure there is an open door policy where parents have access to their child's individual file, which they discuss with their child's key worker. Parents are encouraged to send in items for show and tell sessions. These measures enable parents to feel involved and to share in their children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children make progress and are happy in the nursery as they relate well to caring, interested staff. Staff generally organise the room and resources well to allow the children space to play and explore in comfort. Suitable policies and procedures are in place to promote the care, welfare and education of the children and manage all aspects of the provision. For example, staff are vetted and there are suitable procedures in place to ensure their continuing suitability through appraisal systems and regular meetings. There is a good range of suitable documentation in place which staff complete appropriately to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded. However, the documentation to record parental complaints does not take account of revisions to the National Standards. The supervisor has regular links with the local authority advisor working together to reflect on the practice and identify strengths and areas for improvements.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. The supervisor and committee chair have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and work effectively together to plan and provide good opportunities for children's care and education. Staff plan and provide an interesting range of activities to enable children to make good progress. They are able to make suggestions for improvement through the staff suggestion box. Staff work effectively as a team to ensure children develop well through regular staff meetings and daily discussions. Staff ensure ratios are met. They organise the space and resources well to ensure all children's developmental needs are met and they make good progress to the early learning goals though some aspects of nursery education do not effectively meet the needs of the children. Children benefit as staff are highly committed to improving all aspects of the provision and updating their knowledge and skills with three members of the staff completing childcare qualifications to higher levels including degrees. Children's progress is well monitored as the supervisor regularly checks the children's records to ensure they are completed. All legally required documentation, which contributes to children's health, safety and wellbeing is in place and confidentially maintained. Overall, the nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the nursery was required to improve and update documentation including the child protection policy and details in the complaints policy. Good progress has been made and the child protection now contains a suitable procedure if an allegation is made against

staff. The complaints policy includes contact details and of the role of Ofsted. These measures ensure children's welfare is safeguarded.

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:

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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):

- improve documentation to record complaints that complies with current guidance in the revised criteria to the National Standards for childminding and day-care

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):

- review the use of activity planning sheets to ensure they are used effectively to prepare activities for children learning at different rates
- improve the knowledge and understanding of all staff of the importance of the links between observations and planning for children's progress and development
- extend the provision of the craft area and materials so children have independent access to a wide range of materials, tools and joining materials in order to initiate their own creativity and imagination.

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