

St Michael`s In Greenfield Pre-School Group

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	136082
Inspection date	13 February 2008
Inspector	Derelyn Burns
Setting Address	Greenfield Centre, Park Avenue, Winterbourne, South Glos, BS36 1NJ
Telephone number	01454 777604
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Registered person	St Michael's In Greenfield Pre-School Group
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 Michael's Pre-School first opened in the 1960s and moved to the present premises in 1996. It operates from a large, purpose-built playroom in the Greenfield Centre. The pre-school is registered to care for 26 children aged from two years to school age and accepts children from two years six months.

The pre-school is open for a variety of sessions each weekday. Morning sessions run from 09.00 until 11.30. Wednesday morning sessions begin half an hour later and are for under threes only. Afternoon sessions run from 12.30 until 15.00, except for Thursday afternoons. Tuesday afternoon sessions are for rising fives only.

There are currently 55 children on roll, of these, 40 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The pre-school currently support a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The pre-school is managed by a voluntary committee of parents. There are six members of staff working directly with the children, on a part time basis. Of the six staff, five hold appropriate early years qualifications, while one member of staff is working towards a qualification. The

pre-school also employs an administrator. Staff are supported by a regular rota of parent helpers. The group is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are aware of their own needs. They regularly and confidently access water whenever they are thirsty, from the mini water dispenser positioned at child height in the playroom. For example, two boys run into the room from outside panting, they run straight to water dispenser and fill their glasses. They drink until their thirst is quenched. Children learn good hygiene procedures; they know to put their used drinking cups into the bowl next to the dispenser.

Children learn about the importance of good personal hygiene. Their understanding is effectively supported and reinforced by the positive messages displayed around their environment. In the bathroom area, photographs of a child flushing the toilet and washing hands, with simple written instructions, gently but effectively remind children of this good practice. Children's independence in maintaining their personal hygiene is promoted well. For example, photographs of a child wiping their nose, then putting the tissue in the bin, are positioned on the wall next to a box of tissues along with a mirror at child height. Children use the tissues to blow or wipe their noses, while watching themselves in the mirror until their nose is clean. They then dispose of the tissue hygienically in the bin provided.

Children learn about healthy eating and enjoy eating fresh fruit at snack time. Children enjoy making and drinking their own fruit juice made in the 'Juicer' with leftover fruit. Children grow their own vegetables, such as leeks and potatoes, which they make into soup and enjoy eating.

Children are very active. Weather permitting, they enjoy the free flow play between the indoor and outdoor environments. Children's climbing and balancing skills develop well, through the wide range of resources and activities available. Children's large physical skills continue to develop, even when they are unable to play outside. Children learn to move with control and co-ordination, as they enjoy dancing to music, while banging 'tapping sticks'. They are aware of each other as they move and wave the sticks around safely.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in an inviting and stimulating environment. It is very well organised by staff to effectively promote and encourage children's independence. Children easily access a wide range of well maintained resources and equipment. Children's learning and development is effectively promoted by the good organisation of the room and the question cards displayed in each area. Staff use these question cards to further extend and challenge children's learning while playing.

Children learn about keeping themselves safe and are reminded of dangers by staff, such as, not to put pens tops in their mouths and the dangers of flicking sand. Children begin to have an awareness of the importance of safety while outside the setting. Visits from people who help keep them safe within their community help promote this awareness. For example, a visit from the local Lollypop Lady was used to develop children's awareness of road safety, using role play. A 'Pelican Crossing' was made by children and staff and the Lollypop Lady helped children cross safely.

Children are safe. Regular fire drills help children understand the importance of listening carefully to instructions, ensuring they are safe in the event of an emergency. Staff conduct daily risk assessments, which ensure children play in an environment free from hazards.

Children's welfare is safeguarded. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of child protection. They are vigilant and fully aware of their responsibilities in ensuring children are safe from harm. There is a comprehensive policy in place, although this does not refer to the Local Safeguarding Children Boards procedures, (LSCB).

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children are making good progress and their needs are effectively met.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Staff take into account children's starting points, observe what they are doing, and effectively support them to progress in their next stage of development. Children respond well and are keen to learn. The quality of resources and activities offered throughout the session are highly effective in promoting and challenging children's learning. Children are motivated and feel a sense of pride and achievement, supported by appropriate responses from staff.

Children make excellent progress in communication language and literacy and mathematical development. For example, a child confidently writes out their first name in full on the ground using chalk, 'look that's my name', the child confidently tells those around. Children represent numbers using their fingers and other objects. Children count confidently up to 10 and beyond. A child writes numbers on the floor, numbers, 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, are written without any help, numbers, 4, 5, 8 are written with guidance from an adult. The child says confidently 'a number 1 and 0 makes a number 10', then proceeds to mark this on the floor.

Children interact confidently with adults and peers, they take turns in conversation, sharing equipment and listening to each other. For example, children work together during a role play train ride, one child gives out tickets, another pencils and paper. Children confidently make marks on the paper and use these in their play as 'tickets'. Children use their own experiences and chat about their 'journey' imitating things they may have heard in their own personal experience, for example, wearing seat belts.

Children work and play in an interesting environment and satisfy their curiosity through first-hand experiences, for example, tending to vegetables grown in the garden. Children are beginning to use questions to find out why things happen, they gather information about how things work and suggest answers. For example, during a water activity a child shouts excitedly, 'look look at this' then pours water into the top end of a pipe, 'Quick now look at bottom and see the water come out', as the child's play continues, the questions start to focus on why and how the pipes and water are working, 'right, lets see what happens when..'. The child experiments with lots of different ways of pouring, and investigates what happens when different openings in the pipe are used.

Staff provide a range of opportunities to allow children to use their creative skills imaginatively, however, the introduction of some art and craft activities limit children's creativity and

imagination. For example, children are shown an end product made by a member of staff, although staff explain to children that they can use their own ideas, their imagination is hindered as they try and achieve an end product similar to the adult version.

Staff make regular observations of children's play and use these to identify where children are in their learning. Staff then use the play plans to identify and plan for children's next steps in their progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Staff know the children very well. Their use of individualised play plans provide effective support and ensure children make good progress along the stepping stones. However, this good practice and effective support in promoting children's progress and achievements are not reflected in the overall curriculum planning. The overall planning covers all six areas of learning, but give no reflection of what is actually happening in practice. For example, activities show no aim or expectation of children's learning or how they link to the stepping stones.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are involved in discussions about their own lives and cultures. They begin to learn about beliefs and cultures outside their immediate experience, through the satisfactory range of resources. Children gain an awareness of their community, through visitors from local services, such as, Fire Officers and the Police.

Children feel valued and included. They are confident in their play and are happy to help one another, for example, a child happily holds a piece of plastic pipe for another when asked during a water activity outside. Children behave well. They share resources and negotiate whose turn it is next, sometimes with the aid of appropriate adult intervention. They have a good awareness of expected codes of behaviour, for example, a child confidently tells an adult that the indoor toys must not be taken outside, when asked what toys children were able to use outside, the child quickly responded 'Outside toys of course!'. Children feel secure and supported within the group. They know routines well, such as, taking a book to look at while sitting at a table as they wait for a snack to arrive. Children show respect to one another, a child says 'Excuse me' and politely asks the child to move so they can pass by on a bike. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children flourish as a result of the good partnership between staff and parents. The wealth of information obtained from parents before their child starts contributes to children's positive experiences at the setting.

Parents have access to a wide range of comprehensive policies and procedures. These provide useful information and set out clear aims and expectations for both the setting and parents.

The partnership with parents and carers for nursery education is good. An effective two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise, between staff and parents has a positive effect on the child's development and learning. Information from parents regarding children's starting points is shared with the key worker. Staff use this information to plan appropriate activities for the child's first few sessions. Parents' ongoing involvement in their children's learning is valued and encouraged. This is effectively implemented through the use of individual play plans. These are completed for each child by their key worker and highlight an area that the child will be working towards during that month. These are shared with parents and they are encouraged to record their own comments, for example, progress observed at home or activities their child enjoyed.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The registered person, play leader and staff have a secure understanding and knowledge of the National Standards and regulations, which they implement effectively to promote positive outcomes for children. Staff are deployed effectively and staff's good practice is highly evident in their interactions with children.

The clear operational plan plus a wide range of comprehensive policies and procedures, work in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution.

Leadership and management is good. The staff team work well together in creating an effective, and improving setting, where children are safe, feel good about themselves and make good progress towards the early learning goals.

The team are committed to continuous improvement. They discuss the effectiveness of the nursery education curriculum, what is going well and what needs to improve, through informal but regular discussions at team meetings. Staff share good practice ideas gained through attending courses, visiting other settings or from reading magazines. They discuss if implementation of these will improve their practice and improve outcomes for children. The setting demonstrates that they have high expectations of the service they provide. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last education inspection the setting was asked to ensure that staff are aware of specific areas of development for some children. Staff know children very well. They make observations of children's play to assess their progress along the stepping stones. Children make good progress as staff provide good support and challenge children's learning based on their observations.

At the last care inspection the setting was asked to ensure that the first aid box and its contents comply with Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations. The setting has a fully stocked first aid box that is checked regularly by a designated member of staff. Children receive appropriate care in the event of an accident.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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):

- update the child protection policy to ensure it contains reference to Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures (LSCB)

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):

- improve planning to accurately reflect the good practice and progress on children's learning
- develop ways to further encourage children's self expression and creativity in art work and displays.

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