

St. Mary's Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY262363
Inspection date	21 January 2008
Inspector	Janet, Elizabeth Singleton
Setting Address	St. Mary's College, Shear Brow, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB1 8DX
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Registered person	The Governing Body of St. Mary's College
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 is run by the Governing Body of St Mary's College and operates from within the grounds of St Mary's College. It opened in 2003 and lies on the edge of the Bastwell, Shear Brow and Corporation Park wards of Blackburn. A maximum of 58 children under eight years may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open Monday to Friday, 07.30 to 18.00, for 51 weeks of the year. In addition the nursery provides occasional crèche facilities, as and when required, during evenings or weekends in order to accommodate adult learners. The nursery also provides day care for students and members of the community within Blackburn with Darwen and surrounding areas.

There are currently 105 children on roll, of these, 40 receive funding for early education. The setting supports children who have English as an additional language. Children are cared for in designated areas, for under twos, tweenies and pre-school aged children. A large secure outdoor play area is available that is divided into different areas for the different age groups of children.

The nursery employs a total of 18 staff including the manager. Of these, 15 are qualified in early years and three are working towards a level 2 qualification in early years.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is generally promoted satisfactorily because the staff follow appropriate hygiene practices, for example, washing hands before meals and after playing outside. Children learn about cleanliness as there are daily routines in place for snack and lunch times, including wiping tables and wearing appropriate protective clothing. Children's first aid needs are met by ensuring that the first aid box is fully stocked and all staff are qualified in first aid. However, children are not always encouraged to wipe their own noses and some children have mucus on their faces.

Children are nourished as they are provided with a healthy, varied menu. For lunch they enjoy a home cooked meal of Cumberland pie followed by fruit and ice cream. They make healthy choices for snack as they enjoy fresh apple and try other fruits during healthy eating topics. The setting follows the 'smiling for life' policy.

Children develop their physical skills as they have daily opportunities to play outdoors and delight in riding the wheeled toys and enjoy the experience of practising their large movements, running, stopping and changing direction as they move freely. They use small tools competently as they glue, cut and stick during creative activities. They develop their hand-eye coordination as they make jigsaws, use pens and crayons to draw, and enjoy threading activities to promote the development of their fine movements.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children learn to keep themselves safe because the staff have effective safety procedures and policies in place which minimise the risk of accidental injury to children. All the required safety features are available and the security of the premises is good. The door is locked and entrance into the building is monitored by a camera with access being via a staff member.

Children play safely because the staff minimise risk by checking toys and equipment. They move freely through the well planned environment accessing areas of continuous provision, including mark making, messy play, free painting and role play. The storage of toys and equipment enables children to enhance their own play as they enjoy the wide range of good quality toys, including creative materials, construction and imaginative resources.

Children's welfare is effectively safeguarded and they are protected because staff demonstrate a very good understanding of their role in child protection and have a good understanding of the signs and symptoms of child abuse. The key staff are confident of the action to take should a child protection issue arise because they fully understand all procedures to protect children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy and achieve, making good progress as they make decisions and choices about their play, moving freely through the setting to take part in the very well planned curriculum and the continuous provision of sand, art and craft, and free painting. Staff plan a range of very interesting activities which support children's learning as they take part in singing sessions and story time. They sit with staff and discuss their play, as younger children explore the construction bricks or enjoy a cuddle with the staff. They enjoy the role play as they act out the roles from the hospital and use the resource books about, for example, blood, skin and heart, to talk about the body. The setting makes very good use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework as staff follow the children's choices and build on what the children are already doing. They become independent learners as they move through the setting making decisions and exploring their environment.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress because the staff have a very good understanding of the Foundation Stage. They develop a balanced and interesting curriculum within a free flow environment which gives equal weighting to the six areas of learning. The children's individual learning needs are assessed regularly by their key worker to identify their next steps for learning. Evaluation of all activities takes place to ensure these meet the needs of the children attending. Children are very well supported in their learning because staff sit and talk to them about their play.

Children are confident as they readily enter the setting and find something to occupy themselves with. They are independent as they manage their personal needs, with some children managing their fastenings on their clothing. They are confident speakers as they chatter both to each other and to staff during their play. They ask good questions beginning with who, why and what and listen to the answers given. They choose books and sit and read, handling them correctly as they tell their own story. Children confidently practise their writing skills as they access the mark making area and the varied opportunities, with delight and enthusiasm, to write for a variety of purposes.

Children use their mathematical skills as they count to 10 and understand that objects can be grouped as they count different coloured figures and separate them to count each colour individually. They operate the computer with skill and enthusiasm as they show extremely good control of the mouse. They use their imagination in the role play as they act out hospital scenarios. They access the free painting and create their own sticking pictures in the messy area. They sing and act out dances during the group activity as they confidently move their bodies to complete the actions. Overall, children make good progress towards the early learning goals considering their starting points.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and welcomed into the setting because staff value and respect each family who attends. They are encouraged to engage fully in all purposeful activities because staff ensure all have an equal opportunity through the areas of continuous provision. The children learn to manage their behaviour because staff have consistent boundaries and guidelines which enable children to take responsibility for their own behaviour taking into account the age and

stage of development of the child. Staff talk very calmly and reinforce rules as they give gentle reminders, for example, 'don't run' and 'shall we tidy up the toys?'

Partnership with parents and carers is good. They share good quality information, warmly welcome parents into the nursery and encourage parents to participate in the topics and continue some work at home. Parents can view their child's folders and are welcome to discuss any issues regarding their child at any time. The entrance hall is very welcoming to parents and has very good, informative displays regarding the setting, including all the topics, activities, care and education practices provided for their child.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. The children learn about the community and other cultures as they engage in very good activities which promote their understanding. They enjoy playing together and learn to share as they wait their turn to participate in the workshop. They help each other, for example, one child assists in fastening another child's coat and is really helpful, kind and considerate, before going outside to play. They learn about the world as they take part in and enjoy celebrating festivals from their own cultures and those of others.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children move freely through an effectively organised setting which provides good play opportunities. Policies and procedures are used to promote the welfare, care and education of the children and work well in practice. All the required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and maintained to a very good standard.

The leadership and management is good, with staff being led by a strong management team. Staff work well together and support each other in their roles. Training is promoted for all staff to increase their knowledge and skills, to improve their practice and therefore the care and education of the children. The management team responds to changes in childcare practices and constantly reviews the policies and procedures, including the plans for all age ranges of children, to ensure their needs are being met by well trained and skilled practitioners. The staff monitor their own performance through the appraisals system, through the regular staff meetings and through the evaluation of activities, in order to improve their practice and, therefore, benefit the children.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to update the child protection policy and procedure to be used in the event of an allegation against a member of staff and ensure that it is understood by all staff. The staff have revamped the policy and ensured it meets with the requirement of the National Standards. All staff are fully aware and confident of the action they may need to take should an allegation be made against any member of staff, therefore, children are protected.

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):

- improve the strategies for assisting children in learning about personal hygiene in regard to keeping their own noses clean.

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 the staff's skills in asking open-ended questions to promote children's thinking.

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