

St Michael's Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY336687
Inspection date	06/08/2009
Inspector	Patricia Webb
Setting address	Rear of St Michael's Court, off Crocketts Lane, nr Chamberlain Walk, Smethwick, West Midlands, B66 3BX
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

St Michael's Nursery has been registered under the current private ownership since June 2006. It operates from four base rooms in a single storey building in Smethwick. It is situated in a residential area close to local amenities. The nursery primarily serves children from the local community and surrounding areas. Children are grouped in rooms according to their age range and use all rooms located on the ground. These are easily accessible to all. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6pm throughout the year, with the exception of public holidays.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 42 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 50 children on roll in the early years age range, some of whom, attend on a part-time basis. Older children may attend and this provision is registered by Ofsted on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register.

The setting employs nine members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least level 2. In addition, the setting also employs a business operations manager and a cook. The nursery receives support from the local authority early years advisory team.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate. Whilst the management and staff are working positively with outside agencies from the local authority to bring about some improvement, progress is limited. Staff knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage is not yet sufficiently secure to guarantee effective planning and delivery of stimulating and challenging experiences for all children. Arrangements for ensuring children's welfare and safety is promoted are not robust, marred by their overall enjoyment of their environment.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the following action by the specified date:

- develop staff knowledge and understanding of the effective delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage with particular regard to training and conducting on-going staff appraisals (Suitable people) 06/11/2009
- plan and organise the provision to ensure that every child receives an enjoyable and challenging learning and development experience tailored to meet their 06/11/2009

individual needs (Organisation; also applies to both parts of the Childcare register)

- make systematic observations and assessments of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles in order to identify learning priorities and plan relevant and motivating experiences for each child (Educational programmes) 06/11/2009
- ensure that outdoor and indoor spaces, furniture, equipment and toys are maintained and are clean, safe and suitable for their purpose in order to offer children a safe and stimulating environment (Suitable premises, environment and equipment; also applies to both parts of the Childcare Register) 04/09/2009
- review the processes for risk assessments to ensure that they are fully effective, adhered to by staff and cover anything with which a child may come into contact with (Suitable premises, environment and equipment; also applies to both parts of the Childcare Register). 04/09/2009

To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop the opportunities for free access to outdoor play and enable children to make spontaneous choices about their activities
- develop the systems for evaluating the quality of the provision in order to prioritise areas for improvement and enhance outcomes for children.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff changes since the last inspection have resulted in a new manager being appointed, who is working positively with staff and outside agencies to bring about improvement. Policies and procedures have been reviewed and updated as staff are currently being inducted in new ways of working. However, the progress in certain aspects is limited and hinders how effective the delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage is for improving outcomes for children. Processes for effective planning, observation and assessment are being explored and waiting for further guidance in this has resulted in some assessment not being carried out for individual children for some time. This hinders how staff can effectively plan for next steps or offer support and challenge.

The management is working through the action plan, although formal methods of evaluating the quality of the provision are not yet in place to effectively prioritise key areas for attention. For example, the overall condition of the premises is poor and attention is not always given by staff to following the procedures for cleaning and checking the environment or equipment. Staff appraisals are in the process of being completed but are not yet fully effective in addressing inconsistency in practice with regards to interaction with the children.

Satisfactory systems are in place for working in partnership with parents who offer suitable levels of information to staff in order to meet individual needs. Attractive displays of individual care plans and routines are being developed across all care bases and children in the 'Tumbles' room eagerly seek out the photographs of the members of their families, fostering a sense of belonging. Staff have a sound knowledge of the procedures for safeguarding children and share the responsibility with parents regarding the provision's duty of care to act in the best interests of the child at all times.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The overall condition of the premises is inadequate and mars children's enjoyment of their environment indoors and outside. An unpleasant odour pervades the front entrance although it does not enter the main care base. Staff are endeavouring to locate the source to address this. Routines for cleaning of the premises or checking of equipment and resources are not always followed by staff, thereby, compromising children's welfare and safety. For example, the outdoor area is affected by the recent bad weather and equipment in this area is very dirty and muddy. Staff do not always check this diligently. Discarded toys, dolls and pieces of composite resources are left within children's reach and not cleared away or cleaned to protect children. Risk assessments are being updated, although they do not always cover everything that a child may come into contact with. For example, the use of a hot glue gun by staff in a care base has not been assessed to ensure that children are safe, and a missing leg on the water tray hinders children's play and enjoyment.

Children enjoy their meals in the nursery, tucking in to freshly cooked lunches and teas with relish, often asking for second helpings. The recent review of the menus means that children are now offered nutritious, balanced and healthy meals with close attention paid to specific dietary and religious requirements. Older children use their cutlery with skill and dexterity, enjoying the social interaction as they chat with their friends and the adults. Fresh drinking water is freely available. Babies feeding routines are followed in accordance with parents wishes to maintain consistency. Children's health is suitably promoted as some staff hold current first aid certificates. Minor accidents and the administration of medication are managed efficiently.

Some staff have a sound awareness of child development and interact positively with the children in their care. Young toddlers are encouraged to develop and hone their early walking skills through appropriate activities and the animated support they receive. However, not all staff interact wholly with the children and this inconsistency hinders how children make progress particularly in their vocabulary, critical thinking and problem solving areas of learning and development. There are times when the routine of the nursery impinges on children's overall enjoyment and achievement, such as, when they are brought in from the outdoor play area to participate in 'an activity'. Attempts have been made to create special areas outside, such as, the den using voile panels strung from the line, but the children are not always able to access such areas or activities spontaneously. Support from the local authority is supporting the management in exploring more effective use

of the outdoor space. Staff are also working with the advisers to develop effective strategies for managing children's behaviour. Processes are in place to liaise with parents and carers to develop a consistent approach where staff may have concerns about a child's behaviour.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	4
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	4

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	4
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	4
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	3
How well are children safeguarded?	3

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	4
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	4
How well are children helped to stay safe?	4
How well are children helped to be healthy?	3
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	4
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	3
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:

Not Met (with actions)

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (How the childcare provision is organised) 06/11/2009
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Suitability and safety of premises and equipment) 04/09/2009
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Suitability and safety of premises and equipment). 04/09/2009

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (How the childcare provision is organised) 06/11/2009
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Suitability and safety of premises and equipment) 04/09/2009
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Suitability and safety of premises and equipment). 04/09/2009