



## St Martins Pre school

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	127602
<b>Inspection date</b>	18 October 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Vanessa Wood
<b>Setting Address</b>	St. Martins Church Hall, Northumberland Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 7LP
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<b>Registered person</b>	St Martins Pre school
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 Martins Pre School opened in 1971. It operates from the church hall at St Martin's, Northumberland Road. The pre school serves the local area. A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time. The pre school is open on a Monday, Thursday and Friday from 09:00 until 11:30 and on a Tuesday from 09:00 until 12:30. Afternoon sessions are held on a Monday and Thursday from 12:30 until 15:00. The pre school is open for 36 weeks of the year.

There are currently 32 children aged from 2 to 5 years on roll. This includes 13 children who receive funding for nursery education. The pre school currently supports one child who has special needs and two children with English as an additional language.

The pre school employs seven members of staff. Five members of staff including the two supervisors have early years qualifications and two members of staff are waiting to attend training. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children understand the well established routines when they wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Children are protected from infection through diligent staff who keep the premises, equipment and furniture suitably clean. Most staff have a current first aid certificate which enables them to deal with any accidents children might have at the setting. Children enjoy nutritious snacks of fruit and crackers which the staff supply and they can help themselves to drinking water at all times.

A large outside play area is available to children, although this is mainly used in the summer. There is also a large hall where children can experience physical play throughout the year, for example children enjoy the obstacle course set up by staff where they climb, balance and crawl through objects.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play with a range of good quality, developmentally appropriate toys. Furniture is child height making it easier for them to access resources. The premises are secure and children are able to move freely and confidently.

Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised by the effective organisation and deployment of staff. Staff use a risk assessment to make sure that each aspect of safety is covered before children arrive at each session. However, there is some concern about the radiators and pipes that join the radiators as these can become hot and are not covered at the moment. Staff are aware of this concern and are taking steps to find a solution.

Staff are able to help promote children's welfare because they have a comprehensive knowledge of child protection issues although the written policy lacks detail.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Most children arrive happily and confidently explore the various activities on offer. They have fun playing with their peers, and are able to relate to other children and adults well. Children's confidence is enhanced by the praise and encouragement offered by staff. Staff encourage children to do things for themselves and allow them space to explore and experiment without unnecessary interference.

Staff have attended the Birth to Three Matters training but have not implemented this yet to develop learning for children under three years who attend. They have a sound knowledge of the curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and provide activities to cover the six areas of learning.

Nursery Education:

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are interested and concentrate well on self chosen activities. They are developing an awareness of their own needs and feelings and enjoy joining in familiar songs. They form good relationships with their peers and adults.

Children's language is developing well through good conversations with staff that stretch children's imagination and encourage children to think. They enjoy stories read to them and can handle books confidently. Their listening skills are good and they sit still and concentrate well at circle time. There is less opportunity for children to learn the sound of letters and to write their name. Staff expose children to a variety of mathematical concepts which they assimilate naturally. Most children are able to count well and some are able to combine numbers when counting objects and understand simple mathematical concepts.

Children benefit from experiences to explore and investigate within safe surroundings. However, at times staff miss opportunities to extend learning for older, more able children, this is because planning is weak and does not identify areas where play can be extended. Staff provide appropriate resources to encourage children's understanding of colour, texture, form and space and to use their imagination in the home corner.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are respected and valued as individuals. Staff know the children well and are able to tailor activities to suit each individual child which helps the provision to foster children's moral, social and cultural development well. Children develop an understanding about the wider world and community through visitors to the provision and having access to a range of play resources which show positive images of culture, ethnicity and gender.

The individual needs of all children are well met and the provision has effective arrangements to care for children with special educational needs. In general children behave well and are learning to understand right from wrong through consistent boundaries and appropriate praise for things done well.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents appear to be very happy with the care their children receive at the provision, but are not clear about the curriculum for the foundation stage that the staff follow. The committee members are new and developing their role within the provision. There is good communication between parents and staff to ensure all the needs of the children are met.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

A procedure to appoint new staff is in place together with an induction programme which appears to work well in practice. The committee is comprised of new members who are not yet fully aware of their role and responsibilities, although they support the group well.

Children benefit from being cared for by staff who are qualified and have a good knowledge of the curriculum for the foundation stage. They have a sound understanding of children's needs through good communication with parents. Staff are committed to improving the standard of care and education at the setting through evaluation of the work they do. They are aware that written educational plans are weak and intend to get help to ensure these plans show clearly how children will achieve in the six areas of learning. Policies and procedures are generally in place, although the written Child Protection policy lacks detail. Therefore the leadership and management of the group is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection, the setting was asked to improve staffs knowledge of the foundation stage, improve planning and organisation of sessions, strengthen the assessment system and strengthen the partnership with parents. They were also asked to have a written risk assessment including fire drill, ensure an effective staff recruitment and induction procedure is in place, update policies including the child protection policy.

Most of these have been satisfactorily addressed with the exception of the written child protection policy which needs to be updated and refer to current legislation, the written educational plans which are not clear and do not refer to the stepping stones and the partnership with parents which although ensures sufficient information is being shared, parents are not being fully informed about the curriculum for the foundation stage.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

There are no complaints to report.

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:

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 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):

- implement the Birth to three matters framework to enhance play experiences for younger children
- ensure the child protection policy is up dated in line with current legislation and includes a clear procedure to be followed if a member of staff be accused of abusing a child
- develop the outside play space so that this area can be used all year

#### **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):

- develop written education plans to show how all the early learning goals will be covered and in particular the short term plans so that staff are clear about what children are expected to learn from the activities
- ensure all activities are clearly planned to show how activities can be adapted to suit the needs of children of all ages and abilities
- provide parents with more information about the curriculum for the foundation stage in order to involve parents more in their children's learning

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