



St Michaels Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 509277 |
| Inspection date | 02 November 2005 |
| Inspector | Jean Mary Andrews |
| Setting Address | St Michaels Hall, Routh Lane, Tilehurst, Reading, Berkshire, RG30 4NY |
| Telephone number | 01189 429 391 or 0789 0379490 |
| E-mail | |
| Registered person | St Michaels Pre-School |
| 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 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 Michael's Pre-school first opened in 1965. It operates from rooms within St Michael's Church Hall in Tilehurst. A maximum of 30 children may attend the preschool at any one time. The preschool is open each weekday during term times only. Sessions are from 09.15 to 11.45. A lunch club is offered from 11.45 to 13.15, one day a week. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 35 children, aged from 2 to 5 years, on roll. This includes 3 and 4

year olds in receipt of funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area and attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is able to support children with special educational needs and English as an additional language.

The preschool employs five staff. Of these four staff, including the manager hold an appropriate early years qualification. One staff member is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a range of activities, which contribute to their good health. There are indoor and outdoor activities to help them develop control of their bodies, for example, the climbing frame and bikes. Children especially enjoy playing with bats and balls. They are becoming aware of the way activity affects their bodies and know when they need a drink.

Children are independent and go to the toilet unaided; some are aware of personal hygiene and wash their hands. However, staff do not always encourage children to do this and procedures in place do not protect children's health, for example, the bowl of water in the hall is not regularly changed. Children do not wash their hands before snack time. Most staff hold first aid qualifications and there are procedures in place for recording accidents.

Staff provide a range of healthy, nutritious snacks and drinks; children are beginning to be aware of healthy eating. However, the organisation of this time does not promote good practice, with food being kept at floor level. Children have opportunities to have a drink throughout the session, for example, one child poured himself a drink and said "I was really thirsty".

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a well organised group environment where they have easy and safe access to an adequate range of toys and resources appropriate for their age, which meet safety standards.

Staff carry out daily safety checks and organise space and equipment to minimise potential hazards for children.

Staff protect children's welfare through an understanding of their roles and responsibilities in child protection. They are aware of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and the procedures to follow should they have concerns about a child in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are confident in their environment. Staff plan a variety of activities and encourage children to participate in the range available. Children select the toys and resources they wish to use from the range put out. Staff have a developing knowledge of the Foundation Stage but this is not reflected in their planning. Therefore staff miss opportunities to extend children's learning appropriately. Children are comfortable within the playgroup and are developing relationships with their peers and adults within the setting. Children receive support from staff in their play.

They enjoy interacting with different staff in one to one, small group and large group activities.

Nursery Education

The quality of nursery teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are keen to take part in activities. They are developing their independence skills and select the toys and resources they wish to use. Children sit and listen at group times. They recall and tell the group events that have happened in their personal lives, for example, the cake they received for their birthday. Children enjoy books and stories in group situations. Some children are beginning to recognise their names in print. However staff miss opportunities to further develop children's early reading skills, through simple labelling. Children's imaginative skills are developing through role play, singing and creative activities.

Children play and work well together, they take turns and co-operate with others in their play and work. Children use mathematical language and staff provide opportunities for children to explore language, such as full and empty, during activities, for example, when measuring water in containers in the water tray. Children use numbers in play situations, for example, counting apples. Children are becoming aware of the traditions and cultures of other people and the wider world around them through books and activities.

Staff discuss the individual children with parents and all parents complete an entry profile when their child starts the pre-school. This enables staff to build a sound knowledge about the routines, preferences and family backgrounds of the children in their care. Procedures are in place to observe and record individual children's achievements and progress. However, the methods in place are not consistent. Staff miss opportunities to record children's progress through the stepping-stones towards the early learning goals. Staff use techniques for reinforcing children's learning such as one to one questioning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel respected as individuals and made to feel good about themselves, for

example, art work is displayed and children receive praise. Staff talk to the children regularly to ensure that they understand the boundaries. Children behave well. They have an awareness of right and wrong and show respect for others. Equipment and resources are available to ensure all children are able to participate. Some resources and activities promote positive images of diversity; therefore, children develop an understanding of the wider world. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is met.

Parent and staff enjoy a friendly relationship, which ensures continuity of care for the children.

The partnership with parents of children in receipt of funding for nursery education is satisfactory.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The staff meet the children's needs through generally effective organisation. They understand and generally follow the setting's acceptable policies and procedures. However, a system for staff recruitment, induction and appraisal is not place. Staff and visitors to the premises are not recorded.

The provider meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection a complaint statement has been written.

This gives details of the procedures to be followed if parents have a complaint and includes the names and telephone number of the regulatory body.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to record.

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

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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):

- ensure children wash their hands to prevent the spread of cross infection.
- develop a system for staff recruitment, induction and appraisals
- develop system to ensure staff and visitors are recorded on a daily basis

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):

- ensure children's development records are used to monitor children, plan for progression, kept up to date and available to parents
- develop planning to ensure all areas of learning are covered and are in sufficient detail to support children's development.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk