



St Mary's Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	143117
Inspection date	09 February 2006
Inspector	Jennifer Barton
Setting Address	Church Rooms, Church Street, Ilchester, Yeovil, Somerset, BA22 8LN
Telephone number	07813 474953
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Registered person	St Mary's Pre-School
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 Pre-School opened approximately 40 years ago. It is a committee run group situated in a church hall which is a listed building in the centre of the village of Ilchester in Somerset. The pre-school has sole use of the premises and children attending are from the local area and from the Royal Navy Air Station (RNAS) in Yeovilton which is nearby. The premises consists of a ground floor and first floor playroom, toilets and kitchen. There is also a secure outside play area at the rear of

the premises.

The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions run from 09:15 to 11:45 and 12:45 to 15:15 Monday to Thursday, and 09:15 to 11:45 on Fridays. Children have the option of joining the lunch club from 11:45 to 12:45. The Tuesday and Thursday afternoon sessions are particularly structured for the children due to start school.

At present there are 40 children on roll of these 31 children are in receipt of funding. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs.

Six members of staff and one volunteer work with the children. Three staff have level three Early Years Care and Education qualifications and three other staff are undertaking training. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a healthy environment, during each session children participate in physical activities to help develop control of their bodies. Children benefit from regular fresh air as they have access to their own outdoor area and use a wide range of equipment such as, balancing and climbing equipment, and balls and hoops for coordination skills. Children are becoming aware of the way activities affect their bodies and they know when they need a drink or a rest.

Children are well cared for in a clean environment where they learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. Children understand why they regularly clean hands before handling food and after visits to the toilet as this prevents the spread of infection. They have easy access to antibacterial soaps and gels and use disposable towels.

Children enjoy healthy and nutritious snacks and drinks and are learning about healthy foods through regular discussions with staff and participating in good activities such as, growing tomato and herb plants. Children's dietary requirements are met well through good written information and liaison with parents.

Accurate accident records and written permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment ensures children are cared for in their best interest, however medication records are not fully effective

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a bright, welcoming and safe environment. Although free space is limited children are able to move safely and freely around the playrooms and access

a range of resources and equipment that are selected on a rotation system. Children are learning how to reduce hazards for themselves, for example not running indoors and putting chairs under tables.

Children are safeguarded and their welfare promoted through good procedures. Staff have effective systems for children's arrival and departure from the setting and ensure through regular risk assessments children are cared for in a secure environment. Children benefit from good supervision levels both indoors and outdoors.

Children are well protected from harm through staffs good understanding of child protection procedures in line with the local area child protection committee procedures. Regular fire drills and appropriately located and well maintained fire appliances ensure children are well protected against the risk of fire, however some procedures such as fire log records are not in place.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time in the pre-school, they arrive happy and eager to participate. All children are achieving well because staff are experienced and are interested in what children do and say and respond well to their needs. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and have some awareness and information of the framework for Birth to three matters framework if it is required. Children's development is well promoted through an overall good range of resources and activities. There is a good balance between child initiated and teacher led activities and staff are flexible within their routines to meet children's needs. Children have close relationships with staff and the key worker system is beneficial in building relationships with parents to ensure children's individual needs are met. Staff regularly observe children and are developing records to ensure appropriate next steps are planned in children's play and learning.

Children are involved in some interesting and well planned activities, which allow children to explore and extend their learning such as, in cooking and making 'shaker bottles'.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning for funded children is good. Children are making good progress across the six areas of learning, however plans do not ensure sufficient regular attention in all areas such as, role play, using information technology equipment and linking sounds to letters. Children have regular observations and a system to record progress against the stepping stones is being developed. Staff use good interaction skills, they play, talk and continually ask questions which effectively supports and extends children's learning.

Children are growing in independence and confidence and are motivated to learn, they are able to carry out activities in groups or individually. Children's listening and speaking skills are developing well, children are eager to talk in large groups to recall

what activities they have enjoyed in the pre-school. Children have regular opportunities in planned activities and daily routines to recognise and write letters and numbers. They experience regular counting and problem solving in daily routines such as, snack times and register. Children are competent using a wide range of equipment and their imagination is explored well in art and craft activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. Children receive good support and care from staff who work closely with parents to ensure children's progress is suitably enhanced. Staff consider children's individual needs when planning activities and events to enable all children to participate. Staff take positive steps and are proactive in promoting the welfare and development of all children for example all children are learning sign language. Planned activities, resources, local visits and visitors to the pre-school introduce children to their own environment as well as that of the wider world.

Children behave well, they are able to take turns and share when participating in activities. Children benefit from good routines and staff who are good role models. Staff use effective behaviour management they praise and encourage through gently reinforcing procedures and use a star sticker system. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Staff encourage parents to be involved through regular newsletters and information on the notice board. Parents are welcome to help in the pre-school and to encourage their children to bring in items from home that begin with the letter of the week. A good written prospectus about the procedures of the pre-school and written records on children's progress are provided.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled in an appropriate environment, although space and resources are not organised to gain the maximum benefit to children.

Children benefit from experienced staff which enhances their care and development. Staff are well deployed and children are well supported by regular positive interaction and occasional individual attention. Staff are committed in ensuring children's needs are met, they meet regularly to monitor and reflect their practices such as planning.

The leadership and management of the pre-school is satisfactory. Staff and the committee work well together and know their individual roles and responsibilities well. There are appropriate systems in place to monitor the provision and staff complete regular appraisals. However areas identified for improvement such as, the operational plan and organisation of space has not been developed. The supervisor attends regular training and feedbacks to other staff to ensure they all increase their

knowledge and understanding, and that children's progress continues to develop.

Children's wellbeing is adequately supported through policies and procedures, however organisation and regular reviewing of documentation and paperwork is not fully effective.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provision was asked to obtain written permission from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment and to ensure child protection procedures comply with the Area Child Protection Committee procedures. The pre-school have now obtained written consent from parents and all staff have a good understanding of the procedures of child protection to ensure children are safe from harm and action can be taken in the best interest of the child.

At the previous Nursery education inspection the pre-school were asked to develop their planning and evaluation systems and provide more opportunities in every day activities to allow children to link sounds to letters and to learn about calculating and recognising written number. Staff have incorporated numbers and letters in their daily routines which gives children more opportunities to learn. Staff are developing new planning and assessment systems and these will remain as a recommendation for further development.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004.

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):

- review and develop your operational plan to ensure it is fully effective in meeting the needs of the children

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):

- continue to develop planning so all aspects of the six areas of learning receive sufficient regular attention

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