



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 251658

DfES Number: 548016

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	28/02/2005
Inspector Name	Hazel Meadows

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	St Mary's Pre School Playgroup
Setting Address	322 Woodbridge Road Ipswich Suffolk IP4 4BD

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of St Mary's Pre School Playgroup 1072893
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	St Mary's Pre School Playgroup
Address	322 Woodbridge Road Ipswich Suffolk IP4 4BD

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

St Mary's Pre-School Playgroup opened in April 1999.

It operates from a large church hall in a residential area in east Ipswich. The playgroup makes full use of the hall. The majority of the activities are primarily contained at one end of the hall and the remainder is utilised for large physical play. The hall leads directly outside to a safety surfaced play area and the group also has occasional access to an adjacent grassed area.

A maximum of 24 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday mornings from 09:10 until 11:40 and Monday and Friday afternoons from 12:40 until 15:10, term time only.

There are currently 39 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 25 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The playgroup supports children with special educational needs and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs four part time staff. Three of the staff, including the play leader, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

St Mary's Pre-school Playgroup is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very good progress in all areas of learning.

Staff are calm, caring and consistent in their approach and build trusting relationships with the children. They promote children's positive behaviour through example and effective strategies plus a clear pre-school routine.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff understand the importance of children learning through first hand experiences and they provide a broad range of fun activities, using a wealth of interesting and imaginative props. Most staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Plans clearly link to the areas of learning and stepping stones, with the learning intention indicated on staff planning sheets. Observations are recorded, mostly once a term. Staff operate a key worker system and informally evaluate children's progress to identify the next steps in a child's learning and to aid future planning.

Leadership and management is very good. The pre-school has an active and supportive parent committee. There is a clear leadership structure, with good communication between all concerned. The staff team work very well together and have a commitment to the ongoing improvement and development of the pre-school. They intend to further exploit the outdoor area, review the indoor layout and improve ICT. The committee are developing a staff appraisal system.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents receive a well written information booklet and are given ongoing information, including planning and topics, via the well presented notice board, newsletters and verbally by the staff. An induction session is provided for new children with their parents. Parents indicate that staff are friendly and approachable and they feel well involved with their child's learning. Children's assessment records are shared with parents, particularly at the termly parent evenings and their contributions are welcomed.

What is being done well?

- Children are able to learn and make discoveries through their play and fun, first hand experiences. They have extended periods of free play and easy access to resources, encouraging them to become independent learners, complimented by some adult led activities.
- Staff are very inclusive of all children and have a positive attitude and approach to diversity of culture, disability, language. They are proactive to find the most appropriate methods to support individual children and enable them to participate and make progress.
- Children are becoming confident and independent. They separate from their

carers with increasing assurance and are forming trusting relationships with staff. Children relate well to their peers and are developing consideration for one another.

- Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are provided with good quality information about the setting including an outline of the Foundation Stage and areas of learning. Parents are kept well informed about the planning and current topics and encouraged to participate/contribute. Children's assessment records are shared with parents at parent's evenings and their contributions sought

What needs to be improved?

- evaluation of children's progress to more effectively plan for the next steps in children's learning

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made since the last inspection.

The group has purchased a climbing frame which is regularly utilised in the large hall area.

The action plan shows how the group addressed this area for development despite being on a very tight budget and having limited storage.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children are keen and motivated learners and independently access the resources available. They confidently come into the pre-school and are forming trusting relationships with staff and relate well to their peers. They persist for considerable periods at activities that engage them and show a sense of pride in their achievements. Children are well behaved and are developing personal independence with self-care.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children speak confidently with adults and their peers. Many recognise letters, words and their names eg name cards/snack mats & labels Tesco/table and they are linking sounds and letters. They have opportunities to write for a purpose in their play and to practise 'writing' their names. They are attentive to stories and occasionally independently use the book area. Children practice pre-writing skills & handle scissors, pencils, brushes with increasing skill and control.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children confidently count to 10 and well beyond and use numbers enthusiastically in their play. Opportunities for simple calculating and problem solving are utilised effectively eg group and snack time and children are able to make simple comparisons. Children use some mathematical and positional language with understanding. They are able to recognise shapes in two and three dimensional form.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children investigate items using all their senses eg shaving foam, crepe paper, wood and are able to construct with a broad range of objects eg Brio, bricks/boxes. They are developing awareness of living things and of their own environment eg planting, minibeasts, bird food, pet rabbit and visits from nurse/fire-fighters. Children have some access to simple technology eg toy tills/telephones and tape recorder. They are developing a good sense of time reinforced by the clear pre-school routine.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children have regular opportunities for physical play and are developing competence and skill with judging space and distance, climbing, balancing, and are moving with control and coordination eg ride on toys. They are developing good hand/eye coordination using scissors, pencils, glue/paint brushes and with more intricate movements such as threading and using chopsticks. They are becoming independent with toileting and hand washing.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children explore a variety of textures eg ice, wood, collage, sand, soil, shaving foam. They recognise different colours and how to change them by mixing. They enjoy singing rhymes and musical activities and instruments. Children have opportunities for free role play/dressing up, using props, to allow them to express their own ideas and play out situations/things they have seen. Eg Chinese takeaway, garage.	

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- There are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- continue to develop more systematic evaluation of children's progress to effectively plan for the next steps in their learning

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.