



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 101605

DfES Number: 514680

INSPECTION DETAILS

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| Inspection Date | 25/06/2003 |
| Inspector Name | Miriam Sheila Brown |

SETTING DETAILS

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| Day Care Type | Sessional Day Care |
| Setting Name | St Marks & Hesters Way Playgroup |
| Setting Address | Community Centre Brooklyn Road Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL51 8DZ |

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

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|------|---|
| Name | The Committee of St Marks & Hesters Way Playgroup |
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

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| Name | St Marks & Hesters Way Playgroup |
| Address | Community Centre Brooklyn Road Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL51 8DZ |

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and 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 Marks and Hesters Way Playgroup first opened in 1961 and is situated in the community centre to the north of Cheltenham town centre. The group is managed by a committee of parents who also help on a rota basis within the group.

The group serves the local community and they are open Monday to Friday, 09.30 to 12.00 during the school term.

The group is registered for 30 children and accepts those from two-years-seven months to five years of age. They currently care for six funded three-year-olds and 19 funded four-year-olds. There are two children who speak English as an additional language and the group has experience of children with special needs.

Children use one room of the centre as the main playroom and also have the use of the hall and two other rooms. They have a secure outdoor play area.

All staff have first aid and child protection training. The leader, deputy and 50 per cent of the other staff hold relevant qualifications in childcare.

The playgroup are working towards the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership quality assurance award.

How good is the Day Care?

St Marks and Hesters Way Playgroup provide good quality care for children. Staff are experienced and hold relevant childcare qualifications. They attend regular training to ensure their practice is kept in line with regulations and is up-to-date. The group have a clear operational plan, and policies are regularly reviewed. The play room is bright and attractive with many displays of children's work. Play areas are well organised and offer the children a good variety of resources to assist their progress. Children are also able to use the other rooms in the community centre. Records are well maintained and stored securely.

A good balance of toys and resources cover all areas of learning and promote

equality of opportunity for boys and girls, although opportunities for children to use recycled materials for modelling are limited. The carpeted book area provides a relaxing space for children and the outside area is safe, well-planned and secure. Safety is well promoted within the setting and staff are conscientious in their implementation of health and safety requirements.

A good range of well-planned topic work promotes children's personal care and assists in their knowledge of healthy eating. Staff have clear details of children's dietary requirements but do not inform parents of foods offered during the session. The group have a good range of multi-cultural resources and support all the children well in their understanding of different cultures and ways of life. The group support children with special educational needs well. Staff are well trained in child protection procedures and have good procedures in place to inform parents and assist staff.

The partnership with parents is good and they are warmly welcomed to the group. They have good opportunities to join in with their children's learning and are kept regularly updated about their children's progress both informally and through written annual reports.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The playgroup have reviewed their child protection policy and it now contains details of the procedures to be taken in the event of an allegation against a member of staff. This was a requirement from the last inspection and the group now have a better understanding of how to manage such a situation.

What is being done well?

- Staff work attentively and well with the children, listen to them and provide a consistent and sympathetic response to their needs. (Standard 2).
- The group provide a good balance of toys and resources that cover all areas of learning, including those that promote equality of opportunity. (Standard 5).
- Staff employ good procedures to ensuring children's safety inside and outside the premises and on outings. (Standard 6).
- Staff extend the children's awareness of healthy eating and caring for themselves through well-planned topic work and a wide variety of snack foods. (Standard 8).
- The behaviour policy is clear and well implemented by staff. Positive group rules help the children to make good relationships with each other. (Standard 11).

What needs to be improved?

- children's opportunities to use recycled materials for construction. (Standard 3).
- parent's awareness of foods offered to children during topic work. (Standard

8).

Outcome of the inspection

Good

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?**The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection**

| Std | Recommendation |
|-----|---|
| 8 | consider displaying lists of foods offered to children during topic work. |
| 3 | increase free play opportunities for children to use recycled materials for construction. |

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Children attending St Marks and Hester's Way play group are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Children take part in well-planned activities which encourage their awareness of the world around them. They are well behaved and confident. They enjoy a range of activities which are relevant to their lives such as health and cleanliness. Children use their imagination well in role-play activities. Access to recycled materials and resources to extend ideas is limited.

Teaching is generally good and staff support children well as they play and learn. Children's individual progress is not tracked through assessment to ensure the more able children build on what they already know. Good use of open-ended questions by the staff encourage the children to think, problem solve and improve their language. There are missed opportunities in mathematical development for example not developing patterns, and extending number knowledge. The staff encourage the children to care for others around them. The children are confident, socialable, well mannered and well behaved. Children's need for physical development is acknowledge and well supported.

Leadership and management of the play group is very good. There is close co-operation between the playgroup committee and the staff. They work very hard to provide a warm welcome for the children and their parents and carers. Staff are committed to improving and building on the quality of childcare provided.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Parents are provided with good information on the group. Notice boards and newsletters provide information on the forthcoming events and topics. Parents are given detailed information on the early learning goals, and they are given half termly information on their child's developmental progress. Staff involve parents in topics, they send activity sheets home so they complete them with the children.

What is being done well?

- Children are confident and self-esteem is promoted. Staff encourage the children to be confident, play together and participate in all activities. The children's behaviour is good.
- Children are developing use of language for thinking and communication successfully. The staff use good open-ended questioning to support this. The children are given good opportunities to write; pens and paper are put out regularly.
- Children have a good bodily awareness developed through interesting topics. The children have very good access to large physical play equipment and many are able to ride the two-wheel bikes and use balancing boards confidently.

- Staff work well as a team and are good role models for the children. They provide interesting activities for the children.

What needs to be improved?

- assessments of children's individual progress to inform planning and support them to build on prior knowledge.
- access to recycled and craft materials to help the children extend activities through the range of resources available.

What has improved since the last inspection?

There has been generally good progress with the key issues.

The group had two points for development to address following the last inspection. These were to share children's developmental progress with the parents throughout the year; and for staff to provide increasingly challenging physical activities related to climbing and balancing and incorporate this into the planning.

Staff inform parents about their child's developmental progress every half term and verbal information is shared regularly. Detailed assessment is not yet available.

There are now very good resources in place for the children to develop their climbing and balancing skills, this has been incorporated into planning effectively.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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|------------|----------------|
| Judgement: | Generally Good |
|------------|----------------|

Children are confident and work well together, they form a good relationship with adults and each other as they play. They co-operate, take turns, share with each other and show a good level of personal independence. They show a good awareness of the community and the world around them. Children are unable to access resources themselves, to extend the activities selected at each session.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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|------------|----------------|
| Judgement: | Generally Good |
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Staff encourage to use language for thinking and communication during the sessions. Children are given the opportunity to write their names on their work and understand the concept of reading left to right. They are able to access books easily to encourage their knowledge of the written words. Individual children do not routinely get the opportunity to recognise their own names.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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|------------|----------------|
| Judgement: | Generally Good |
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The children are familiar with numbers and staff use good number songs and rhymes to re-enforce the children's knowledge. The staff use good mathematical language with the children as they play. Children are encouraged to count and recognise numbers using calculators. Opportunities are missed to support the more able children to develop on their knowledge of number, size and pattern.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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|------------|----------------|
| Judgement: | Generally Good |
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Children recall events that have happened effectively such as the trips out. They are learning about themselves and the local area through planned activities, for example the topic on health. Children have a good awareness of other cultures and staff promote this well. Children do not have regular access to recycled materials which restricts their ability to extend the activities through the range of resources available.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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| Judgement: | Very Good |
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Children are able to develop their large physical movement very well. They have very good access to physical play equipment with a wide range of climbing and balancing apparatus available. Most of the children can ride two-wheel bikes and use balancing boards effectively. Children use small tools and equipment confidently such as pens, brushes and construction equipment.

| CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT | |
|---|----------------|
| Judgement: | Generally Good |
| Children use their imagination well in role-play situations. Children express feelings and describe textures accurately, such as when tasting the fruit. Planned craft activities are predominantly adult led. Children do not have regular access to free choice of creative craft and recycled materials which allow them to extend activities and create objects for themselves. | |
| Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately. | |

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally 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: THE KEY ISSUES

- Develop assessments to track individual children's progress against the stepping stones.
- Use assessment to inform future planning and provide support for individual children.
- Ensure children have access to creative and recycled resources to extend their play.

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.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.