



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 129391

DfES Number: 584258

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	22/06/2004
Inspector Name	Sheila Harrison

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	St Marys Kindergarten
Setting Address	St Marys School New Road Northchurch, Berkhamsted Hertfordshire HP4 3QL

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of St Mary's Kindergarten Management Committee 129391
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	St Mary's Kindergarten Management Committee
Address	New Road Northchurch Berkhamsted Hertfordshire HP4 3QZ

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. Mary's Kindergarten opened in 1997. It operates from the nursery classroom of St. Mary's Church of England School and has use of the school hall, nursery garden and the school playing field. The Kindergarten serves the local area.

There are currently 32 children from 3 to 5 years on roll. This includes 12 funded 3 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports no children with special needs and two children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 13:15 until 15:30, a lunch club operates for the older children from 11:45 until 13:15.

Four part-time staff work with the children. Two staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 3 and one staff member is currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting has participated in the Herts Quality Assurance Scheme. It receives support from the school, nursery teacher and from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

How good is the Day Care?

St. Mary's Kindergarten provides a satisfactory of care for children aged 3-5 years.

The pre-school provides a bright and stimulating environment where the children move confidently. The premises are safe, but some risk assessments and recording procedures may be improved and updated to ensure a business like approach.

The provision is suitably organised, and effective use is made of the space. Staff are conscientious and use their time to the benefit of the children. The carefully planned routine supports the children's learning. There is a wide range of good quality and easily accessible resources. Staff engage with the children's play, both indoors and outdoors, encouraging the children to develop their dexterity. However, the breadth of the children's cultural awareness is limited. Staff know the children well through a

range of settling -in procedures. They build warm meaningful relationships with the children who appear happy and well behaved.

Staff are suitably qualified, and wish to increase their knowledge of child care and education issues to continue to develop the good practice. There are trusting relationships with the parents and strong partnerships the school.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the nursery agreed to review registration procedures and the complaints procedure.

The nursery keeps a school register and notes if children have left early. They will ensure lunch time children are included. The complaints procedure is included in the brochure.

What is being done well?

- Staff are well deployed within the pre-school. They have worked hard to become a consistent team and are committed to developing the provision through regular team meetings and further training. This ensures the children are well supported, confident and secure.
- Staff have an effective working relationship with the parents and are aware of the importance of good two way communication on a daily basis. Parents are provided with informative and regular newsletters.
- Staff have close links with the school which provides a shared ethos of good early years principles. The pre-school uses the school hall regularly. They are fully involved in the fundraising and social activities of the school.

What needs to be improved?

- records relating to the fire drill, lost or uncollected children and the medication policy.
- staff's knowledge and understanding of equal opportunities issues
- risk assessments on the premises identifying actions to be taken to minimize identified risks.

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

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 must take the following actions by the date shown

Std	Action	Date
1	develop lost/uncollected child policy and procedure.	21/07/2004

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
6	review the risk assessment on the premises identifying actions to be taken to minimize identified risks and to expand records relating to medication and the fire drill.
9	develop staff's knowledge and understanding of equal opportunities issues

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision of nursery education at St. Mary's Kindergarten is good. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Most staff have developed a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage and use this knowledge to plan a broad, balanced and purposeful curriculum with a wide range of interesting adult directed and child initiated activities. Plans are produced and displayed in conjunction with the school nursery and reception class, to ensure the children have access to a balanced curriculum.

These are informally evaluated. Staff regularly observe the children and each child's progress is recorded in relation to the stepping stones. They effectively support the children's learning. Children are given sufficient opportunities to revisit their learning. Staff make worthwhile use of the outside area and school playing field giving children chances to learn with a more active approach.

There are no funded children with special educational needs but there are adequate strategies to support any such children in the future. The kindergarten has yet to develop an appropriate approach for children with English as an additional language.

Leadership and management are generally good. The manager is committed to staff training and professional development. The information from discussions and staff meetings are partially used to monitor and improve the quality of care and education. There are strong links with the nursery and staff, premises and policies are consistent throughout. Children are confident and eager to move into the school.

The partnership with parents is generally good. A welcoming and enthusiastic relationship has been established with parents. Weekly plans are given to the parents and staff talk informally about the children's development.

What is being done well?

- Staff build easy and trusting relationships with children. They manage the children well and have high expectations for behaviour. Children actively participate in a wide range of activities to support their learning.
- Staff make effective use of time and resources. They work directly with the children and provide an inviting environment that is organised to help the children become self-sufficient.
- There is an effective partnership with the school and the children are familiar and confident within the premises. Kindergarten staff work within the school and the management committee has representation from the governing body.

What needs to be improved?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● strategies to support children with English as an additional language ● participation with the parents, to use their skills and to involve them in the assessment and planning process.

What has improved since the last inspection?
n/a

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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The children respond positively to staff and have formed good relationships with their peers. Children behave well. However some children find it difficult to concentrate in some activities. Their confidence and independence is promoted with children helping themselves to toys to extend their games. They cooperate with each other, share and take turns when working in a group. Children talk about their families and celebrate their birthdays.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children talk confidently to each other and in groups. Staff encourage the children to concentrate and listen carefully with the use of a spider finger puppet. Children are familiar with their names and are beginning to recognise their surnames. They handle books conscientiously and enjoy rhymes. There is a reduced book corner to make way for the current role play area. Children can hold a pencil effectively and are beginning to write their names in line with the school handwriting style.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are confident in counting, recognising number, shape and sizes. Staff use chance occasions to discuss number, for example, the number of stones in the children's shoes. Children use the outside to combine a sequencing and physical activity whilst throwing a bean bag. Children learn the number names but do not see their full use as labels. Some resources for the children to experiment with weight or measure were not easily accessible.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children were interested in the computer. Staff encourage children to develop their dexterity with the mouse and use the appropriate language for file and print. Children could change the colour of the paintbrush and helped each other. They explore their senses and observe changes during an activity on the properties of ice and trying to guess the contents of the parcels during circle time. Children discuss their own families, but other cultures are not sufficiently acknowledged.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children move freely with pleasure and confidence and develop control over their bodies. They practise running, jumping and have sufficient exercise during periods outside. This is well supported with effective interaction from the staff. The use of the school field enables children to use the parachute and observe the older children at sport. They use small -scale tools and equipment safely and with increasing control. Children understand to carry the chairs safely.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children show curiosity mixing a range of colours and using paint wash, tissue and glue. They build a repertoire of number and rhyming songs. Children choose and acted the animal sounds to a favourite song opening an imaginary box. Children use the musical instruments rhythmically with the music. They confidently communicate their ideas through interesting and varied role-play areas of the beach and teddy bears picnic.	

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 appropriate strategies to support children with English as an additional language
- encourage participation with the parents, to use their skills and to involve them in the assessment and planning process.

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.