



Office for Standards  
in Education

## NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 131564

DfES Number: 512073

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 01/04/2003  
Inspector Name Deborah, Jean Watton

### SETTING DETAILS

Setting Name St Christophers Playgroup  
Setting Address St Christophers Church Centre  
Southampton  
Hampshire  
SO19 6PJ

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Kathy Webster

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name  
Address

## **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.

<b>Information about the setting</b>
<p>St. Christopher's pre-school is a committee run pre-school, situated in the church hall of St. Christopher's church in the Thornhill area of Southampton. Children have access to the main hall, a smaller room and an enclosed outdoor play area. Registration is for 26 children over two and under five years of age. It is the policy of the pre-school not to accept children under two years nine months. There are 51 children attending, mainly from the local area, including 17 funded three year olds and 17 funded four year olds. All children speak English as their first language and there are no children with special educational needs. The pre-school sessions are :- Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 09:30 - 12:00 and 12:30 - 15:00 hours. There are six members of staff and one regular volunteer. Five members of staff are qualified or working towards a qualification. The pre-school has regular support from a teacher advisor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.</p>

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

The provision of nursery education is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The pre-school provides opportunities for children to make good progress in personal, emotional and social development. Children are encouraged to try new things and they learn to share and take turns. There are weaknesses in the provision of mathematical development and communication, language and literacy. Children have limited opportunities to develop mathematical thinking or early reading and writing skills. Children enjoy imaginative play but lack opportunities to explore music, sound and dance. They use a variety of tools and equipment and become confident in physical play. Staff know children well, engaging them in conversation and fostering their self esteem. Staff make regular assessments of children's learning, linked to the stepping stones. However, these records are not always used to plan activities, linked to the early learning goals, which challenge children and extend their learning. Behaviour is generally good. Children are self confident and considerate of others. The management encourage staff training to improve and update skills. However, failure to monitor the provision of nursery education, poor staff deployment and limited knowledge of the early learning goals, result in children making limited progress in some areas of learning. Since the previous inspection, a special needs co-ordinator has been appointed. The partnership with parents is generally good. Parents are informed about their child's progress through meetings and informal discussions. The pre-school notifies parents of forthcoming events and topics through newsletters. However, parents receive insufficient information about policies and procedures. Parents are encouraged to share information about their child's needs and abilities throughout their time at the pre-school.

### What is being done well?

Children's personal, social and emotional development is good. Children are confident, sociable and have caring relationships with each other and staff. Children demonstrate a good sense of space and move confidently during physical play, making use of a range of equipment. Parents are informed about their child's progress and are encouraged to share information about individual needs and concerns.

### What needs to be improved?

Opportunities for children to develop independence and make choices. Staff's use of assessments and planning to extend learning, related to the Early Learning Goals. Opportunities through practical activities for children to develop skills in mathematical development and communication, language and literacy.

**What has improved since the last inspection?**

A new assessment system has been implemented to record children's learning, related clearly to the stepping stones. Staff have undertaken training in special educational needs and a co-ordinator has been appointed.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

<b>PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children make generally good progress in personal, social and emotional development. They are confident and keen to try new things. Children are well behaved, responding positively to the expectations and sensitive encouragement of staff. They learn to share and take turns and develop caring relationships with other children and staff.	

<b>COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY</b>	
Judgement:	Poor
Progress in communication, language and literacy is poor. Children are confident and fluent speakers, engaging easily in conversations with each other and with adults. However, there are few opportunities for them to link letters with sounds or to recognise letters of the alphabet. Children are not encouraged to develop early reading and writing skills during practical activities like writing their name on artwork. Staff fail to extend vocabulary in everyday activities.	

<b>MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	
Judgement:	Poor
Progress in mathematical development is poor. Children count up to ten and recognise numerals to nine. However, opportunities are missed for children to solve practical problems or to begin to understand addition and subtraction. Children are not encouraged to explore shape, size, quantity or pattern.	

<b>KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD</b>	
Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
There are significant weaknesses in the development of knowledge and understanding of the world. There are few opportunities for children to find out about living things or objects and events they observe. Staff do not extend activities to encourage more able children to question why things happen or how things work. Children frequently discuss events in their lives and learn about the local environment. They also learn about their own and other cultures.	

<b>PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children make generally good progress in physical development. They use a wide range of equipment and tools in their art and craft, play dough and construction activities. They develop a sense of space and move confidently during physical play both indoors and outdoors, making use of equipment for climbing and balancing.	

<b>CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT</b>	
Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
There are significant weaknesses in creative development. Children enjoy a variety	

of art and craft activities, however there is a lack of opportunity for more able children to make choices and develop individual skills. Children enjoy role play and use their imagination in the home corner, however there are few opportunities for them to explore music and sound.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately:	Y
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**OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION**

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The next inspection will take place in one to two years time.

**WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT**

provide opportunities for children to develop independence and make choices. plan activities to extend children's learning making use of individual assessments, and linked to the Early Learning Goals. provide practical activities which enable children to make progress in mathematical development and communication, language and literacy.