



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 109509

DfES Number: 518710

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	20/10/2004
Inspector Name	Alison Weaver

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	St John's Pre-School
Setting Address	The Reading Room St John's Church, School Lane Crowborough East Sussex TN6 2SD

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of The Management Committee
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	The Management Committee
Address	St John's Pre-School St John's Church Hall, St John's Road Crowborough East Sussex TN6 2RB

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 John's Pre-School opened in the 1960's. It operates from a church hall in Crowborough close to a local school. They have the use of the one room with a kitchenette and toilets. There is an outdoor area available. The group serves the local community and surrounding area.

There are currently 17 children from 2 to 4 years on roll. This includes 13 funded 3 year olds. There are currently no funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a number of children with special needs.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.00 until 12.00.

Four staff work with the children. One member of staff has a recognised early years qualification and has qualified teacher status. There are no staff currently working towards a recognised qualification. The setting receives support from a mentor from the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

How good is the Day Care?

St John's Pre-School provides satisfactory care for children.

There is an established staff team who are very skilled and experienced but the majority lack recognised childcare qualifications. They work well together and are very supportive to each other. There is limited evidence of staff undertaking training in recent years to keep up to date with current practices. There is a satisfactory recruitment procedure in place.

The room used is small but it is generally used effectively. Safety is given a high priority and all the necessary safety precautions are in place. Children are supervised well and given a lot of individual attention. The staff ensure that the premises is kept clean with appropriate health and hygiene measures being taken. Children develop an understanding of good hygiene practices. The staff plan and

provide healthy snacks for the children.

The staff are good role models and relate very well to the children, praising and encouraging them. This results in the children being very confident and generally well behaved in the group. Children are able to choose from a wide range of good quality toys and equipment which they enjoy playing with. Staff plan and provide a balanced variety of interesting activities on a daily basis. Children have daily opportunities to experience physical play, with the outdoor area being used regularly.

The staff are very aware of the importance of working closely with parents. Parents are encouraged to come into the group and are able to be involved on the committee. They are very happy with the care provided for their children. They are kept informed about their child's progress through regular verbal and written feedback. Parents are provided with general written information about the group. Some of this documentation needs to be reviewed and improved so that it reflects the practices of the group. The required records are in place with some details lacking. These records are not securely stored.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the group was set two actions relating to staffing. The first action that the person in charge should have an appropriate qualification is being met. The second action set was that at least half of staff present should have a relevant qualification. This is not being met and as a result this continues as a recommendation.

What is being done well?

- Children are very settled and happy in the group. They are well occupied and play well, both independently and with others.
- The staff are very friendly, caring, and approachable. They create a calm and relaxed environment with clear everyday routines for the children. New and unsettled children are given good adult support. Staff are very good at encouraging children's independence. This is seen in numerous situations including when children spread their own crackers at snack time.
- Despite the fact that the room is small it is organised well and used to promote children's independence. Different play areas are created and daily messy play activities are available. The storage units are very effective as children are able to make their own choices from the resources available. Staff make the room very attractive and colourful with a variety of posters and displays around the room.
- There is a good variety of safe and suitable toys and equipment. These resources are used well to provide children with challenging and stimulating activities.

What needs to be improved?

- the provision of a specific book area where children can sit quietly
- staff training and development, to meet the requirement for half of the staff to be qualified to level 2 in childcare
- the written policies, to ensure that they reflect the practices of the group
- the security and confidentiality of the records
- the keeping of records on staff members.

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 should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection**

Std	Recommendation
2	Develop and implement an action plan detailing how at least half of all childcare staff will hold a level 2 qualification in childcare.
14	Ensure that records are kept secure and confidential.
14	Review and improve the written policies to ensure that they reflect the current practices of the group.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at St John's Pre-School is acceptable and of good quality. The overall judgement is generally good although children do make very good progress in the six areas of learning.

The overall quality of teaching is generally good. Staff develop good, caring, and supportive relationships with the children. Staff have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage. This is seen in the excellent way they interact with the children to extend their learning. The curriculum is broad and covers all areas of learning. There is a good variety of interesting activities which staff use well.

Although staff ensure that the children are working towards the early learning goals, a lack of written detail means that links to the stepping stones are not clear. Observations are carried out regularly but the overall assessment system is basic and fails to link progress clearly to the stepping stones. The assessments are not fully used to inform how to progress to the next stage of children's learning.

The leadership and management of the setting is generally good. The staff work well together as a team and are very supportive. Overall the setting is organised well in the limited space available. There is no formal system in place to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and staff development. Too little attention is given to actively encouraging and seeking training for staff in the group.

The partnership with parents and carers is generally good. They are provided with some information about the setting but very little on the Foundation Stage. They are kept informed about their child's progress through verbal feedback and regular written reports. Parents are welcome in the group and are encouraged to talk to staff about any concerns or issues. The opportunities for parents and carers to contribute to their child's learning and assessment are not fully extended.

What is being done well?

- Staff are very good at developing language; they value what children say and do; regularly introduce new vocabulary; and effectively model and reinforce language. They use very good questioning techniques to encourage children to think about what they are doing and to talk about their experiences.
- Staff have a good knowledge of the individual children, particularly those in their key worker group. They provide interesting and stimulating activities which children enjoy. The group has a wide range of good quality resources which are used effectively to promote children's learning. These resources are well organised and the majority stored in good low, accessible storage.
- The environment is very colourful and the wide variety of posters and pictures

are used well to reinforce children's learning. It can be seen that the children's work is valued by the way it is attractively mounted and displayed.

- Children's independence is actively promoted in a variety of everyday situations including looking after their own personal needs such as wiping noses, acting as helpers at snack times, and tidying up. They frequently make their own selections from the resources which are in the low storage units.
- In the regular newsletters parents are given helpful suggestions of activities to do at home to extend their child's learning. The written reports also give parents a good overview of children's progress.

What needs to be improved?

- the written planning, to ensure that it contains sufficient detail and clearly links to the stepping stones, and to show how activities can be adjusted to take into account children learning at different levels and rates
- the assessment system, to show clear links to the stepping stones, and to use it more effectively to inform the written planning to plan for the next steps in children's learning to ensure that individual needs are met
- parents' understanding of the Foundation Stage and opportunities for them to contribute to children's learning and assessment.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made to address the key issues raised at the last inspection. The staff plan and provide a wide range of practical opportunities for children to develop their understanding of addition and subtraction. This includes encouraging children to decide whether they have enough plates at snack time or whether they need any more. The staff also use other everyday activities to introduce simple calculation.

Children are learning about the sounds of letters in normal routines. The staff use the everyday routines and activities to promote this aspect of learning. Staff reinforce the letter sounds in many ways including when they get children to write their names on their work, find the initial letter of their name at the start of the session, and at snack times. This results in children making very good progress in understanding the link between sounds and letters.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children settle quickly into the setting and separate from their carer easily. They are confident, happy, and enjoy the activities provided. They generally behave well and are learning to share and take turns. They relate confidently to each other and to adults, asking for help and sharing their thoughts. They generally concentrate well at activities. Their independence skills are being promoted effectively, particularly with the opportunities to select their own resources.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident speakers and use language well, this is evident in small world play activities. They are learning to listen to each other, particularly during circle times. They are learning new vocabulary. They enjoy books and listen avidly to stories. Children practise their emergent writing skills in a variety of ways, showing increasing skill. They are developing a good understanding of the link between sounds and letters. Many children recognise letters in their names.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children count confidently to 10 and beyond. They sort and match competently. They choose and enjoy number activities during free play. They join in enthusiastically in number songs and rhymes. Children are introduced to mathematical language and are beginning to use it correctly themselves during free play. Children are developing a good understanding of simple calculation through everyday activities. They show increasing awareness of shape, space, and measure.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children confidently design and make a wide variety of objects using a range of construction materials and tools. They explore and investigate objects using their senses. They learn about their environment and the natural world. They are developing an understanding of other cultures and traditions through planned topics. Children talk confidently about past and present events in their own lives and those of others. They competently use computers and a variety of everyday technology.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children show good co-ordination and sense of space. They move confidently and safely, responding enthusiastically to movement activities. They experience a range of large equipment where they practice skills such as climbing, balancing and crawling. Children access a range of tools which they use with increasing skill. Their fine motor control and hand-eye co-ordination is developing well. They are developing a good understanding of how to keep healthy.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children are encouraged to use their imagination and they express their ideas in a variety of different activities. They experience a good range of art and craft activities. They join in enthusiastically in singing sessions. They have regular planned opportunities to explore sound and musical instruments. Children participate in role play activities and enjoy dressing up.

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

- extend the written planning to provide sufficient detail in the short term plans, clear links to the stepping stones, and to ensure that it caters for children working at different rates and levels so that individual needs are met
- improve the assessment of children's progress by linking it clearly to the stepping stones and ensuring that it identifies individual children's next steps for learning and the information gained is used to inform the planning
- develop parents' knowledge of the Foundation Stage and extend opportunities for them to contribute to children's learning and assessment.

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.