



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 153062

DfES Number: 516708

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 24/09/2004  
Inspector Name Jan Leo

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care  
Setting Name St Nicolas Pre-School and Playgroup  
Setting Address St. Nicolas C of E Primary School  
Boxhill Walk  
Abingdon  
Oxfordshire  
OX14 1HB

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of St Nicolas Pre-School 284755

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St Nicolas Pre-School  
Address St. Nicolas C of E Primary School  
Boxhill Walk  
Abingdon  
Oxfordshire  
OX14 1HB

## 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 Nicolas Pre-School and Playgroup opened in 1982. It operates from a purpose built building within the grounds of St Nicolas School. The group serves the local community of Abingdon within the catchment area of the school and the surrounding areas. It is run by a parent committee.

There are currently 45 children from 3 to 5 years on roll, of whom 44 are in receipt of government nursery education funding. This includes 42 three year olds and 2 four year olds. Two children have identified special needs, three speak English as an additional language, and the staff support several others who have a range of health problems. The group is registered to provide sessional care, with sessions running from 09.00 to 11.30 and 12.20 to 14.50. It is open Monday to Friday, term time only.

Seven staff work with the children on a full or part time basis and all are qualified or experienced. The setting receives support from a teacher from Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

### How good is the Day Care?

St Nicholas Pre-school and Playgroup provides good quality care for children. Well defined recruitment and supervision procedures are in place, and a high staff ratio is maintained. The environment is well prepared with interesting and colourful resources to entice children into the room. The activities are changed regularly to keep children's interest, and they offer choices and challenges to suit all temperaments. Children have mostly free access to outdoors as an alternative learning environment. Shade and shelter are provided by a newly erected gazebo to enable year round use. All of the required documentation is in place but some lacks detail and can be misleading.

Very well thought out safety procedures are recorded and practiced to keep children safe. Staff and committee know what is expected of them and carry out their duties diligently to ensure safety concerns are addressed promptly. Some first aid

equipment is out of date. Specific arrangements are made with parents and carers of children who have health problems. The children's individual needs are met appropriately. Snack time is a very sociable occasion and children serve themselves with healthy refreshments. Hand washing is not routinely carried out directly before eating. Staff consider all children needs and carefully monitor progress to provide additional support for children; specific needs are considered in the planning. Staff have a sound understanding of child protection issues.

A varied program of activities is provided and all children are supported in order to reach their full potential. They have opportunities to learn about other people's values and cultures and they are eager to learn. Staff act as good role models, and children are polite, cooperative, and play well together.

Staff form close ties with parents and carers to build a clear picture of each child's personal needs. Information is shared in private meetings, and is kept confidential.

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

Not applicable.

#### **What is being done well?**

- There is a strong emphasis on quality and dedication. The committee understand their responsibilities and work closely with staff to support what they do and relieve some of the pressure. Robust recruitment procedures are in place to select high calibre staff who will fit well into the team and work with dedicated enthusiasm for the benefit of the children. Additional staff are brought in to release others for administrative tasks, and team training days are encouraged.
- The environment is interesting and very welcoming. Activities are prepared before children arrive and are designed to offer opportunities for construction, creativity, make believe, quiet and noisy play. Children choose what to do and work well alone or in groups. They eagerly move from one activity to another, sharing equipment and talking to friends, wanting to try everything on offer.
- Staff build excellent relationships with children and their families. Parents and carers are invited for a private meeting before their children start, to ensure staff build a complete picture of their child's needs and can plan effectively for their development. Any requiring additional support, for any reason, is monitored closely and records are kept in order to keep parents up to date. Staff successfully adapt activities to enable all to be included at an appropriate level.
- Behaviour management is very effective. Staff act as good role models, enthusiastically joining in activities, treating others with respect, and remaining calm at all times. Children are encouraged to join in, praised for their achievements and distracted when unhappy. Snack time is organised as a social occasion with tablecloths and flowers on the tables, and children are

civil, friendly and very well behaved.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- the daily record of attendance to accurately reflect when children are present
- the complaints procedure, to include Ofsted's contact details
- the child protection procedure to include contact numbers and details of the procedure to follow in the event of allegations being made against staff
- documentation inaccuracies are removed regarding reference to outdated terminology and practice
- the hand washing routine, to give children the opportunity to wash their hands immediately before eating
- monitoring of first aid equipment, to ensure the contents of the first aid box are kept up to date.

#### **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
7	Promote good health more effectively by ensuring the contents of the first aid box are checked regularly and kept up to date, and the hand washing routine at snack time is reviewed to enable children to wash hands immediately prior to eating.
14	Ensure policies and procedures contain sufficient detail, records are accurate and inaccuracies are removed regarding reference to outdated terminology and practice.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

St Nicholas Pre-school and Playgroup provides high quality nursery education overall which enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals. Provision for personal social and emotional development, and physical development are particularly well planned.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff build excellent relationships with children to help them separate easily from their carers, settle well and enable all to become part of the group. Staff plan and provide a range of activities and resources to suit all interests and abilities, changing activities frequently to retain children's enthusiasm. They join in with play, working well as a team, and making full use of learning opportunities. Staff are good role models and enable children to learn effortlessly.

Leadership and management are very good. The staff are well supported by the committee and all are dedicated to improvement. There are regular meetings to share ideas and concerns, and staff are encouraged to continue with their personal development to keep standards high. Rigorous recruitment, induction and supervision procedures are in place to ensure staff are motivated and work well together. They all carry out their duties diligently to ensure practice remains relevant and appropriate.

The partnership with parents and carers is very good. Comprehensive information about the curriculum and early learning goals is shared, and information about current themes and topics is displayed. Parents and carers find staff easy to talk to and have regular opportunities to learn about their children's progress, though these are limited at the end of each session. Detailed information about the children is obtained before admission, to enable children's individual needs to be met appropriately, and parents or carers with special skills are invited to share their knowledge to enhance children's experiences.

### What is being done well?

- Staff welcome and settle children well. Children are offered a wide range of interesting activities as soon as they arrive, and each child can select what to do and where to play. Staff support children according to their individual needs, deploying themselves effectively to help children grow in confidence, and standing back when appropriate to enable individuality to flourish.
- Children are confident, independent, enthusiastic and eager to participate. They move from one activity to another at will, waiting patiently for a turn when space is limited. Children access resources for themselves using a magnifying glass from a display to study a bug in the garden, and finding a drill in order to 'fix' things. They know where resources live, get a drink when they are thirsty, join in activities energetically, and willingly volunteer to help staff clear up.

- Staff and management work well together. Each have clearly defined roles and fulfil their responsibilities effectively to support each other and keep standards high. Excellent recruitment and supervision procedures are in place to monitor the effectiveness of the provision and ensure good team work, and additional staff are brought in to give staff adequate time to carry out administrative duties.
- Parents and carers are valued and made welcome. All new parents have an opportunity to share information confidentially with staff in order for their children's needs to be met appropriately. Concerns are noted and monitored, progress for all children is recorded and shared, and comprehensive information about the curriculum is clearly displayed. Staff make themselves available and parents and carers find them easy to talk to. Anyone with special skills, talents or knowledge is welcome to share the information with the group to enrich children's learning and help develop an understanding of diversity.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- the collection arrangements, to enable parents and carers to share in children's learning on a daily basis and read the notice board at leisure.

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

Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. The group was asked to continue to develop planning systems and record keeping to evaluate effectiveness of recording, reporting and assessment, and to enable easy tracking of children's progress.

All staff are involved in planning and have systems in place to monitor the activities. They have introduced easy to complete observations and evaluation charts, which are understood and used by all staff. Information about children's progress is transferred to their profiles, and each entry is dated to give a clear indication of the rate of progress. These profiles are used by staff, at planning meetings, to ensure the planned activities are pitched at the correct level to enable all children to progress.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children eagerly participate in activities, choosing what to do, and working well alone or with different friends for extended periods. They bond well with staff and their peers to create a lively and harmonious group. They listen to others, confidently express their feelings, know what is expected of them and behave very well. The children strive to please staff by volunteering to clear up; they share resources, take turns fairly, and respond politely to others. They are very independent.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Most children speak clearly and can make themselves understood. They are beginning to talk through what they are doing and happily chatter to themselves as they play. Children listen to stories with interest, and comment on what is happening. They have free access to mark making equipment and make full use of it to paint and draw both indoors and out. Some form recognisable letters and add 'captions' to their work. All children can use a wide range of equipment with controlled movement.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are beginning to show interest in numbers and use them correctly in free play. They enjoy number songs and rhymes and some can count accurately beyond 10. Children show understanding of addition and subtraction using their fingers to work out how many children are left as others leave, showing numbers progressing from 1 to 10 and back to 1. Children spend lengthy periods building cog systems and towers, adjusting the pieces to compare balance and shape.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children freely explore and talk about their environment, showing interest in a helicopter overhead which was 'a forces one because it's black', and inspecting a daddy longlegs more closely. Children construct objects from their own ideas, accessing tools as necessary to complete the task and mimicking their use in role-play. They confidently use the computer and other technological equipment, navigating their way through programs, adjusting the volume to suit, and phoning mummy on the mobile.

### **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement: Very Good

Children have free access to outdoors and seize opportunities to paint, construct, and dig outside. They join in activity sessions energetically, copying staff to develop a wide range of movements including jumping, marching and balance. Reluctant participants watch from the sidelines but staff encourage them to participate when they feel ready. Children know how exercise affects their body, accessing drinks when needed, and cooling off outside. They use equipment sensibly and safely.

### **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement: Very Good

Children explore colour, shape and space through relevant, practical activities linked to topics. They mix and play with media to see what happens, adding paint to glue, and sprinkling powder paint through shakers. Most recognise a number of colours. Children know the words of several songs and sing tunefully, beating time with their feet. They copy staffs actions, energetically trying to outdo their friends. Children like role-play and develop their ideas well with no inhibitions.

**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:
- the collection arrangements, to enable parents and carers to share in children's learning on a daily basis and read the notice board at leisure.

*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.*