



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 115372

DfES Number: 580457

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 16/02/2004  
Inspector Name Jeannette Waring

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care  
Setting Name St Mary's Playgroup  
Setting Address St Mary of the Crays  
Church Centre, 114 Old Road  
Crayford  
Kent  
DA1 4DZ

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of The Committee of St Mary's Playgroup  
1028153

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name The Committee of St Mary's Playgroup  
Address 13 Manor Way  
Bexleyheath  
Kent  
DA7 6JP

## 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 Pre-School is managed by a parent committee and has been in operation for approximately 29 years. The group operates from rooms above St. Mary's Parish Church. They have sole use of the main play room and are also able to use other rooms within the church complex. The group is situated adjacent to St. Joseph's Primary School and is able to use the school playground and field for outdoor play. The pre-school is set in a residential area close to Crayford and Bexleyheath shopping centres. It serves families from the locality .

The group is open from 9:00 to 11:30 Monday to Friday and from 12:45 to 15:15 Monday, Wednesday and Thursday during term time.

There are eight members of staff including the playleader; all staff hold an appropriate childcare qualification and all hold a current first aid certificate.

This pre-school is included in Bexley's Early Years Development and Childcare Plan and receives nursery education funding for all three and four year old children attending. There are currently 42 children on roll aged from 2 to under 5 years; 25 3-year-olds, 23 of whom receive funding and 8 4-year-olds all of whom are funded. The group supports a small number of children who have special educational needs. At present there are no children attending who speak English as an additional language.

### How good is the Day Care?

St Mary's Pre-School provides children with a good standard of care in a warm, friendly and stimulating environment. The main playroom is bright and welcoming and good use is made of the available space. Children have regular access to outdoor play and in inclement weather are able to use a large hall for physical play activities. The setting's policies and procedures form an effective operational plan and all required documentation is maintained to a high standard. All records are carefully completed and securely stored, however, the register does not currently

record hours of attendance for children who do not attend a full session. At the time of the inspection the setting was in the process of completing the Pre-School Learning Alliance Accreditation Scheme.

Good attention is paid to health, safety and hygiene issues. Good arrangements are in place for the safe arrival and collection of children and a CCTV unit allows staff to effectively monitor access to the provision. The setting operates a keyworker system and staff demonstrate a good knowledge of the children in their care and cater for children's individual needs. Children with special educational needs are well supported.

Staff plan and provide a good range of appropriate and interesting play activities for the children. Interaction between staff and children is very good. Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour; they set clear rules and boundaries which the children know and understand and encourage good behaviour with appropriate praise and encouragement.

Partnership with parents is strong. The pre-school is managed by a parent committee and all parents are encouraged to take an active part in the work of the setting. Regular newsletters keep them up-to-date with pre-school activities and the committee organises events for parents throughout the year.

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

At the last inspection the setting was required to keep a record of any significant incidents including any significant incidents of unacceptable behaviour. There has been no requirement to record anything since the last inspection, however the setting has an incident record book in place.

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

- Staff plan and provide a wide range of stimulating play activities, a good range of good quality equipment is provided and staff routinely sit with children extending their play.
- Documentation is maintained to a high standard, in particular the comprehensive policies for health and safety issues ensure that children are safe and secure at all times.
- The keyworker system enables staff to form good relationships with the children in their care; staff demonstrate a good understanding of children's individual needs as well as their skills and abilities.
- The strong partnership between staff and parents underpins the work of the setting; the parent committee works closely with staff to manage the group and between them they encourage all parents to be actively involved with their child's learning at pre-school.

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

- the procedure for recording hours of attendance.

**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
2	Record hours of attendance for all children.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

St. Mary's Pre-School enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals. Effective teaching ensures that children's play is appropriately supported and extended. Children are very confident and happy, they are forming good relationships with each other and with staff, and behaviour is very good.

A good range of stimulating, practical play activities are planned every day and children are encouraged to practice and refine skills; they explore and investigate equipment and materials and express their thoughts and ideas verbally and in their play. Staff spend time talking and listening to children and encourage them to think for themselves. Children concentrate well at chosen activities and enjoy taking part in group singing time and listening to stories in small groups, although whole group story times are less effective. Children's creative and imaginative development is well supported although they do not have access to a wide range of freely available craft materials each day. Good systems are in place to provide support for children with special educational needs and for those who speak English as an additional language.

This setting is managed by a parent committee; leadership and management and partnership with parents is very good. Staff and parents have clearly defined roles and areas of responsibility and they work closely together to create a friendly and harmonious environment for the children. Clear and effective policies and procedures and a strong commitment to staff training underpins this work. The staff team work well together and the effective keyworker system ensures children's individual needs are met. Staff meet together each week to plan, evaluate and review work and to complete children's assessment records. Parents have regular opportunities to share and to contribute to children's records and staff use assessment to inform future plans.

### What is being done well?

- Children's personal, social and emotional development is well supported. The staff team know the children well and are able to meet their individual needs. This supports children's growing confidence and independence and fosters their self-esteem.
- The well planned curriculum, the range of good quality equipment and the care with which the activities are presented ensure that children are given a broad and stimulating daily programme.
- Staff ensure that children have daily access to outdoor play space or to the large hall, where they are able to move freely and use a wide range of equipment which supports their physical development. Children are learning to move with confidence, control and imagination. The outdoor area is also used imaginatively to extend children's learning across the curriculum.

- The staff team is strong, they work well together to create a happy, relaxed and friendly environment and are good role models for children.

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

- the organisation of whole group story time
- children's access to a wide range of freely available art and craft materials on a daily basis.

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

There were no key issues from the last inspection, however a point for consideration was raised. The setting was asked to provide more access to the alphabet frieze so that children have more opportunities to recognise the shape and sound of letters. Children now have many opportunities to recognise letter shapes in the labels and notices round the room, through the use of name cards and in a range of games and activities. Children sing rhyming songs and enjoy listening to and joining in with alliteration and refrains in stories. Some older children recognise letters and can sound familiar initial letters.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are happy, sociable, motivated and confident, they settle well to play and move between activities making independent choices. Children are learning to play co-operatively, to share and to take turns. Staff set clear boundaries for children and behaviour is very good. Staff foster children's self-esteem by valuing their efforts, listening carefully to them and giving appropriate praise and encouragement.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Staff encourage language development by speaking clearly and listening carefully to children, consequently many older children are confident and fluent speakers. Children enjoy stories and rhyming activities and use books for pleasure in the well resourced book corner, however, whole group story time is not always effective for all children. There are many opportunities for children to make marks, draw and write in a range of daily activities and older children have very good pencil control.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children enjoy counting in daily activities, many older children count reliably to 10 and can recognise numerals. Number rhymes and games help children to become familiar with numbers and counting and these are also used to introduce simple calculation. Children weigh and measure in cooking activities and when preparing playdough and have many opportunities to explore shape, size and position and to set, sort, compare, match and make patterns with the wide range of carefully chosen resources.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children have very good opportunities to investigate the natural world in the outside area and to explore natural materials in a range of daily play activities. They have opportunities to design and build using construction toys and recycled materials and the inclusion of a computer and a range of working equipment in the daily programme ensures children are familiar with everyday technology. Children have a growing awareness of their own culture and are introduced to a range of other cultures.

**PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children have regular access to outside playspace and to a large hall where they can explore the space around them; they use climbing and balancing equipment and wheeled toys and practice skills such as running, jumping, hopping and skipping. They use balls to practice their throwing and catching skills and are able to use a range of tools, equipment and malleable materials with growing dexterity. Children move around the building with control and use the stairs in safety.

**CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Very Good
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Staff encourage children to explore their own ideas, to use the materials provided for their own designs and to experiment with a range of media and materials. Children mix paint, make dough, paint, draw, build and create collage pictures freely. However, only a limited range of craft materials are provided each day. The role play area provides some very good opportunities for children to use their imagination and children create games and characters for themselves in this area.

**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 key issues but two points for consideration.
- review and evaluate the whole group story time to ensure that all children benefit from the experience
- review the way art and craft materials for collage/box building are presented to encourage children to make an independent selection from the range provided.

*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.*