



**Office for Standards  
in Education**

## **COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT**

**URN 108463**

**DfES Number: 517677**

### **INSPECTION DETAILS**

Inspection Date      15/10/2003  
Inspector Name      Annette, Marie Carter

### **SETTING DETAILS**

Day Care Type      Sessional Day Care  
Setting Name      St Mary's Pre-school  
Setting Address      St Mary's School  
                         Cookham Road  
                         Maidenhead  
                         Berkshire  
                         SL6 7EG

### **REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS**

Name                      Mrs Patti Prescott

## 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 opened in 1990. It operates from two rooms in a mobile within the school grounds of St Mary's Roman Catholic school premises, Maidenhead.

There are currently 50 children from three to five years on the roll. This includes 22 funded three year olds and 15 funded four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a number of children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.00 to 11.45 every weekday, and an afternoon session operates from 12.30 to 15.00 every weekday apart from Wednesday's.

Six members of staff work with the children and an additional staff member is employed on a part-time basis. Over half the staff have recognised early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and has close links with St Mary's school.

### How good is the Day Care?

St Mary's Pre-school provides good quality care for children.

All aspects of the provision are well organised, and effective use is made of the staff, space and resources to ensure that all children are well cared for. The space is organised effectively to promote children's development and safety. Staff are guided by an agreed set of policies and procedures which they understand and consistently apply. All of the relevant documentation is in place, although some detail is missing.

High priority is given to ensuring children's safety and appropriate precautions are taken to safeguard children and minimise potential risks. The group takes positive steps to promote health and hygiene and children are encouraged by staff to follow appropriate hygiene procedures. Staff understand the need to protect children and the appropriate procedures to follow if concerned about a child. Children behave well

and respond positively to the staff and the setting routines. Staff use praise and encouragement effectively to encourage independence, promote good behaviour and self-esteem.

The staff work well as a team to plan a stimulating range of practical activities which promote children's thinking, creativity, knowledge and development. Children's learning and play are well supported by staff and sufficient challenges are provided in all areas of learning. Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the individual needs of the children attending. Staff take time to listen to the children and good relationships are evident. The group has a good understanding of equal opportunities and has a suitable written policy in place.

The group works in partnership with parents in order to promote the child's well-being, development and progress.

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

Not applicable

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

- The children are provided with sufficient challenges and stimulation in all areas of learning.
- The space is organised well to allow children to move confidently and safely within the environment.
- Staff make children's safety a high priority and all potential risks have been effectively minimised.
- There are high standards of hygiene and good systems in place to prevent the spread of infection, which staff adhere to.
- Staff promote children's good health and encourage children's independence during basic hygiene routines.
- Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the children's individual needs, which they cater for appropriately.
- Children respond positively to the staff and the setting routines and know what is expected of them.

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

- the child protection policy, to include procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation made against a staff member.

#### **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
13	ensure the child protection policy includes procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation made against a member of staff;

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

St Mary's Pre-school offers a good quality nursery education. Children enjoy learning through a wide range of interesting activities, and make generally good progress in all areas of learning.

Teaching is generally good. Staff have a sound knowledge of the foundation stage, shown by the activities planned and observed, and through discussions with staff. Teaching methods encourage children to engage in conversation, however some staff lack confidence in their ability to question effectively to extend children's learning. Staff contribute to planning systems which effectively covers all six areas of learning. There are appropriate assessment systems in place to record children's progress, although these are not used to guide future planning and further extend learning. Relationships are good, children respond positively to staff and behave well. Staff use praise and encouragement effectively to encourage independence, promote good behaviour and self-esteem. Children with special educational needs are well supported and strategies are in place to provide appropriate support for children with English as an additional language.

Leadership and management is generally good. The committee and staff work well as a team and are committed to ongoing professional development and continued improvement in the quality of education provided.

The partnership with parents is generally good and contributes to the children's progress towards the early learning goals. Parents are regularly kept informed about their child's time at pre-school, their activities and progress. They are encouraged to involve themselves and share observations with staff and are welcome to discuss their child's progress. Most parents are happy with the quality and quantity of information they receive.

### What is being done well?

- Staff create a well resourced and stimulating environment where children express and communicate their ideas using a wide range of tools and equipment competently.
- Children show a good awareness of shape and relate this knowledge to similarities in their environment.
- Children show a respect for others personal space and negotiate space effectively and safely.
- Staff are aware of their strengths and weaknesses and attend ongoing training.
- Children are developing good language skills and are good communicators. They initiate conversation with others with emerging self-confidence.

- Effective behaviour management strategies are used which encourage children's independence and self-discipline. Relationships and behaviour are good, and children show care and concern for others.

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

- the use of daily routines to promote problem solving and simple calculation to consolidate children's understanding of mathematics;
- the use of assessment to guide future planning of activities, and to reflect extension activities for more able children;
- the staff expertise in the effective use of open ended questioning to extend children's learning in all areas;

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

The setting has made generally good progress since the last inspection.

Staff have introduced a wide range of topics to increase the opportunities for children to explore their environment and question how things work. The use of investigative equipment has been extended and learning has been enhanced in this area.

Planning records have been improved and fully reflect the six areas of learning and the various elements contained within them. Children's records detail observations and achievements and such evidence is included in the end of year report.

The group have made good progress towards encouraging children's independence during snack times, although there still remains missed opportunities to exploit all practical situations for learning purposes.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children show increasing independence in selecting and carrying out activities. Children regularly seek out others to share experiences and are forming good relations with their peers. The children respond positively to staff and behave well. Their confidence and independence is encouraged through the effective organisation of resources, and daily routines. There is some evidence to suggest that children explore cultures and beliefs through everyday practical activities.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are developing good language skills and are good communicators. Children use language purposefully to describe their thoughts and feelings, and listen to others with interest. Some children spend time in the book corner and show an interest in illustrations and print in books, although on inspection this area lacked staff support. Many children can recognise their names in print, and are beginning to write them independently with correctly formed letters.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children show an interest in numbers and counting. They are becoming effective at using mathematical language to describe quantity, size and shape during their practical activities. However, there are some missed opportunities to consolidate mathematical learning during daily routines. Children show a good awareness of shape and relate this knowledge by identifying similarities in their environment. For example, a child made a comparison between a circle and the shape of a steering wheel.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children confidently and frequently talk about past and present events in their lives. They are curious and show an interest in the natural world and their community. Staff provide a good range of resources for children to explore and investigate, however there are some missed opportunities to encourage discussion of why and how things work. Children use simple tools competently and safely and can complete simple programmes on the computer.

**PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children negotiate space effectively and show an awareness of others. They engage skillfully in a variety of activities involving hand-eye coordination, and show good control and balance on large equipment. They are beginning to explore the effects of exercise on the body through practical activities and with encouragement from staff. Written plans indicate that less attention is given to this area of learning, but despite this practical evidence shows children are developing well in this area.

**CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children express their creativity in a variety of ways, using a wide range of materials, tools and equipment. They enjoy music and singing sessions and successfully memorise words and actions, explore simple rhythm patterns and sounds of musical instruments. Staff missed the opportunity to further explore the children's response to the sweet and sour taste of the fruit during snack time. Children are developing a good awareness of colour and communicate this through drawings and paintings.

**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**

- use daily routines to develop and consolidate children's understanding of mathematics, in particular problem solving and simple calculation;
- use assessments to inform and guide future planning, showing clearly how plans can be modified for those who learn at different rates and extension activities for more able children;
- develop staff expertise in asking more open ended questions about why things happen and how things work.

*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.*