



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 127608

DfES Number:

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 15/09/2003
Inspector Name Lesley Hartley

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name St Marys Pre-School Playgroup
Setting Address Riverhead Village Hall
Riverhead
Sevenoaks
Kent
TN13 3DS

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of St Marys pre-school committee

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St Marys pre-school committee
Address 29 Lyndhurst Drive
Sevenoaks
Kent
TN13 2HG

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 Playgroup opened in the 1950's. It operates from one room within

St. Mary's village hall in Riverhead in Sevenoaks. There are currently 50 children from two and a half to five years on roll. This includes 8 funded three year olds and 21 funded four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. None of the children speak English as a second language.

The group opens four days a week during school times. Sessions are from Monday and Tuesday 9.00 a.m. until 11.45 a.m., Thursday and Friday from 9.00 a.m. until 3.00 p.m.

Seven staff work with the children. Over half the staff early years qualifications to NVQ 2 or 3. Some staff are working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership(EYDCP) and Pre-School Learning Alliance.

How good is the Day Care?

St. Mary's Pre-School Play Group offers a satisfactory standard of care for children.

Children have the opportunity to undertake a wide range of activities, overseen by qualified and experienced staff. There is a range of policies and procedures however staff are not familiar with all of these.

The programme is carefully planned giving the children a wide variety of choices, however resources do not promote equality of opportunity. The staff are welcoming towards the children and their parents. The staff have a consistent approach to managing behaviour and offer praise and encouragement to the children.

There is a range of paperwork in place however some of this lacks detail.

What has improved since the last inspection?

A number of actions relating to documentation and the need to complete a regular risk assessment were made at the last inspection. These actions have been met.

What is being done well?

- the provider makes good use of the space available;
- a wide range of stimulating and interesting play materials are available to the children;
- an extensive range of policies and procedures are available to parents;
- every child is encouraged to participate in the activities;
- the group have consistent procedures in place when dealing with inappropriate behaviour.

What needs to be improved?

- the record of visitors to the group need improving;
- confidentiality of records by ensuring that they cannot be accessed by unauthorised people;
- the security of the premises, to prevent unauthorised access;
- ensure good hygiene practices are in place regarding hand washing;
- the range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice regarding disability;
- staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues.

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
6	improve the security of the premises to prevent unauthorised access
9	provide a range of appropriate activities that promotes equality of opportunity including disability
2	ensure records are available recording names, arrival and departure times of visitors and that all records are kept confidential
13	ensure that the child protection procedure for the nursery complies with local Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) procedures and develop staff's knowledge in this area

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision of nursery education at St Mary's Pre-School is generally good overall. It enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals in most areas of learning. However, there are weaknesses in the programmes for communication, language and literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world.

The quality of teaching is generally good overall. Senior staff plan a variety of appropriate practical activities for the first part of the morning and children are grouped according to their age for story and special daily activity. Both younger and older children have sufficient opportunity to enjoy physical activities inside on a regular basis. Resources are of good quality and organised to encourage children to make choices. All staff maintain a dialogue with them and help to develop children's language. Free play activities for funded children are presented in an enthusiastic and lively manner, but older children are not extended or provided with sufficient challenge, particularly in aspects of literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world.

Staff have begun to observe and make notes of children's learning in the each of the six areas of learning. This enables senior staff to use assessment to plan out the next steps in children's learning.

The leadership and management of the group is generally good. The supervisor undertakes appraisals and has a system of monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching. She is aware that new staff work are working towards a more collaborative approach, however, they lack confidence and training in the early learning goals.

The partnership with parents and carers is generally good. Parents are greeted warmly and talk with staff about their children and are well informed of future events in the group. An evening is planned around the early learning goals to help parents support their child's learning at home.

What is being done well?

- Relationships between staff and the children and their parents are good. These help children develop children's confidence and support their learning.
- Children explore a range of creative materials that encourages them to use their imagination.
- Regular children's assessment is helping to plan their next stepping stones in learning.

What needs to be improved?

- staff knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals.
- the attention to increasing children's awareness of print of sounds of letters and words: and of the different purposes of writing.
- the opportunity to explore addition and subtraction in practical play situations.
- the attention given to living things, objects and the use of technology.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The information from children's assessment is used to help support children's individual learning.

Although no outdoor play area is available the staff have planned a regular indoor programme for physical activities each day during free play time and a more formal session twice weekly.

Children enjoy the cosy book corner and share books with each other. Staff read individual stories and both three and four year olds enjoy their daily group story time.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children's confidence and self esteem are built up by staff who are sensitive to their needs and know them well. They are encouraged to be independent and concentrate on tasks. They select activities from the available resources and are learning to take care of their personal needs. They share and take turns. Overall children behave well, however, sometimes older children become boisterous.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are keen to communicate with staff through talk and gesture. They listen enjoy sharing books with staff and others. However, they are not sufficiently encouraged to notice print, or sounds of letters and words. Children recognise their names and are beginning to write these, but activities such as role play are not extended to include opportunities to write for different purposes.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are learning to count to 10 and recognise, shapes, colours and sizes for example, comparing the size of the orange and this is reinforced as they use words like half and whole. However, practical play situations and finger rhymes are not sufficiently exploited to extend children's understanding of adding and taking away.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Planned activities help children to notice changes that occur for example wet and dry when making the icing for the biscuits They are encouraged to become familiar with their local surrounding. They have opportunities to make models from construction. However, there is limited chances for children to compare objects and explore living things and to use technology regularly.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are given regular opportunities to balance, crawl through tunnels, and jump. Staff are on hand to give support and encourage new skills such as helping children to manage the trampoline safely. There is two planned regular weekly indoor physical activity sessions that all children access. Children learn to handle scissors, pencils and paintbrushes with increasing control.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children participate enthusiastically, they draw freely and use a variety of paints to make their hand prints. Role play activities are varied and children enjoyed playing 'the shop' There are planned weekly music sessions and opportunity to explore instruments. However, there is less chances for children to sing rhymes and enjoy using their voices.

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

- the staff's knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals.
- the attention given to increasing children's awareness of print of the sounds of letters and words, and of different purposes of writing.
- the opportunities for children to explore mathematical concepts through practical play particularly adding and subtraction.
- the attention given to exploring living things, objects and the use of technology.

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.