



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 101530

DfES Number:

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	03/07/2003
Inspector Name	Karen Elizabeth Screen

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	St Mary's Playgroup (Tetbury)
Setting Address	Christchurch Hall The Chipping Tetbury Gloucestershire GL8 8EU

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of St Mary's Playgroup (Tetbury)
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	St Mary's Playgroup (Tetbury)
Address	Christchurch Hall The Chipping Tetbury Gloucestershire GL8 8EU

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 Playgroup is situated in a church hall near the centre of Tetbury, a rural town in Gloucestershire. The playgroup serves the local community and is managed by a voluntary committee with charitable status. The playgroup facilities include: the hall, kitchen, toilets and the use of the gardens of a nearby nursing home, for outside play.

There are 35 children on roll; of these, 15 three-year-old and 12 four-year-old children receive education funding. The group use an adapted form of High/Scope to organise children's learning. There are currently no children attending who have special needs or who use English as a second language. The group is open from 09:30 to 12:00, Monday to Friday during term-time only.

There are four members of staff. Three hold current child protection and first aid certificates and appropriate early years qualifications.

How good is the Day Care?

St Mary's Playgroup provides good quality care for children. Good use is made of staff, space and resources, which are organised so that children are able to extend activities for themselves. There are effective arrangements for sharing records with parents to keep them informed of their child's development. However better use could be made of prior parental knowledge of the children.

The group's risk assessments help to maintain a safe and secure environment, including the premises which are very secure with effective systems for the safe arrival and collection of children. However registration arrangements do not clearly show when children and staff are present. Staff are active in promoting good health and hygiene e.g. children do not need to be reminded to wash their hands after using the toilet. The staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. All children are valued and their individual needs met. Most staff have a good knowledge and understanding of child protection issues.

Care learning and play is a major strength of the group. Children are involved in a wide range of activities which support their language, mathematical thinking, imagination and creativity. Good behaviour is valued and encouraged. Staff are expert at dealing with potentially difficult behaviour. They are good role models and have reasonable and realistic expectations of children's behaviour. However, records of any incidents need to be recorded separately in order to maintain confidentiality.

Staff work in partnership with parents and carers to meet the needs of the children e.g. current parents organise "open days" for new children and their parents, to sample a typical day at the playgroup.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the group agreed to ensure that the toilet area is safe when used by the playgroup children. The report was copied to the person in charge of hire and maintenance for the premises. The work was delayed (through no fault of the group) and is now expected to be completed in the summer holidays.

What is being done well?

- There are effective procedures for appointing and vetting new staff (standard 1).
- The group maintain high staff ratios of one adult to five children (standard 2).
- The staff are committed to up-dating their training which is geared to reflect the needs of the individual as well as those of the playgroup (standard 2).
- Children are happy and keen to attend. They make confident choices from the activities provided and are interested in and enjoy their play. They form good relationships with the staff, who know the children well and respond to their needs. Staff are friendly and approachable, they give reassurance, encouragement and appropriate praise (standard 3).
- Observations and records of the activities are evaluative and used effectively to plan the next steps in children's play and learning (standard 3).
- The group make effective use of their risk assessments to maintain a safe and secure environment for children (standard 6).
- Children are treated with equal concern and the needs of all children are met. The resources reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender, disability, language, religion, and age. Staff actively pursue inclusion of all children and promote positive attitudes (standard 9).
- Staff, parents and committee members enjoy very good relationships. Parents feel involved, valued and able and welcome to contribute to their child's development through the playgroup. Parents feel well informed about their child's achievements and progress (standard 12).
- The group's policies are clear and helpful to staff, parents and committee. In addition, useful information is provided for staff, parents and committee about

their roles and responsibilities (standard 14).

What needs to be improved?

- the registration system for staff and children, to show the times of arrival and departure (standard 2);
- incident records, to ensure that confidentiality is maintained (standard 11);
- use of parental knowledge of the children (standard 12).

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	further develop the registration system for staff and children, showing the times of arrival and departure
11	make sure that incidents are recorded separately in order to maintain confidentiality

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

How effective is the nursery education?

St Mary's Playgroup offers high quality provision which helps children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals.

Teaching is very good. Relationships with children are excellent. Staff provide good role models and have reasonable and realistic expectations of children's behaviour. They use interesting and stimulating methods to help children make very good progress towards the early learning goals e.g. plan a good range of opportunities for children to practice skills which refine control and co-ordination even though they do not have their own outside play area. Observations and assessments are used well to monitor and evaluate the playgroup's provision of nursery education e.g. they are used to plan the next steps in children's learning. The group have identified the need for further development of their planning to include how activities/experiences are adapted for individual children. Staff promote self-confidence and a positive attitude in all children.

Leadership and management is very good. The playleader has a positive attitude which motivates and empowers her team. Key roles such as the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) have been delegated to staff with a particular strength or interest in the subject area. There is a strong team spirit and staff and parent helpers are very clear about their own roles and responsibilities. The playgroup are good at assessing their strengths and weaknesses. They have good strategies in place to improve the quality of their provision e.g. the SENCO oversees their policy and provision, attends regular training and shares good practice with all staff.

Partnership with parents is very good. Information about the group and its provision is of good quality. Parents feel very well informed about their child's achievements and progress. The next plan is to use parents knowledge of their child's interests, competencies and experiences to help plan the curriculum for the child.

What is being done well?

- Children form excellent relationships with staff and other children and are sensitive towards others. They learn to be co-operative and work well together.
- Children are confident, well behaved, independent and show high levels of concentration.
- Children's spoken language is developing very well. They learn to negotiate, organise and take turns in conversation.
- Information about the playgroup and its provision is very good. Parents value the detailed regular newsletter and the notice board which contains valuable information about the topics being covered, health matters and parenting issues.

- The playgroup are very good at assessing their own strengths and weaknesses. They have good strategies in place to improve the quality of their provision, for example the SENCO oversees their policy and provision, attends regular training and shares good practice with all staff.

What needs to be improved?

- planning, to provide sufficient detail to enable staff to adapt experiences and activities to promote learning for individual children;
- use of parents knowledge of their child's interests, competencies and experiences to help plan the curriculum for the child.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Improvement since the last inspection is generally good.

The group produced information about the desirable learning outcomes and later replaced it with information about playgroup activities which support the early learning goals, to take account of the change over to the early learning goals. They are continuing to develop the information contributed by parents. Planning now covers all areas of the early learning goals including what children are expected to learn.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making very good progress. They form excellent relationships with staff and other children. They learn to co-operate and work well together. Children are confident, well behaved, independent and show high levels of concentration e.g. three and four-year-olds listening intently to their key worker explain the choice of activities on offer and waiting their turn to plan their day.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making very good progress. They learn to negotiate, organise and take turns in conversation. Children's spoken and their language for thinking is developing very well. They use speech effectively to connect ideas, explain what is happening and anticipate what is happening next e.g. three and four-year-olds describing how ice cubes change shape and reduce in size when melting and predicting which tray of ice will melt first, the one inside, or the one outside.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making very good progress. They show a keen interest in numbers and counting. Three-year-old children confidently say and use numbers up to five e.g. counting the number of children in their group for snack time to find out how many cartons of milk would be needed. Some children show a good understanding of addition and subtraction through practical activities and discussion e.g. checking that the number of girls added to the number of boys equal the total number in their group.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making very good progress. They enjoy using their senses to explore objects and materials in practical activities e.g. tasting and feeling ice cubes melting in their cup. Children confidently select and use appropriate materials for building and construction. They have a very good understanding of the past, present and change over time e.g. three and four-year-olds discussing how we grow old, when walking past elderly people in the nursing home grounds used for outside play.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children are making very good progress. They show an awareness of space, themselves and others and move with control and coordination e.g. three and four-year-old children kicking and throwing ball to each other outside in the garden of the nursing home and riding bikes clock-wise around the cleared hall. Three and four-year-old children competently use a range of small and large equipment e.g. scissors, climbing frame (photographic evidence), paint brushes, glue sticks and trikes.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children are making very good progress. They engage well in imaginative play based on their own experiences e.g. four-year-old pretending to be a policeman holding up the traffic and two three-year-olds re-enacting the birthday celebrations held earlier and singing happy birthday. Children explore the sounds of different instruments with enthusiasm. Children work creatively on a small or large scale e.g. choosing from a wide range of materials to make their own seaside pictures.

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, but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- continue to develop planning, to provide sufficient detail to enable staff to adapt experiences and activities to promote learning for individual children;
- building upon parents knowledge of their child's interests, competencies and experiences to help plan the curriculum for the child.

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.