



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 305324

DfES Number: 516179

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 10/07/2003
Inspector Name Sylvia Cornock

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care, Full Day Care
Setting Name St Mary's Catholic Pre-School
Setting Address Belgrave Avenue
Congleton
CW12 1HT

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name . St Mary's Catholic Pre-Sch Com

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 Catholic pre-school is affiliated to the Catholic Primary school in Congleton in whose grounds it sits. It is administered by a committee of parents. It is registered to provide full day care for 22 children aged from two to five years from 9.00a.m. to 3.15.p.m. Full day care is offered so that children can attend two sessions in one day, and more than five sessions in one week. The lunch time is an optional link time between the normal sessions, when children staying must bring in a packed lunch.

The newly built premises consist of two large playrooms, kitchen, toilets and outdoor play area.

There are 36 children on roll of whom 13 three year olds and 19 four year olds are currently in receipt of funding.

There are six members of staff of whom two hold a relevant qualification, the supervisor has the NVQ3 and the deputy NVQ2. The group is supported by a teacher from the Early Years Development Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

St Mary's Pre School provides unsatisfactory care for children. Of the six staff employed two have completed relevant training, with one of these on sick leave. However, the training and experience is not reflected in current practice. One of the six staff employed has not completed the vetting procedure, this member of staff was left alone unsupervised with children. Volunteers/parents covering the supervision of children over the lunch time period have not completed relevant clearance. There are systems in place for recording children and staff daily. The procedure followed is not in accordance with the statement in the parents brochure. One member of staff was not signed in on the daily register for the morning session. There is no system for recording visitors.

The planning of the children's activities are basic, however there are a good range of

resources but these are not used effectively to promote children's all round development. Staff interaction is limited.

The newly erected building consists of two large playrooms which provides adequate space for the children. However the organisation of the equipment and resources stored within these rooms limits and restricts the accessibility for the children to benefit and meet their needs at all times. OFSTED are not given prior notice of changes regarding premises which affect the children's care. There has been a risk assessment completed, this does not state areas which they have outlined as needing attention, including recommendations regarding fire safety and health and safety issues.

Parents are given a brochure about the setting but this is out of date and does not include current information and practices.

What has improved since the last inspection?

During the last inspection 17 actions were raised for the Registered Person to address. These actions related to aspects of the written policies and procedures, safety outdoors, storage of equipment, play space, resources and care aspects in relation to children requiring a sleep or rest.

Since the last inspection some of the policies and procedural aspects have been addressed and some remain outstanding. An incident record book has been provided. The daily register for full day care does not show the times of arrival or departure, the policy document and parents brochure has not been updated to reflect the change to full day care. Written permission from parents to the seeking of any emergency medical advice or treatment has been addressed for some children. The complaints and child protection policy has not been updated to reflect correct information regarding the procedure to follow or the name, address and telephone number of the regulator. The outdoor area has not been addressed as the building of the new premises has taken place. Storage of equipment remains an issue. Although play space has increased within the new building, it is not used well, for sleep/rest or the range of activities provided which was minimal to promote children's all round development.

What is being done well?

- good range of equipment and materials (standard 3 & 5)
- premises are kept secure, main door locked, only opened by a member of staff (standard 6)
- children's dietary needs are known and followed (standard 8)

What needs to be improved?

- keep OFSTED informed of all changes. Std 1&4
- procedures for appointing staff, completing appropriate clearance on all staff

and ensuring unvetted staff are never left alone with children (std 1)

- staff induction to make them aware of the operational plan, policies and procedures. Std 2
- the written procedure to be followed for uncollected children. Std 2
- the details of all staff employed are kept and available. Std 2
- the space, resources and staffing deployment to ensure children are grouped appropriately and adult/child ratios are met. Std 2
- the qualification of staff and the needs to ensure 50% present hold a relevant childcare qualification. Std 2
- the daily register to include all staff present and the recording of times of arrival and departure for children and staff. Std 2
- the recording of all visitors to the premises. Std 2
- the planning and play opportunities throughout the day. Std 3
- the staff are aware of children's individual needs in relation to sleep/rest and protection from the sun. Std 3
- the outside play area, storage of equipment and materials to be made safe. Std 4
- the resources and materials ensuring children have access to a full range of toys and equipment. Std 5
- the risk assessment of the premises to minimise identified risks to include fire safety and health and safety issues. Std 6
- the medication records to be countersigned parents and their permission for the seeking of medical advice. Std 7
- the safety of storing lunch boxes in the fridge at the correct temperature (std 8)
- the developing of an equal opportunities policy and the provision of resources to reflect positive images. Std 9
- the training opportunities for the staff with responsibility for children with special needs, child protection and behaviour management Stds 10.11& 13
- the information shared with parents to include, policies and procedures, organisational changes, the address and telephone number of the regulator. Std 12

Outcome of the inspection

Unsatisfactory

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 must take the following actions by the date shown

| Std | Action | Date |
|-----|--|------------|
| 1 | ensure staff who have not been vetted are not left with the children unsupervised | 31/08/2003 |
| 2 | ensure staff/child ratios are met at all times and staff are deployed effectively | 31/08/2003 |
| 2 | provide an action plan on how you are going to meet the qualification requirements | 31/08/2003 |
| 2 | ensure there is a procedure in the event of a child not being collected | 31/08/2003 |
| 14 | must keep Ofsted informed of all changes prior to them taking place | 31/08/2003 |
| 5 | ensure children have access to a full range of toys and equipment to promote play and learning in all areas including resources and materials to promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. | 31/08/2003 |
| 6 | ensure the risk assessment is reviewed regularly and is linked to Health and Safety Policy, training and induction. Pay particular attention to the fridge temperature, storage of equipment and the supervision of the climbing frame | 31/08/2003 |
| 6 | ensure the recommendations from the Fire Safety Officer are implemented particularly in relation to the storage of the keys. | 31/08/2003 |
| 6 | ensure the requirements of the Environmental Health Officer are implemented | 31/08/2003 |
| 9 | provide an equal opportunities policy which is consistent with current legislation and guidance, available to all staff, volunteers and parents. | 31/08/2003 |
| 11 | review procedures for managing children's behaviour to take into account the need for consistent boundaries and ensure appropriate supervision at all times to reduce the opportunity for | 31/08/2003 |

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| | bullying to occur. | |
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The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

| Std | Recommendation |
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| 2 | ensure there are written records relating to all members of staff and they are recorded on the daily attendance register. |
| 2 | ensure there are sufficient qualified staff. Staff must be clear about their individual role and responsibilities, using space and resources to benefit children, allowing staff to work directly with children in appropriate group sizes. |
| 2 | ensure your daily register of attendance shows the arrival and departure times of the children and includes staff attendance. |
| 2 | ensure a record of all visitors to the premises are kept |
| 2 | ensure induction of staff includes knowledge and understanding of the policies and procedures within the setting. |
| 2 | ensure only suitably vetted staff are responsible for children over the lunchtime period, if parents or volunteers are used to compliment the staff, they must be vetted or supervised at all times. |
| 3 | ensure staff are aware of children's individual needs and allow them to rest or sleep when appropriate and ensure that adequate steps are taken to protect them from the sun. |
| 4 | ensure that only areas considered suitable for registration are used, this includes the outdoor playarea. |
| 5 | consider the storage and presentation of toys and equipment, so that they offer sufficient stimulation and challenge. |
| 6 | practice fire evacuation procedures on a regular basis to ensure both staff and all children are familiar with the process |
| 7 | ensure all parents have given written permission to the seeking of any emergency medical advice or treatment in the future and that all entries in the medication book are countersigned by parents. |
| 10 | provide a written statement which is consistent with current legislation and guidance, ensuring staff have regard to the Code of Practice (2002) and are aware of the SENCO's responsibilities. |
| 12 | confirm all parents awareness of the practice regarding saying prayers |
| 12 | review information for parents to ensure the correct detail is included in relation to staff qualifications, responsibility of children's attendance being recognised and complaints procedure.(to include Ofsted as the regulator) |
| 12 | ensure parents are informed of the daily routines and visits to areas of the premises which do not conform to registration. |
| 13 | ensure that the designated member of staff gains knowledge based on the Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) procedure, has attended a child protection training course and this knowledge is cascaded to all staff to ensure they are aware of child protection issues and are able to |

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| | implement the policies and procedures. |
| 13 | ensure the policy includes procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer. |
| 14 | ensure records are kept confidentially |

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The nursery education at St Mary's Catholic Pre-school has significant weaknesses. Children's progress towards early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development is limited by significant weaknesses in leadership and teaching. There is generally good progress being made in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development and creative development but opportunities are missed to use every day situations to promote learning.

The quality of teaching has significant weaknesses. The staff's insecure knowledge and understanding of stepping stones towards early learning goals is the underlying cause for weaknesses in planning, use of resources, assessment, and setting appropriate challenges for three and four year olds in all curriculum areas. Some inadequate supervision leads to poor behaviour which in turn limits children's equal access to some activities.

The quality of leadership and management is poor. There has been little commitment to improvement in practice since the last inspection, although new premises offer much greater scope for this to be demonstrated. The manager does not involve herself actively in support of her staff during sessions or monitor their effectiveness nor does she have much involvement with the children. Little use is being made of the professional guidance that can be obtained from the early years support network.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Parents give assistance in supervising children during lunch times and when the children are taken out on trips. Information is shared daily on an informal basis and parents feel confident they can discuss their children's progress at any time. Children sometimes take worksheets home to work on. There is an end of year parents evening. Information given to parents about the curriculum is limited. Parents are not informed about the stepping stones to early learning goals.

What is being done well?

- Children play creatively with self selected activities from a good variety of resources. They have opportunities to explore colour and texture through a wide variety of art and craft activities.
- The structure given to children's development of pencil control, learning to recognise and write letters in their names and link sounds to letters.
- The use of games and number activities help children to sort and classify, count up to ten, learn about shape and size and make comparisons.
- Staff develop good relationships with parents through informal daily contact. Parents feel confident to discuss their child's progress at any time..

What needs to be improved?

- the expectations for children's behaviour so that they learn to be considerate and respectful to each other and adults;
- the quality of supervision and improvement of staff involvement in free play activities to ensure all children are gaining equal access to activities, they sustain interest, and their thinking is suitably challenged;
- the over dependence on published worksheets to provide structure, and using every day opportunities more effectively to support learning.
- the structure of long term and medium term plans to ensure all strands within each area of learning are being covered over the year;
- the identification on daily plans of the learning aims for activities, how these relate to stepping stones and how children are to be grouped or supported, based on information gained from assessments;
- the use of planned observations during activities in order to make assessments of progress in a broader range of skills than are currently identified from worksheets;
- the programme of activities to develop children's understanding of their own and other people's cultures;
- the identification in the weekly physical education programme of how activities are varied so that children regularly use equipment for aiming and catching, pushing and pulling and pedalling; use space safely indoors and understand about their bodies;
- the information given to parents about the stepping stones and how activities link to the foundation stage curriculum.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The areas for improvement identified at the last inspection were: staff's knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones for the early learning goals; teachers' planning to identify how adults will be deployed, so that all members of staff support and extend children's learning, particularly in communication language and literacy and mathematical development during 'free play' times; children's behaviour during large group times and transitions between activities; assessment of children's progress to include all areas of learning; using assessments to inform plans for individuals and groups, and to comply with the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs; children's knowledge and understanding of other people's cultures and beliefs.

Progress towards improvements in the above areas has been poor. Staff continue to have an insecure knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones towards early learning goals. Although daily plans now identify who is responsible for some activities at each session these continue to be mostly craft, worksheet or games orientated activities rather than input into children's free play. The plans do not specify clearly enough what the expected learning outcome is for children, so staff

are not sure how to support and extend the children's learning. The management of children's behaviour continues to have weaknesses due to poor supervision. There is a record of assessment now being used to record progress towards early learning goals, but it is not being used effectively as a planning tool. There is still no programme for promoting awareness of other people's cultures and beliefs.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

There are significant weaknesses in this area. Some children do not gain confidence when they are pushed away from activities by others and staff do not manage behaviour well. Children who are allowed to be rude or dominate others do not learn consideration or respect. However, children are forming relationships and becoming increasingly independent. The failure of staff to motivate children results in lack of persistence in some activities. Staff do not explain the purpose of the prayer.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children make generally good progress. They use language for communication well when playing imaginative games. Staff miss opportunities to help older children listen more attentively, and share experiences within a group. Children learn to identify and write letters in their names and link sounds to letters, but do not write for a purpose. Story time is enjoyed by most children. A good range of books are available to children but they do not benefit without planned staff involvement.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children make generally good progress. Children learn to recognise numerals, count up to ten, and make comparisons, using a published scheme of work sheets. Children also use practical sorting and counting activities from a good range of resources. Detailed records are kept of children's progress. Staff do not use knowledge gained from observations to set children challenges during free play activities and develop mathematical thinking to solve problems.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

There are significant weaknesses in this area as staff are weak in their understanding of the early learning goals. Staff have good resources to help children investigate the features of objects, materials and living things, but have limited learning aims so fail to develop children's interest. Children use computer technology and learn how to join materials in craft. Outings are used to explore the environment. Staff do not raise children's awareness of cultural diversity in their planning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

There are significant weaknesses affecting children's progress. Stronger children climb with agility, but pushing on the climbing frame without effective supervision puts children in danger. Children do not move about safely between the two rooms resulting in a child tripping over. The programme of activities does not ensure children have regular access to wheeled toys, and equipment for aiming and catching. Children use a range of equipment to develop hand to eye co-ordination.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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| Judgement: | Generally Good |
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Children make generally good progress. Children use their imagination when playing socially in the role play area and with small world toys. There are regular opportunities for children to explore colour texture and shape during art and craft activities. Most children are responsive to music and singing for the concert but some do not like it to become too noisy. Children express themselves less well when art and craft activities are too structured

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The next inspection will take place in one to two years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- improve the staff's knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones and early learning goals;
- improve staff's expertise in supporting children's learning during free play activities;
- ensure long term and medium term planning covers all elements of the foundation stage curriculum;
- create more focused short term plans, by identifying specific learning aims for each activity;
- use observations more effectively to inform planning for individuals and groups;
- improve the management of staff to ensure that they are deployed effectively to enable them to keep children involved and interested in activities and monitor equality of access;
- foster in children a spirit of co-operation and respect for others.

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.