



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 509031

DfES Number:

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	08/03/2004
Inspector Name	Jennifer Devine

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	St Andrews Pre School
Setting Address	Malvern Avenue Harrow Middlesex HA2 9ER

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of St. Andrew's Pre-School
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	St. Andrew's Pre-School
Address	Chair of the M.C., c/o St. Andrews Church Malvern Avenue Harrow Middlesex HA2 9ER

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public 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 Andrews pre-school registered in 1985. It operates in St Andrews Church Hall in Harrow.

The children are separated into three groups within the hall. The group has sole use of the premises during opening times but all equipment needs to be stored away at the end of each session.

The group is registered for 50 children from 2 years 10 months to 5 years. There are currently 61 children on roll. This includes 32 funded 3 year olds and 6 funded 4 year olds. There are currently no children with special needs and the group supports 22 children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15 to 11:45am.

The staff group consists of 4 full time staff and 13 part time staff working with the children. Over half the staff hold early years qualifications. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. The setting is part of the Pre School Learning Alliance.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

St Andrews Pre School offers acceptable nursery education but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals in Communication, Language and Literacy and Creative have some weaknesses. In all other areas children are making generally good progress.

Teaching is acceptable but has some significant weaknesses. Most staff have a sound knowledge of the stepping stones which enables them to plan a satisfactory range of activities. They work closely with children to encourage their learning. However, this is not consistent and some staff do not provide sufficient challenges to children's learning, in particular in extending vocabulary. Some staff have a good awareness of assessment and can clearly identify children's achievements to help them move on in their learning but this is inconsistent. Evaluation methods need to be developed for the whole group. Although there are currently no children with special needs there are appropriate systems in place to provide support. There are good systems in place to support children with an additional language.

Leadership and management is acceptable but has some weaknesses. The manager is new in post and is still settling in. She provides support to staff but needs to be aware of the inconsistencies of some staff's level of involvement with children. She encourages staff to attend further training such as foundation stage workshops. The manager is aware of needing to further develop planning and assessment methods.

Partnership with parents is generally good. The setting is welcoming and staff are approachable. Verbal feedback is given regularly and parents can speak with the keyworker if they wish. However, more formal meetings could be arranged to ensure parents are kept well informed about their child's learning. Regular newsletters are produced which contain information on the theme. Some parents are actively involved in the group, such as helping with computer time.

What is being done well?

- Children work well together, are co operative, share and take turns.
- Children have good relationships with adults and each other.
- There are good opportunities for children to develop their imaginative thinking through well resourced role play materials.
- There is a good range of practical mathematical activities for children to develop their counting and number skills.
- The group works well in partnership with parents.

What needs to be improved?

- Planning for the curriculum needs to be consistent across the group.
- All staff need to develop an understanding of assessment and evaluation methods.
- More opportunities need to be available for children to develop their independence with self help skills and in selecting a wide range of creative materials.
- All staff need to provide sufficient challenges to children's developing vocabulary.
- More opportunities to practise mark making for all children.
- Developing problem solving opportunities for mathematical development.
- Enhancing the curriculum for knowledge and understanding of the world to ensure children have opportunities to question why and how things happen.
- Develop the curriculum for physical development to include a full range of planned activities .

What has improved since the last inspection?

Older children are given more opportunities to sound letters and extend their vocabulary. Children have some opportunities to practise writing letters and their names but this could be enhanced further. The younger children still require more input from staff on extending vocabulary. The Special Educational Needs Policy has now been adopted by the group and is fully understood. Good support is given to children with an additional language.

There are now good resources of non fiction books, there is access to computers and resources reflect positive images.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children work well together, are generally cooperative, share and take turns. They are generally confident and have developed good relationships with adults. They have a sense of right and wrong. Children are generally interested in the resources and are able to make choices with the available activities and concentrate well. There is a lack of opportunity for children to independently select resources, such as creative materials and develop their independence during snack times.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Older children listen attentively to stories and group discussions. Children have good opportunities to develop their imaginative thinking with well resourced role play areas. Older children have generally good opportunities to link sounds to letters. They are beginning to understand print carries meaning and show an interest in books. There are missed opportunities for the three year olds in providing sufficient challenges for language development and in writing for a purpose for all children.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are learning to count up to ten and recognise numbers through practical activities such as measuring and playing skittles. They are enthusiastic to build intricate models from building bricks and use these to develop their understanding of shapes, sizes and positional language. They are beginning to understand simple addition and subtraction. There are missed opportunities for children to develop some problem solving with materials such as sand due to lack of adult intervention.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children have generally good opportunities to be involved in investigative and exploratory work such as experiments with water/ice and using a magnifying glass. They learn about past and present events in their lives and learn about people from the wider community such as the postman. Children have some opportunities to learn about the natural world such as growing bulbs or talking about animals but these need extending further to enable children to question why things happen.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children move around confidently with increasing control and are beginning to show an awareness of space, such as coordinating a tricycle. Children have daily opportunities for physical exercise but these sessions lack planning to ensure a balanced range of activities are provided. They use tools and equipment, such as paint brushes with confidence and handle materials with control.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
Children use medias such as paint when using the painting easel, junk modelling and collages which are largely adult directed. There is a lack of opportunity for children to select creative resources and work independently to develop their imagination. Older children enjoy story telling using props. Children have some opportunities to learn about sounds in planned activities such as recording their own voices or making and playing their own musical instruments.	
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's 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

- To develop consistency with the planning of the curriculum to ensure all children in the group have equal opportunities to develop their learning through a broad range of activities.
- Ensure all staff have a good understanding of assessment and evaluation methods to enable them to clearly identify children's achievements and help them move on in their learning.
- Ensure all staff have a good understanding of providing sufficient challenges to all children's language development.
- Provide more opportunities for children to independently select a full range of creative materials to enable them to develop their creative imagination in art.

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.