



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 205482

DfES Number: 517411

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 07/12/2004  
Inspector Name Donna Stevens

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care  
Setting Name St Ambrose Pre-School  
Setting Address School House, Leswell Street  
Kidderminster  
Worcestershire  
DY10 1RP

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of St Ambrose Playgroup

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St Ambrose Playgroup  
Address School House, Leswell Street  
Kidderminster  
Worcestershire  
DY10 1RP

## 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 Ambrose Pre-School opened in 1982. It operates from two classrooms within St Ambrose Primary School; a Roman Catholic school close to the town centre of Kidderminster. The setting serves both the local and surrounding areas.

There are currently 56 children from 2 to 4 years on role. This includes 26 funded 3-year-olds. The 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 time. Opening hours are from 9:00 until 15:00 and children attend for a variety of sessions in between these times

There is one full-time and nine part-time members of staff who work with the children, all of whom have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. There are six members of staff who are currently working towards a higher level of early years qualifications. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

### How good is the Day Care?

St Ambrose Pre-School provides good care of the children. The staff team have many years experience in the early years. There are two rooms, both of which are warm and welcoming and enable the children to access all the activities on offer. The staff are well organised and make good use of the space. However, the group's operational plan does not reflect their current practice. There is a good selection of resources and equipment and the children have free choice of a good range of age appropriate and stimulating activities. The group keeps up-to-date, accurate records, which are stored appropriately.

Attention to safety is good and children are encouraged to learn about hazards, such as how to handle scissors safely. Children are well supervised at all times and risk

assessments are carried out on a daily basis. Good daily routines encourage children to learn about hygiene practice and children understand the importance of hand washing after toileting and before eating meals. Improved nappy changing facilities enable staff to change children with privacy. Children are supplied with snacks and drinks mid-session and bring packed lunches for lunchtime. Staff have a good understanding of their child protection responsibilities and know who to contact if they are concerned about a child in their care.

A good range of activities are organised to meet different developmental needs and interests in all areas of play and learning. Children are very well behaved; they are aware of what is right and wrong, share and take turns. The resources available reflect positive images of minority groups, themes and projects and help children to become aware of other cultures. Children contribute to projects and themes by bringing items from home. Children with special needs and English as an additional language are very well supported within the group.

The staff have good relationships with the parents, sharing information on an informal basis at the end of each session.

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

Good progress has been made since the last inspection when four actions were raised.

Staff have attended training and the required levels of qualified staff are now met. In addition, all staff have satisfactorily completed the required CRB checks. A copy of the ACPC guidelines is available within the setting, and actions raised at a recent visit to inspect an additional classroom have also all been satisfactorily addressed.

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

- A high staff ratio means that children receive a good level of individual support.
- A good range of activities is offered in all areas of play and development.
- Children with special needs and English as an additional language are very well integrated into the group.
- Children are well behaved and there are good strategies in place to deal with any problems in a calm and consistent manner.
- Good relationships have been established with parents and carers.

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

- the operational plan.

**PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)**

There are no complaints to report.

**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	Ensure that the operational plan is reviewed and updated to reflect the nature of the provision.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

St Ambrose Pre-School provides very good quality nursery education, which enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff manage the children very well and have good relationships with them. They plan a good variety of activities and understand what children learn from them. The two classrooms are well laid out and the resources are used well to create an interesting learning environment. The outdoor area is used well and activities are planned to cover all areas of learning. The staff also make use of the school hall to extend the children's physical play. Staff give individual children a good level of support and those with special educational needs and English as an additional language are encouraged to participate in the full range of nursery activities. They develop children's language by talking to them and asking questions which encourage them to think and talk about what they are doing. Group activities for the funded children are presented in an enthusiastic and lively manner and are particularly good in the areas of physical and mathematical development.

The leadership and management of the pre-school are very good. The staff work well together as a team and are keen to attend training and improve their knowledge. Several of the staff are attending training to further their knowledge and this is encouraged by management. Children's learning is assessed against the stepping-stones and early learning goals and this information is used to plan what children should do next. An effective recording system is maintained which shows the children's progress and is shared with parents, albeit on an informal basis.

The partnership with parents is very good. Parents spend time talking informally to staff about the children at the beginning and end of sessions. They are kept informed of pre-school events through photographs, newsletters and a notice board.

### What is being done well?

- Children's physical skills are promoted very effectively through a stimulating range of indoor and outdoor activities.
- Children benefit from effective teaching in mathematical learning. They are constantly encouraged to count, calculate and look at mathematical concepts such as size and shape.
- Children with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are included in all activities. Staff find out all they can about children's specific needs and their home languages. They work in partnership with parents, carers and outside agencies to ensure children gain as much as possible from activities.
- Staff are very good at developing children's language. They value what children say, ask questions, introduce them to new vocabulary, and

encourage them to listen to each other.

- There are excellent strategies to promote good behaviour and consideration for others. Staff are patient, clear and consistent and help children to understand the impact of unacceptable behaviour on others.

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

- the system for sharing information with parents or carers about children's progress on a formal basis.

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

Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. Parents are now involved in the assessment of their children and these together with assessments made by staff are used in the planning to identify areas where children need support with their development and learning. In addition, opportunities for children to count, calculate and use mathematical problem solving have increased greatly allowing children to make very good progress in this area. As a result of these improvements, children are making very good progress in all areas of learning.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are well known by the staff who are sensitive to their individual needs. Children are developing independence and persist with difficult tasks e.g. using scissors. They are encouraged to choose between activities and take care of their personal needs such as dressing and undressing during gym sessions, putting their coats on, and washing their hands. Children behave well. They are taught to share and take turns and play well together in groups in areas such as role-play.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are keen to talk to staff, each other and to other adults in the setting. They enjoy listening to stories and sharing books with staff and each other. They are encouraged to notice written words displayed around the nursery on signs, labels and posters. Children are given lots of opportunities for mark making, both with traditional tools such as pens and pencils and in natural materials such as sand. They are encouraged to use language imaginatively in all areas of play.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children benefit from a very good level of support in mathematical development. They are constantly encouraged to identify colours, shapes and sizes within planned and unplanned activities. They are helped to count to 10 and to calculate and compare numbers. They enjoy singing number rhymes. Children are able to recognise written numbers up to 10 and this is due to the wealth of written numbers throughout the nursery on toys and resources such as games and posters.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Planned activities help children notice changes that occur, for example mixing ingredients together to make Christmas biscuits. Children enjoy making models from construction toys and recycled tubes and boxes. They learn about information and communication technology by using a computer and small electronic toys. They have a sense of time and place by looking at changes to the weather and the outside world. They learn about different cultures and ways of life through topics.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Regular sessions set challenges to develop children's physical skills. They balance along planks, are learning to use hoops and balls and are skilful at controlling their bodies and weaving between each other. They learn to understand the effects that exercise has on their bodies and the importance of warming up before and relaxing once they have finished. Children are taught to handle and control small objects. They handle the scissors, pencils and paintbrushes with increasing control.

**CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children participate enthusiastically in music sessions, joining with actions and using musical instruments. They draw freely and are developing their use of imagination by using paint and sticking materials to design and make pictures and models of their own design. Children draw on their experiences and imagination as they play in the home corner.

**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 to report, but consideration should be given to improve in the following:
- develop an effective system for sharing information about children's progress with parents on a formal basis.

*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.*