



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 509178

DfES Number: 584603

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 01/02/2005  
Inspector Name Sue Davey

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care  
Setting Name St Nicholas Church Playgroup  
Setting Address St Nicholas Church Hall  
Uphill  
Weston-Super-Mare  
North Somerset  
BS23 4UH

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of u/a

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name u/a  
Address u/a  
,  
u/a

## 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 Nicholas Church Playgroup opened in the early 1970's. It operates from the main hall of premises adjacent to the church in the village of Uphill. A maximum of 24 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 09.00 to 12.00, during school term time. Afternoon sessions are organised depending on demand. Children have access to a fully enclosed safe outside play area.

There are currently 30 children aged from 3 to under 5 years on roll. All these children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area and most go on to attend the village primary school. The playgroup supports children with special educational needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs six members of staff to work with the children. Three, including the leaders, have level three childcare qualifications and one has a level two qualification. Four members of staff are qualified in First Aid. All staff attend regular training to update their skills. The playgroup is managed by a joint church and parent committee. It receives advice and guidance from the Pre-school Learning Alliance and an advisory teacher from North Somerset's Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

### How good is the Day Care?

St Nicholas Church Playgroup provides a good standard of care for children. It is well supported by the church management committee and is integral to their work in the community. The experienced staff team exceed minimum standards with regard qualifications and adult child ratios. They are organised and enthusiastic and there is an effective keyworker system in operation. The premises are adequate for their purpose. There is a new secure outside play area and consideration is being given to extend this further. There is a good range of toys and equipment which are easily accessible to children. There are sound procedures for the day to day running of the group and all regulatory records are up to date. However, some policies and procedures lack the necessary detail and do not reflect current practice.

Staff make sure children are safe at all times and they conduct a daily check of the premises and equipment. Staff follow necessary procedures to deal with accidents or incidents. They talk to parents about any concerns and seek their permission to involve outside agencies. Children are provided with a drink and snack mid-session which sometimes includes fresh fruit. Staff are aware of their responsibilities regarding child protection.

Staff plan a varied curriculum of activities to help children make progress in all areas of learning. Keyworkers spend quality time with their group each session. They record children's achievements and monitor their progress. Staff interact well with children. They show interest in what children say and ask questions to make them think. Staff have a consistent and positive approach to behaviour management which children respond to well.

Staff build good relationships with parents and welcome them to join in with the sessions. They regularly talk to parents about their child's wellbeing and development. Parents are asked to provide specific information so that children are cared for according to their wishes.

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

At the last inspection there were two actions raised. One regarding the completion of a fire log and the other, to identify a member of staff responsible for child protection.

Both of these actions have been addressed. There is now a record kept of fire drills with an evaluation of the time taken and problems encountered. There are members of staff who jointly lead the group. Both leaders take responsibility for child protection issues. They have received appropriate training in this area and fully understand the procedure to follow should concerns arise.

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

- The organisation of time is very good. Staff work effectively as a team and are supportive of each other. Roles and responsibilities are shared out between team members.
- Staff have a consistent and positive approach to behaviour management and they use strategies that are appropriate to children's stage of development. Staff have a calm manner. They acknowledge good behaviour and encourage children to be polite and thoughtful.
- The keyworker system ensures that staff know the children well. Children spend quality time with their keyworker who is also responsible for completing the assessment record. Keyworkers talk to parents about their child's achievements and discuss any concerns as they arise.
- Staff make good use of the premises and organise resources to make sure children have easy access to a wide range of toys and materials which they choose for themselves.

**What needs to be improved?**

- the content of policies and procedures to reflect current practice
- wider use of the outside area to provide children with a variety of play experiences
- the range of healthy and nutritious foods at snack time.

**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
4	Continue to investigate use of the outside area to provide more varied play experiences for children.
14	Review policies and procedures and update as necessary to reflect current practice.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

St Nicholas Church Playgroup provides a high standard of nursery education. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is very good. The staff team are qualified, experienced and very organised. They are knowledgeable about the early learning goals and provide a good balance of activities indoors and outside. Staff have a positive and calm approach to behaviour management. They interact well with the children and join in with their games. Staff take time to listen and show interest in what children say. They sensitively encourage children to participate and speak in groups. Staff observe and record children's progress to assess development and plan future activities. The keyworker system is very effective and staff know their key children well. However, activities in key groups are not planned around the next steps in children's learning.

Leadership and management of the playgroup is very good. The management committee are very supportive and actively seek the views of staff and parents. The minister is a frequent visitor to the group and he engages well with staff and children. The two leaders are very good role-models to other staff. They monitor delivery of the curriculum and regularly reflect on their practise to identify strengths and weaknesses. The whole team are committed to improvement. They take part in an appraisal system and attend various training events throughout the year.

The playgroup's partnership with parents is very good. Parents are provided with clear information about topics, daily activities and their children's progress. They are encouraged to share what they know about their children and be involved in their education. They help with sessions on a rota basis, share specific skills and interests and accompany the children on various trips. Other strategies to involve parents include a 'take home bear', and providing the words to new songs to practise with their children at home.

### What is being done well?

- The way staff work with children is sensitive and responsive. They know their individual key children very well and so encourage them in activities that develop them further. Good use is made of routine events to develop children's confidence, independence and understanding of mathematics.
- Staff support children to manage their own behaviour, for example, by writing up a list of names and providing a five minute sand-timer to help them take turns on the computer. This type of approach is helping children to play cooperatively and they are very well behaved.
- Children choose freely from a wide range of toys and equipment every day. This helps them to make decisions and persevere at activities that interest

them.

- Partnership with parents is particularly good and there are many strategies to involve them in their child's education.
- Staff's commitment to improvement is very strong. They frequently attend team meetings and training workshops. They reflect on their practice and consider new ideas. They have an action plan for improvement which is regularly reviewed and updated. Staff are well supported and guided by the leaders.

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

- key group activities to take account of what skills children need to learn next
- activities and items of interest for children to investigate and explore
- staff's recognition for children's need to extend their own ideas in imaginative play which might not be linked to the current topic.

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

There has been very good progress since the last inspection. At that time the playgroup operated under a different leader. An action plan was drawn up and parents informed how staff intended to address the issues raised. The group were asked to ensure that activities and discussions are timed to maintain children's concentration and provided often enough for children to develop their skills. This related to children becoming restless while others were sharing their news and showing items linked to the topic at registration time. At some physical activities children waited too long for a turn and there were few opportunities for another go. The second issue referred to children's access to climbing equipment.

The group have now restructured the time given for children to share items of interest. This is well managed and avoids children becoming impatient. They all listen attentively as just a few children each day share what they want to say. A variety of physical activities are set up in different areas either indoors or outside. Consequently, children in smaller groups do not have to wait so long for a turn and therefore have more practise at specific skills. A low level piece of equipment has been obtained for children to crawl through and clamber over. The group are currently investigating different possibilities of large climbing equipment and suitable safety surfacing. Storage is the main problem. However the premises are adjacent to an enclosed children's play park and staff can take small groups to make use of the climbing apparatus there.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are interested in and keen to play with the resources provided. They eagerly engage in adult-led tasks and confidently take part in large group activities. They show good concentration skills and persevere to complete a task. Children are very well behaved. They enjoy each others company and play cooperatively by sharing toys and taking turns. Children are independent. They choose what to play with, pour their own drinks and manage their personal needs, but will seek help if necessary.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children confidently use spoken language, often in large groups. They look at books, enjoy listening to stories and answer related questions. They put their thoughts into words by describing their actions and recalling past events. Children recognise the initial letter sound of some words, for instance, a child said, "they land on a 'H' for helicopter". Children practise early writing skills and some form recognisable letters associated with their name. Most can read their own name.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children have a good understanding of number. They count spontaneously during their play. Child said, "I've got six elephants". Children are learning to recognise numerals. They make simple calculations, compare sets of items and use numbers to solve problems. Children weigh cookery ingredients. They compare the weight of similar items and experience volume and capacity through sand and water play. They use simple charts to record food tasting results. Children name shapes and create patterns.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children find out about the world through themed activities. They plant and tend flowers, collect leaves, post letters, visit the church and local school and design and build with a wide range of resources. There are some activities that require children to investigate. Children show a good understanding of technology as they independently operate simple computer games. They have a sound concept of time. Children celebrate traditional festivals and explore other cultural events.

### **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement: Very Good

All children are physically active. They frequently use the outside space and equipment to: run, jump, throw, catch, crawl, clamber, balance and pedal wheeled toys. They bend and stretch in music and movement sessions and pull and push buggies in role-play. Children are gaining spatial awareness. They recognise their bodily needs and notice changes such as feeling their heart beat after exercise. Children skilfully and safely use scissors, they work with playdough and have good pencil control.

### **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement: Very Good

Children freely explore paint and collage materials. They build three dimensional models with recycled boxes, construction toys and playdough. Children sing familiar songs and enjoy learning new ones. They perform associated actions. They learn to tap out a rhythm playing loudly, softly, quickly or slowly. Children engage in role-play, often linked to the current theme. They dress up and use gestures and expression to create a character, although their own ideas are not always extended.

**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 to improving the following:
- improve planning of key group activities to focus more on what children need to learn next
- increase resources and activities to encourage and develop children's curiosity and investigative skills.

*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.*