



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 315246

DfES Number: 513003

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	18/11/2003
Inspector Name	Teresa Ann Clark

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	St Matthews Pre-School Group
Setting Address	Stretton Road Stretton Warrington Cheshire WA4 4NT

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	. St Matthews Pre-School Group Committee
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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 Matthew's Playgroup was established in 1989. It is a community playgroup supported by a committee of parents. The group is located in St Matthew's Church Hall and serves the community of Stretton a rural area of Warrington. The group has formed strong links to the adjacent Primary school. Children have access to a large hall and safe enclosed outdoor area. The group have sole use of the facility during the sessions and is registered to provide care for 20 children under eight years.

There are currently 36 children on roll; of these 20 three-year-olds are in receipt of nursery education funding. There are two children who have English as an additional language and three children who have been identified as having special educational needs.

The group operates during term times, the hours of opening are; Monday 12:30 to 15:00 Tuesday and Wednesday 09:15 to 11:45 and 12:30 to 15:00 Thursday and Friday 09:15 to 11:45. 'Rising Fives' sessions are Tuesday and Wednesday 12:30 to 15:00.

There are two supervisors and one member of staff who hold relevant childcare qualifications. The group receives support from an Early Years Teacher and is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

How good is the Day Care?

St Matthews Pre-School group provides good quality care for children. Staff work well as a team and are clear about their roles and responsibilities, they are effectively deployed to support children in their learning. The Pre-School has a good range of quality toys, equipment and furniture to meet children's individual needs however, the organisation sometimes limits children's choice and independence, and there are insufficient resources which reflect diversity. There are clear policies and procedures in place which are reflected in practice.

The child protection statement lacks necessary detail. Records and documentation

are up-to-date.

Staff place strong emphasis on children's safety and have taken all reasonable steps to ensure the physical environment is safe and secure for children. Staff implement good hygiene practices and encourage children to learn about personal hygiene through daily routines to promote good health. Children are provided with healthy and nutritious snacks to promote their growth and development.

Staff plan a broad range of activities and learning experiences to help children make progress in all areas of their development. Children are happy and confident, good relationships have been formed, staff know the children well and successfully meet their individual needs. Children with special needs are well supported within the setting, staff work closely with parents and other agencies to ensure children's needs are met. Children's behaviour is good, children respect the environment and show care and concern for each other. Staff's use of praise and encouragement fosters children's self-esteem and confidence.

Partnerships with parents is good. Parents are provided with good information about the setting and are happy with the quality of care provided.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the following actions were agreed; that food preparation complied with health and safety regulations, gas appliances to be safe, drinking water to be available and the child protection statement to include procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff.

Environmental health has visited the premises and guidance provided, gas and electrical appliances have been checked and are safe, fresh drinking water is available at all times.

The child protection statement includes procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation made against staff, but the statement does not comply with Area Child Protection procedures.

What is being done well?

- Staff spend time working directly with children, they plan a range of stimulating activities for children who are interested and actively engaged in their play. Staff talk and listen to children, they use effective questioning techniques to challenge children's learning.
- Children are happy, secure and confident within the setting, they have formed good relationships with staff and each other. Staff know the children well and successfully meet their individual needs.
- Children's behaviour is good, children are well mannered, they show respect for the environment and each other as they help tidy away activities play co-operatively, sharing and taking turns.

- Partnership with parents is good, they are provided with good information about the setting and are clearly involved in their children's learning.

What needs to be improved?

- the organisation of resources
- resources to reflect equal opportunities
- the child protection statement.

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
5	Ensure children are able to freely access resources to support their learning and promote independence skills.
9	Ensure that children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
13	Ensure that the child protection procedure complies with local Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) procedures.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

St Matthews Pre-School group offers good quality provision which helps children make generally good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas. Children enjoy learning through a range of stimulating practical activities.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff use their knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals to plan a range of stimulating adult-led activities covering all areas of learning. Some aspects of mathematics and communication, language and literacy are less secure and opportunities for children to be independent are limited. Staff provide a calm environment where children behave well and are motivated to learn. Staff carry out evaluations of planned activities and regular assessments of children's progress, these are not used to inform future planning. Staff interact well with children using effective questioning techniques and constantly engage children in discussion, challenging their thinking and fostering their self-esteem and confidence.

The leaderships and management of the setting is generally good. Teamwork is a strength of the setting and roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and contribute well to the harmonious and effective learning environment. The new management team and staff are committed to improving the quality of care and education, they attend regular training with the Early Years Partnership and cluster group training.

The partnership with parents is generally good. Parents are warmly welcomed, they are provided with good information about the setting and children's progress and achievements. Parents comments are very positive about the setting, they feel involved and their contributions valued.

What is being done well?

- Children are confident communicators, they express themselves, initiate conversations and take turns listening to each other.
- Children's creativity is fostered well, they have well developed imaginary skills as they engage in role-play situations based on their own experiences.
- Children are well behaved. They are kind and considerate towards each other, they show respect for the environment and each other. They have formed good relationships, are happy, confident and motivated to learn.
- Staff work well as a team, they provide a calm learning environment, support children well and are committed to updating their skills and knowledge to improve the quality of care and education for all children.

What needs to be improved?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● children's personal independence in making their own choices● opportunities for children to recognise familiar words, numbers and shapes● short term planning to ensure plans are clearly linked to stepping stones and promote continuity and progression in children's learning.

What has improved since the last inspection?
<p>Generally good progress has been made in addressing the key issues raised at the last inspection.</p> <p>The setting has now developed written plans which are linked to the early learning goals and identify learning objectives, activities and resources. Staff now evaluate teaching plans and parents are informed about the early learning goals and Foundation Stage of learning.</p>

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are happy, confident and secure within the setting. They work independently and as part of a group and sit quietly, concentrate and persevere with tasks. They show respect for the environment and each other as they tidy away toys and help each other. They are well mannered as they use please and thank you. Children are developing some independence skills and are eager to participate in activities, though opportunities for the children to make their own choices are missed.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are confident fluent speakers; they initiate conversations, they use language for a range of purposes, during role-play situations and during small group time. They take turns and listen to each other, they negotiate and organise their own play. Children link sound to letters and older children produce recognisable letters as they write their names. Children do not have opportunities to recognise familiar words in the environment.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children count confidently and reliably up to 10; they are beginning to solve simple number problems in everyday situations and routines. Children use positional language and learn about measure and capacity during baking activities. They recognise simple shapes as they fit puzzles together. Children copy and recreate simple patterns. Children rarely recognise numerals and shape in the environment.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children learn about change through topic work about the seasons and through baking activities. They explore textures as they make bird feeders. Children recall familiar events in their lives, as they talk about their families and holidays. They learn about the environment and the natural world as they talk about the different habitats of animals, birds live in a nest and turtles live under water. Children use a variety of materials to design and construct their own models.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children move confidently and safely around the setting with a good awareness of space, themselves and others. Children use large equipment with good control as they climb under, over and through. Children exercise their bodies during PE sessions and learn about keeping healthy as they develop good hygiene routines. Children are developing good hand/eye co-ordination as they use a range of tools with increasing control.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children use their imagination well, communicating their thoughts and ideas with confidence as they engage in role-play based on their own experiences. Children sing simple songs from memory. They represent their own ideas through a variety of art and craft media learning about colour, shape and texture.	
Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.	

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally 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: THE KEY ISSUES

- provide the children with opportunities to develop their personal independence
- develop short-term planning, taking into account evaluations and children's achievements, so plans are linked to the stepping stones and promote continuity and progression in children's learning.
- provide opportunities for children to recognise familiar words and to practise and consolidate their mathematical learning in number and shape.

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.