



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 203635

DfES Number: 525496

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 13/02/2004
Inspector Name Siobhan O'Callaghan

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name St George The Martyr Pre-School
Setting Address St George's Church Hall
Ongar Road
Brentwood
Essex
CM15 9EE

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of St George the Martyr Pre-school 1057339

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St George the Martyr Pre-school
Address St George's Church Hall
Ongar Road
Brentwood
Essex
CM15 9EE

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 George The Martyr Pre-School opened in 1980. It operates from St George's Church Hall in Brentwood. The pre-school serves the local and surrounding areas.

There are currently 37 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. There are 12 funded 3 year olds and 8 funded 4 year olds in attendance. 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 times. Sessions are from 09:30 until 12:15.

There are eight part time staff working with the children, another member of staff is currently on maternity leave. Half the staff team have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. Four members of staff are currently working towards further early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

How good is the Day Care?

St George The Martyr Pre-School provides satisfactory care for children.

The pre-school benefits from a committed team of staff, the majority of whom have been in post for many years. The provision is adequately organised. Staff set up the pre-school prior to the children's arrival, thus they are able to use resources immediately. There is a broad range of appropriate resources, which children access independently. The pre-school maintains all necessary documentation to ensure their provision runs effectively, however some areas require more detail.

Children's personal health and hygiene is promoted well. Due attention is given to children with allergies, effective procedures are in place to ensure their individual needs are met. Children are offered nutritional snacks and a choice of milk or water to drink. Children with special needs are fully integrated within the provision, suitable

arrangements are in place to meet their needs. A key worker system ensures all children have a person responsible for monitoring their progress. There are safety issues within the pre-school requiring immediate attention.

The children are provided with an appropriate range of activities which over time supports their learning. However, many children find it difficult to listen or to co-operate with each other. This has an impact on the children's learning. Children have ample opportunities to engage in free play, however, there are few more focussed adult led activities. Staff are proactive with the children and take time to speak and listen to them, however insufficient grouping of children hinders their progression.

Partnership with parents and carers is a strong feature of the nursery. Parents have written that they are happy with the care their children receive. Parents are encouraged to be part of the management committee, and to help out within the pre-school. Open days give parents opportunities to talk with staff informally.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection, the pre-school had a number of actions to be addressed, the majority of which were concerned with policies and procedures. They were to review and update the operational plan; to include the role of volunteers, implement procedures for outings, and a procedure for a lost or uncollected child, as well as staff induction. A comprehensive operational plan is now in place and is made available to parents. The manager plans to review and update this on a regular basis. They were requested to show the times of arrival and departure for children and staff. These details are now being recorded in the daily register. The provision was to review and update policies in line with the National Standards. This referred to no smoking, medication and sickness (including consent forms), equal opportunities, special needs, behaviour, complaints and child protection. All policies have been reviewed, updated and shared with the staff team. The child protection policy requires further information. They were to ensure that hazardous plants were inaccessible to children in the outside play area. The garden has been tidied, plants have been cut back, and they are made inaccessible to the children while they are playing outside.

What is being done well?

- The staff team are all fully involved with the children, they spend time talking and engaging with their play. They remain calm and patient with the children, and praise and encourage them to achieve tasks.
- The children are generally happy and settled within their environment, they enjoy adult interaction and will seek adults for support and reassurance.
- The pre-school shows a commitment to equal opportunities and equality of access for all children. Staff maintain lists of children taking part in activities to ensure they all have a turn, if they wish.
- There are good procedures in place to support children with special needs, a

trained designated member of staff is on hand to offer support and guidance to the children and their parents. They maintain close links with outside professionals when applicable.

What needs to be improved?

- documentation, to ensure the procedures for lost and uncollected children includes notifying Ofsted and to ensure that the child protection policy includes procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- staff's planning of the curriculum, to ensure children have a balance of both free-play and more focussed, adult led activities. Ensure children are grouped appropriately, to help support their learning potential and improve their listening and concentration skills.
- children's safety, to ensure toilet facilities are safe for children, this refers to the accessible locks, and that all fire exits are easily opened.

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

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
4	Ensure toilet facilities are safe for children, this refers to the accessible locks.	26/03/2004
6	Ensure all fire exits are easily opened.	12/03/2004

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
2	Ensure procedures for lost and uncollected children includes notifying Ofsted.

3	Ensure children have a balance of both free-play and more focussed, adult led activities. Group children appropriately, to help support their learning potential and improve their listening and concentration skills.
13	Ensure that the child protection policy for the pre-school includes procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at St George The Martyr Pre-School is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the early learning goals in knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development is generally good, however all other areas of learning are limited by some significant weaknesses.

The quality of teaching has some significant weaknesses. Staff have a suitable knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals, their long term planning encompasses all areas of learning. However there are large gaps within the educational programme on a daily basis, which hinders children's progression. Staff have developed some effective questioning skills and are fully involved with the children at all times. They promote positive role models, however many children find it difficult to sit and listen and their behaviour can be challenging. There is limited grouping of children and long periods of large physical play which has an impact on children's abilities to concentrate.

Staff are maintaining informative assessments for all children. They record positive comments and highlight areas for future development.

The leadership and management of the pre-school has some significant weaknesses. There is a team of three managers, all of whom take a regular active role in the planning of the provision. However the effectiveness of the provision has not been monitored to ensure that children are getting a balanced curriculum on a daily basis. Thus children's learning opportunities in many areas are inhibited.

The partnership with parents and carers is very good. Parents are provided with good quality information about the setting and its provision. Parents are encouraged to be part of the management committee and to help out within the pre-school. They have expressed their satisfaction with the care offered to the children.

What is being done well?

- Staff have developed secure relationships with the children, they care for them sensitively and spend valuable time talking and playing with them. Staff fully involve themselves within children's imaginative role-play and encourage their free expression.
- The pre-school have established a library for the children. Children are encouraged to choose books to take home and share with their parents. A comment sheet has been developed for parents to record their suggestions and ideas. There is also a space for children to draw a picture relating to the story.
- Children are developing excellent designing and making skills. They build

models with a variety of construction materials and competently utilise tools such as toy hammers, screwdrivers and saws with a purpose.

- Children are enthusiastic to paint and take part in creative activities. Good provision is available for them to explore materials freely.

What needs to be improved?

- the planning of the educational programme, to ensure all areas of the curriculum are given due emphasis on a daily basis
- the development of the children's personal independence and social skills
- opportunities for children to write independently and to begin linking sounds and letters
- opportunities to further develop children's problem solving during practical activities
- the grouping of children, to support their individual needs and allow them to work at their own level
- the organisation of resources and the times available for their use. This refers in particular to the restricted availability of the computer and musical instruments and to the considerable length of time children are able to access large physical equipment.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The pre-school has made generally good progress in addressing the two key issues raised at the previous inspection. They were to plan more opportunities for children to associate the sound in rhymes with words and letters. This is planned for on a Friday for the older children, however this is not sufficiently covered on a daily basis and does not ensure all children have opportunities to explore this area of learning. They were also to provide more support and encouragement for parents to contribute to their children's records. Each child's key worker is responsible for maintaining their children's progress records, and they are now sending these out to parents three times during the school academic year. Parents can now read and add comments to these and share any suggestions or concerns with their child's key worker.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children are very excited to arrive in the morning, they can access resources immediately and they do so independently. Children are developing sound relationships with staff, however they find it difficult to co-operate with other children. Their behaviour is often disruptive and has an impact on their learning. Their personal independence is promoted through free selection of resources, however this could be extended by supporting children to help themselves and each other at snack time.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children are confident to speak out within a small story session and on a 1:1 level. They can listen attentively within this small group, however larger sessions are too challenging for many of the children. Older children handle books appropriately and use the book area independently. Many children are beginning to write their names, however the opportunities to write independently and to link sounds and letters is limited. There is no alphabet display for children to observe letters.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children can confidently sing number songs, and use their fingers to count to 5 and beyond. Children can count sheep within a puzzle and observe how many are small and how many are large. Staff support children to realise that the sand timer is used to measure time. Children can complete puzzles and recognise shapes with growing skill. There are few opportunities for children to develop mathematical ideas and methods to solve problems within practical activities.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Cooking activities promote children's exploration and investigation into how things can change. They enjoy planting cress and wait to see how this will develop. Children can build sit on toys with large construction resources. They are very excited to access the computer, unfortunately this is not available regularly. Visits to farms and local amenities support children's experiences of their environment. Topic work effectively encompasses different cultures within the community.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are developing good control and co-ordination of their bodies, they can ride bicycles backwards and forwards. They can stop when the red flag is displayed. However after an extended time riding bicycles children become very excited, which has a negative impact on their behaviour. Children use the climbing frame effectively, and competently crawl through tunnels. Children confidently handle a variety of tools and equipment and can use these with a purpose.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children explore the colour, texture, shape and form of play dough, paint and glue. They correctly label colours and can discuss their favourites. Children join in with singing sessions, and know many familiar songs. Their experiences with musical instruments is limited to just one week in every half term. Children play purposefully in the home corner and enjoy adult support. They use their imaginations within construction and absorb themselves fully in small world play.

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 planning of the educational programme, to ensure all areas of the curriculum are given due emphasis on a daily basis. In particular encourage children to develop their personal independence and social skills. Extend children's opportunities to write independently and to begin linking sounds and letters. Ensure children have opportunities to problem solve during practical activities
- implement appropriate groupings of children which will support their individual needs and allow them to work at their own level
- review the organisation of resources and the times available for their use. This refers in particular to the restricted availability of the computer and musical instruments and also to the considerable length of time children are able to access large physical equipment.

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.