



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 256826

DfES Number: 541075

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 21/01/2004
Inspector Name Susan Christine McGuire

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name St Michaels Pre-School
Setting Address The Church Hall
Mace Road
Peterborough
Cambridgeshire
PE2 8RQ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of St Michaels Pre-School 1045382

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St Michaels Pre-School
Address St John's Church Hall
Mace Road
Peterborough
Cambridgeshire
PE2 8RQ

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

Stanground St Michael's Pre-school opened in privately 1975 and has been committee-run since 2000. It operates from St. Michael's Church hall in Stanground and serves the local area and surrounding villages.

There are currently 45 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. This includes 26 funded 3 year olds and 9 funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting has experience of supporting a number of children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens 5 days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9.15 am until 11.45 am daily and from 12.30 pm until 3.00 pm on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

Five part-time staff work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. One member of staff is currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Child Care partnership (EYDCP).

How good is the Day Care?

St. Michael's Pre-school provides good care for children.

Emphasis is placed on on-going staff-training and all staff hold a current first-aid certificate. The staff work well as a team, daily preparing the playspace to create a welcoming environment, and making good use of limited display space. Good paperwork and policies support the day-to-day running of the group.

The staff have a good awareness of safety issues and good procedures are in place to ensure that children can play safely both indoors and outdoors. Children are given clear routines for personal hygiene and their independence in this regard is fostered. Additional opportunities for children to have responsibilities would further enhance

their independence. Snacks are healthy and nutritious.

Children are provided with a range of appropriate activities to support their play and learning, and are encouraged to make choices about how they spend their time at pre-school. Staff know the children well and ensure that all are included. There are good relationships within the group and behaviour is managed well. The resources available include positive images of the multi-cultural nature of society so children can learn about equality through their play.

Partnership with parents is good. They have full access to a range of information about the setting, and the policies are available on the notice-board. They are kept informed about their children through informal discussions daily, and they have access to their records.

What has improved since the last inspection?

N/A - no actions were identified at the transitional inspection.

What is being done well?

- Staff put great effort and imagination into daily preparing the premises to provide a welcoming environment for both children and parents.
- Staff develop very good relationships with the children. They ensure that all children are involved and included in activities. Children are given praise and encouragement.
- There are good resources which give children positive images of the multi-cultural nature of society. The cultures of families who use the group are celebrated.
- Excellent documentation and paperwork underpins the management of the group.

What needs to be improved?

- opportunities for children to be involved in the preparation of art and craft materials, and in tidying away activities.

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
3	Develop strategies which enable children to take more part in preparing resources e.g. cutting collage materials, and in tidying away activities.

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 Stanground St. John's and St. Michaels's Pre-School is of a high quality. It enables children to make very good progress in all areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff create a relaxed atmosphere in which children gain confidence in their abilities. The key-worker system is used effectively and staff build good relationships with the children. They are skilled in taking unplanned opportunities to extend children's learning e.g. setting mathematical problems and introducing new vocabulary. They have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and understand that activities can cover more than one area of learning. Planning is excellent and assessment is used to plan the next steps of learning for children although methods for recording this require some development. Behaviour is well-managed, and praise and encouragement given.

Both staff and management show commitment to the care and education of the children. Good procedures are in place for induction of new staff and there is a clear management structure. The staff work well as a team and know their roles within each session. Meetings are held regularly, when self-evaluation and planning takes place. Staff have annual appraisals. Documentation and policies are well presented and up-to-date. A good liaison with the local primary school is maintained.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents speak very well of the setting and express confidence in the staff. Staff try hard to involve parents in their children's learning and give them opportunities to see records, share a book, and bring in items from home to support topic work. Good use is made of limited display space to give parents information about the management of the setting, and the Foundation Stage and six areas of learning. They also receive regular newsletters.

What is being done well?

- The development of children's imagination and creativity is being fostered very well. There are excellent resources for role-play e.g. a very wide variety of dressing-up clothes, and staff join in if invited, or step back to allow children devise their own imaginary situations.
- Children are confident to attempt writing in a variety of situations, and are provided with a range of tools to enable them to accomplish this.
- Children are developing good relationships with adults and their peers. They work co-operatively together, sharing and taking turns, and behaviour is good.
- Staff have good questioning skills, and take unplanned opportunities to extend children's learning.

What needs to be improved?

- Methods of recording how assessment is used to plan the next steps for individual children.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made in addressing the four key issues identified at the last inspection.

Staff provide challenges to children in their key-working groups, which are appropriate to their stage of development.

Large group activities have been re-organised by using a second room for more appropriate groupings of children for activities such as singing and story. Snack time now follows the cafeteria-style, so children benefit from the social time this provides.

Children's opportunities to develop listening skills are increased by the re-organisation of group time as previously described, and labelling in the room has given them the experience of recognising simple words.

Planned topics provide children with information about their local environment and they explore this on outings. Magnifying glasses are provided for investigating the natural world in the immediate vicinity.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children separate from their carers happily and are confident to approach adults in the group. They are encouraged to consider the feelings of others e.g. Floppy Bear activity, and are learning right from wrong. They share and take turns well. Children's independence is being fostered in their management of their self-care and in opportunities to select activities and resources. The cultures of families who use the group are celebrated and children's families are discussed positively.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children understand that print conveys meaning through labelling and in books. Children enjoy writing as a free-choice activity and are provided with a wide variety of tools for mark-making, e.g. sand-tray, different crayons and pencils, table-painting. Children are using language to express feelings and to negotiate. Most children recognise letters and their sounds and can write their names unaided, with more able children attempting to write other simple words. Story-time is much enjoyed.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children can match and name colours and shapes confidently. They count forwards and backwards using their fingers in number rhymes and songs, with many children able to count beyond ten. Staff set problems for more able children in everyday situations e.g. "how many more candles needed on the playdough birthday cake?" Planned activities give children opportunities to weigh, measure, and compare, and the appropriate mathematical language is introduced, which children use in context in their play.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children are being given a sense of time and place through topics which explore the local environment and the people who work in it. The weather and the day of the week is discussed daily, and children talk about past events with understanding. Knowledge of the wider world is introduced through festivals and looking at maps. They have daily opportunities to explore methods of joining and construction as free-choice activities, and can operate computers, programmable toys and cassette-players.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Equipment is provided which enables children to climb, crawl, balance, pedal, steer and develop ball-skills. Indoors, children enjoy moving to music. Children use a variety of tools with increasing confidence, e.g. scissors, pencils, staplers and enjoy activities which encourage manipulation skills e.g. threading and construction. Health and body awareness is explored in topic work and staff take opportunities to extend this, e.g. discussing what clothes are needed in cold weather.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children show great enthusiasm for role-play and very good resources are provided to support this. Adults in the group get involved in the children's imaginary situations. Staff provide a wide variety of media for children to explore e.g. gloop, jelly and shaving foam, and there are daily opportunities for collage and painting. Staff value and display children's art-work. Children enjoy moving to music and are introduced to sound and rhythm through the use of musical instruments.

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 improving the following:
- Methods of recording assessment of children's learning so that this is used effectively to plan the next steps for individual children.

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.