



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 203985

DfES Number: 584597

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	14/06/2004
Inspector Name	Lynn Clements

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	St Mary's Church Nursery
Setting Address	St Mary's Room Church Street GREAT DUNMOW Essex

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of St Mary's Church Nursery Management Committee 249505
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### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	St Mary's Church Nursery Management Committee
Address	St Mary's Room Church Street Great Dunmow Essex

## 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 Mary's Church Nursery school opened in 1997. It operates from St Mary's Church Hall, situated in Great Dunmow. The nursery serves the local and wider communities.

There are currently 31 children from three to under five years on roll. This includes 17 funded three year olds and 10 funded four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a small number of children who have special educational needs, and has strategies in place to support children with English as an additional language.

The group opens four mornings a week during term times and offers two afternoons each week in the Spring and Summer terms for those children who will be starting main stream school in September. Sessions run from 09:15 until 11:45 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Fridays mornings and from 12:30 until 15:00 on Monday and Tuesday afternoons.

Three full time and two part time members of staff work with the children. Two are qualified early years teachers, and one is qualified to NVQ level 3. One member of staff is currently studying for her Diploma in Pre-school practice. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development Partnership (EYDCP) the Pre-school Learning Alliance (PSLA) and the area special educational needs coordinator (SENCO).

### How good is the Day Care?

St Mary's Church Nursery provides good care for children.

The nursery employs experienced teachers, and motivated staff who work well as a team and are keen to continue their professional development. The setting is well organised and staff understand their roles and responsibilities. However, group story times require some re-organisation to ensure correct ratios are maintained. The premises offer a suitable environment for young children; it is welcoming and well

maintained. Documents are kept safe and are consistent with the National Standards. However, the child protection policy requires minor additions. A clear operational plan is in place.

Staff are aware of safety issues and thorough daily risk assessments ensures the environment remains safe. The premises are secure, with safe systems for the arrival and collection of children. The staff promote good hygiene practices and take appropriate action when children are ill to avoid cross infection. Healthy snacks are available daily and staff take the opportunity to introduce foods from around the world. Children learn about similarities and differences through activities, resources and positive staff attitudes. There are good procedures in place to ensure any concerns regarding children are dealt with appropriately.

Staff use the Foundation Stage curriculum to help plan a balanced range of activities for children. All children attending are provided with meaningful play opportunities which promote progress in all six areas of learning. The settings SENCO works closely with parents and other professionals to ensure children with special needs make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staffs' high expectations and consistent approach supports children's understanding of boundaries and as a consequence behaviour is good.

Parents are encouraged to participate in nursery life and feel included in their children's experiences.

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

At the last inspection the following actions were raised:

Provide training for staff on child protection procedures and ensure child protection policy is appropriate; ensure water in taps is maintained at a safe temperature; provide a range of additional resources which are child accessible enabling them to extend their own learning; revise the behaviour management policy to include information about bullying; ensure children are never kept waiting between activities; set up a system to record children's progress and share with parents; prepare risk assessments regarding the stacked chairs and general risk assessments of the premises due to share occupancy; revise the complaints procedure to include the regulators contact details; make low level kitchen hazards inaccessible to children; ensure staff records are maintained and on site; revise the prospectus to show equal concern for other religious beliefs and ensure all records are available for inspection.

The person in charge has attended local child protection courses and is booked onto an in-depth course in July. In house training has been arranged and attended by staff and they have a good understanding of their responsibilities and have information handouts to refer to if any concerns are raised. The child protection policy is in place but requires a few minor additions which been taken forward at this inspection as recommendations.

The thermostat on the water tank has been adjusted and along with the general hazards of stacked chairs, are regularly checked and included in written daily risk assessments. There are a wide range of toys and resources and purpose built child

accessible storage is now in place helping children extend their own play and learning as appropriate. The behaviour policy includes information about bullying.

Assessment records are in place. Low level cupboards have locks. All records are on site and available for inspection. The prospectus has been updated.

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

- The special educational needs strategies are very effective, and the personal approach and support of staff ensures children and their families are fully cared for. Staff ensure that children's individual needs are met, helping them to make good progress in all areas of learning.
- An key-worker system works very well. Staff make regular observations which enables them to plan appropriate activities which build upon what children know and helps them to become active independent learners.
- Behaviour is very good. Staff act as positive role models, listening to children and helping them learn to take turns, co-operate, share fairly and respect each other.

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

- staff ratios during story sessions
- the child protection policy.

#### **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	Organise the story time sessions to ensure minimum staff ratios are always adhered to.

13	Update the child protection policy to include contact names and telephone numbers of the local police and social services departments.
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## 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 Mary's Church Nursery is good. It enables children to make generally good progress in communication language and literacy and very good progress in all other areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff are well qualified and have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The manager monitors and evaluates teaching practice to ensure staff are working with children appropriately. Staff provide a rich learning environment where children can use their imagination and learn at their own pace. Staff have good relationships with children, asking them open questions to help them develop their thinking skills and extend their ideas. Staff are caring and sensitive to children's needs. They provide stimulating activities, particularly in the programme for knowledge and understanding of the world. Behaviour is good, children share fairly and take turns appropriately.

Staff observe children and record their progress. The planning of children's next steps and a differentiated curriculum enables key-workers to support and challenge children effectively. However, staff miss opportunities to adequately build on children's phonic knowledge to develop their skills for later learning. Provision for children who need extra support is excellent.

Leadership and management is generally good. The group is committee run and well supported by volunteers. The manager and staff meet regularly to discuss planning and the daily running of the provision. Annual appraisals are in place. The manager is pro-active in promoting the continuing professional development of all staff.

Partnership with parents is very good. Staff are friendly and approachable. Parents are confident with the support of the setting and feel included in their children's nursery experiences.

### What is being done well?

- The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world is outstanding. Children learn about other countries, trying on traditional costumes, smelling and tasting foods such as popadoms, curry and cardamom pods. They examine wooden carvings and musical instruments and dance traditional tribal dances. Children use an atlas and books and to locate information, and globes to pin point where the countries are in relation to theirs.
- Staff provide good imaginative play opportunities such as Indian restaurant, shops and home corners and ensure that props and resources support children's understanding and learning. Staff ask open questions and make suggestions which further extend children's ideas and thinking skills.

- Planning and assessment records are meticulous. Attention to detail alongside regular meetings and discussions with key-workers ensures that activities meet the needs of all children and build upon what they already know helping them to make excellent progress towards the early learning goals.

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

- opportunities to develop the phonic and writing skills for older and more able children
- opportunities for parents to make contributions and be involved in assessment records.

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

At the last inspection the following key issues were raised:

To provide more opportunities for children to use their initiative and skills, such as writing spontaneously.

To develop resources to enable children to explore freely the features of man made objects and discover how things work.

The nursery has introduced an office centre which is set up daily and has plenty of resources such as forms, envelopes, pens and pencils, diaries and notebooks all of which provide opportunities for children to understand that print carries meaning.

Staff have also developed an investigation and 'how things work' box. Children spend time examining old clocks, turning the key and watching the cogs and wheeled move around. They turn electric tooth brushes on and off and discover how to grind pepper corns and watch shapes change in kaleidoscopes.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children's confidence and self esteem are high and they are supported by staff who know them well. They are encouraged to become active independent learners, selecting activities and resources for themselves, preparing their own snack, helping themselves to drinks and taking care of their personal hygiene. Children's behaviour is very good. They learn to take turns, share and respect each other, comforting friends when they are sad with words and meaningful gestures.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are keen communicators. They are beginning to link sounds to letters. However, older more able children are not sufficiently challenged with phonetic activities to build skills to help them with early reading and writing. Children listen to and share stories predicting what happens next. They access story and information books following the text with their fingers and making up their own stories. Children understand that print carries meaning through posters and displays at nursery.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Staff use everyday opportunities to promote calculating skills, such as counting the numbers of children at registration and how many cups are needed at snack time. Children discover simple fractions when sharing snacks and filling a cup to half full. Children discover capacity and quantity when playing in the sand and water trays and mixing ingredients in cooking activities. Children sing number rhymes and join in circle games to help them learn about the concepts of addition and subtraction.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children discover similarities and differences between cultures and religions; they learn about different customs, foods and festivals, such as St Lucia. Staff provide excellent opportunities for children to investigate and make discoveries such as the 'how things work' box. They also provide first hand experiences for children to observe the changes of tadpoles into frogs and animals such as calves, kittens and chicks help children understand about growth and development.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children explore large and small tools and equipment such as climbing frames, trampoline and balance beams. They use rolling pins, cutters and scissors when using malleable materials, pulling and stretching dough and clay. Children learn about their bodies during topic work and staff help them to discover changes that occur when they are active. Children have good spatial awareness when dancing and moving to classical music and their favourite action songs.



CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children have plenty of opportunities to use their imagination, becoming super heroes, fairies and dancers. They extend their own role play, making tickets to 'eat as much as you like' in their Indian restaurant. They join in musical activities, exploring the different sounds made by instruments. They engage in large group painting which includes changing the textures of paint by adding mashed potato and pasta. Children listen to visiting musicians and watch classical Indian dancers.	

**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**

- develop the phonetic knowledge of older and more able children, helping them build skills for early reading and writing for later learning
- provide opportunities for parents to make contributions to their children's assessment records enabling them to become more involved in their children's education

*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.*