



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 402029

DfES Number: 518673

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 09/11/2004  
Inspector Name Anita Bartram

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care  
Setting Name St Josephs' Preschool  
Setting Address The Parish Hall  
Highview Crescent, Hutton  
Brentwood  
Essex  
CM13 1BJ

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of St Joseph's Pre-School Committee 1023957

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St Joseph's Pre-School Committee  
Address Highview Crescent  
Hutton  
Brentwood  
Essex  
CM13 1BJ

## 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 Josephs' Pre-School opened in approximately 1960. It operates from St Josephs' parish hall in Hutton, which is on the outskirts of Brentwood. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.00 to 12.00 school term time only.

There are currently 42 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 39 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local and wider catchment area. The pre-school supports a small number of children with special educational needs, and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs 11 staff. Nine of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Three staff are working towards a further qualification.

### How good is the Day Care?

St Josephs' Pre-School provides good care for children.

The organisation of the setting is appropriate and staff are deployed effectively to work directly with the children. Staff ensure a warm and welcoming environment through posters on display, notices and well prepared activities. There is a wide and stimulating range of resources that are planned well to cover all areas of the children's learning. All documentation is in place.

The staff provide a very secure environment for the children. All staff are aware of the children's safety and measures are vigilantly in place to minimise hazards to children. The majority of staff have current first aid certificates. Children are mostly able to try a wide variety of nutritious and healthy foods at snack time. Staff use snack time effectively to extend the children's language and independence skills. All staff are appropriately aware of their child protection responsibilities.

Staff provide a very caring environment where children's individual needs are considered well. Staff follow very effective working practices to meet the specific needs of children with special educational needs. There is an outstanding range of resources to promote positive images of diversity to children. Staff have thorough long and medium term plans in place to provide children with meaningful activities to cover the six areas of learning. During free-play time children play co-operatively and their behaviour is good. Staff have a good understanding of the reasons behind children's unwanted behaviour and are generally consistent in their behaviour management.

Staff are readily available to speak with parents at either end of the day. Parents are welcomed into the group at any time and are invited to special days in the group's calendar such as Christmas celebrations. Individual children's developmental records are available upon request.

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

At the last inspection, the provider agreed to ensure all staff working with children are vetted. All staff have been checked either under the Local Authority or through the Criminal Records Bureau. New staff are in the process of completing their checks.

The provider has produced an action plan detailing how the person-in-charge of the group will hold the appropriate level three qualification. Both the supervisor and the deputy are continuing their professional development.

The heating system is now fully functioning. The complaints procedure has been updated to include Ofsted's contact details, and parents are informed that they may contact Ofsted at any point during the complaint process.

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

- Staff interact very positively and meaningfully. Staff ask open-ended questions to encourage children to think about their learning and the activity they are taking part in. Staff sensitively guide children's play. For example, staff sit in the role-play area becoming fully involved in the children's play to encourage them to play purposefully.
- The environment is very safe and secure. A thorough and comprehensive risk assessment is completed daily to highlight any hazards to children from previous hall users. Activities such as porridge oat tactile play, are assessed and staff take appropriate measures to prevent children slipping or hurting themselves.
- Staff provide a wide and stimulating range of resources and activities. Children are able to move between activities that are worthwhile and purposeful in covering all six areas of learning. A valuable amount of free-play time is allocated to enable children to become fully engrossed in their play.

- Staff follow very good working procedures to support children with special educational needs. Staff use thorough strategies to observe children's behaviour and analyse factors that trigger unwanted behaviour and evaluate the consequences. They use the information gained as they strive to accommodate the differing needs of children.

**An aspect of outstanding practice:**

All children are included in the group and their differences acknowledged and fully valued. The staff's positive attitudes to the rich and diverse community it serves is having a significant impact on all children's personal, social and emotional development. All children take great enjoyment in experiencing different cultural and religious events. Staff are constructive and enthusiastic in how they help children value the similarities and differences amongst them. Barriers to including all children in the community, such as language, are pro-actively dealt with by senior staff. For example, staff seek out interpreters for children and families with English as an additional language. Staff welcome all parents to help within the group and encourage them to share their knowledge and skills in helping children gain more awareness of the world around them. (Standard 9)

**What needs to be improved?**

- the consistency of the methods used by the staff in managing whole group behaviour
- the access parents have to their own child's development records.

**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.)**

Since 1 April 2004 Ofsted has not received any complaints about this provider.

**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
11	Develop and implement a consistent method of positively managing children's behaviour as a whole group.
12	Make individual children's development records fully accessible to parents.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

Provision for nursery education at St Josephs' Pre-School is good. It enables children to make very good progress in five areas of learning. Children are making generally good progress in personal, social and emotional development.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff provide exciting and stimulating activities to help children learn. Resources are well-presented and thought out to cover all areas of the curriculum. Valuable core activities such as tactile and role-play are available for children to learn through first hand experiences. The good amount of free-play time allocated in the session enables children to initiate and develop their play.

Many staff are skilled and knowledgeable in the foundation stage. They are aware of the need to evaluate activities to plan the next steps in children's learning. Staff extend more-able children's learning incidentally whilst they play. During free-play children are busy and purposeful. However, the organisation of whole group time leads to many children's behaviour deteriorating. The noise and distraction of the large number of children, of varying ages and stages, restricts staff in fully extending and challenging more-able children or supporting younger children's learning.

The leadership and management of the group is generally good. The manager leads a committed and knowledgeable staff team. Senior staff lead by example and are excellent role-models for less experienced staff. All staff are committed to the ongoing development of the group. Management of children at routine change over times and whole group times does not always fully enable children to gain the most out of the valuable teaching and resources.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Parents are provided with good quality information about the setting. Staff compile a scrapbook for each child to record their achievements. Parents are not fully able to record their own observations of their child's achievements at home.

### What is being done well?

- Children are keen to explore and investigate. They ask questions about their immediate environment and move busily between different activities. Children use magnifying glasses competently to take a closer look at the giant snails, concentrating hard and making meaningful comments. They extend their use of the magnifying glasses to look at other objects such as the clay lamps other children have made or look at each other's faces.
- Children have high levels of self-confidence. They talk freely about home and different parts of their lives. More-able children initiate conversations with unfamiliar adults within the security of the group.

- The resources and provision for children's imaginative play are excellent. For example, to support children's learning about Diwali, staff create an Indian restaurant in the role-play area. They include a wealth of high quality props and materials to help children appreciate and celebrate the differences and similarities of culture. The props encompass other areas of children's learning, for example, purposeful writing, using simple information and communication technology and dealing with money and acting out roles.
- Staff use purposeful, open-ended questions to extend children's learning. This is particularly evident in children's willingness to guess or work out answers to simple number problems in early calculation. For example, some more-able children accurately work out that 2 more children are needed to add to the three already on the floor to make a total of 5 speckled frogs in their game.

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

- the size and organisation of the groups children are taught in

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

Very good progress has been made in implementing the action plan drawn up to address the three key issues identified at the previous inspection, resulting in good improvements being made to the educational programme.

All procedures and systems now fully embrace the early learning goals. Staff have compiled photograph albums to show evidence of how they are meeting the six areas of learning. These are valuable in helping less experienced staff become familiar with the foundation stage and how learning intentions can be put into practice.

Staff have reviewed the 'rising five' profiles and have amended the assessment system to link in with the stepping stones of the foundation stage.

A staff appraisal system is firmly in place. This is having a positive impact upon staff professional development. Formal observations are not done at present, although senior staff are working towards implementing these in the very near future.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children talk freely about their homes and community they live in. They ably describe where they live and different members of their family. Children are developing very valuable understanding and acceptance of the similarities and differences of their culture and others'. Overall children's behaviour is appropriate. However, organisation of group time and some inconsistencies in staff group management leads to many children becoming disengaged, leading to some bored or distracted behaviour.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are very aware of the purposes of writing. More-able children confidently write their names accurately. Most children write for purpose during role-play activities, such as writing lists and menus. Children's early reading skills are developing soundly. More-able children competently recognise their own name and most children ask what words around them say. Children keenly discuss different topics and talk confidently about significant events that have happened to them.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

As a result of skilful staff interaction and knowledge of children's early mathematical development, children's use of adding on to solve simple number problems is very well developed. All children enjoy counting. More-able children count purposefully beyond ten and younger children willingly try to count. Children enjoy threading and choose particular shapes for their designs. More-able children accurately use simple mathematical language to describe why two shapes are different.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children's skills and confidence to design and make are substantial. More-able children enthusiastically cut and fold paper to the size they want, measuring other paper to make the right size page for their book. More-able children are very skilled in their use of tools to make changes to materials. Children are very keen to explore and investigate. They avidly use the magnifying glass to take a look at the Giant African snails and then move around the hall observing other objects or children.



**PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children use movement freely, trying ways to express themselves or when using large equipment. Children are beginning to take 'safe' risks as they extend their physical skills. For example, they travel down the slide in various ways to explore the fastest or easiest way down. Children move competently around the hall, respecting other children's space at the floor toys or around the rice play. Children enjoy chasing games with friends, and many use large movement during their imaginative play.

**CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children use their senses knowledgeably to explore and discover. They touch the snails to feel their shells and look closely to see them eat. Children respond positively to music. They move rhythmically in time to the taped music and follow staff or other children to copy their style of dancing. Children's use of role-play is excellent. Due to valuable staff interaction and presentation children use this area to practice and consolidate many skills covering all aspects of the foundation stage.

**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**

- consider the grouping of children during the session to enable staff to tailor teaching methods and learning outcomes to suit the differing ages and stages of the 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.*