



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 301174

DfES Number: 512555

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	03/06/2003
Inspector Name	Donna Suzanne Lancaster

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	St Mark's Pre-School Group Playgroup
Setting Address	St Marks Church Hall North Road Darlington Co. Durham DL1 3BH

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Christine Nicholson
------	---------------------

## 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 Mark's pre-school Playgroup opened in 1985. It operates from the church hall, which includes two play rooms, a kitchen, toilet facilities and outdoor play area. It is located to the North of Darlington. The pre-school serves the local area.

There are currently 57 children from 2 to 4 years on roll. This includes 21 funded 3 year olds and 5 funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. One child has special needs and the group supports one child who speaks English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term time. Sessions are from 9:00 - 11:30 and 12:45 - 15:15.

Seven part time and one full time staff work with the children. Four have early years qualifications. Two staff are currently on training programmes. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

### How good is the Day Care?

St.Mark's pre-school provides good quality care for children aged two to four years. Four staff have child care qualifications and two are on training programmes. Staff are continually updating their knowledge through training provided by the E.Y.D.C.P. The premises are warm and welcoming and children feel secure and happy. There is a good range of appropriate play materials available for the children.

Staff ensure children are safe inside and outside the setting. Risk assessments are completed on a daily and weekly basis. Staff promote the good health of children by encouraging them to wash their hands. Snacks and drinks are varied and there is good communication with parents with regard to individual dietary requirements. Child protection procedures are in place but need to include procedures for allegations against a member of staff.

Staff have a good relationship with the children, they talk and play with them and help them learn. Developmental records are maintained for children two to four year olds. Children with special needs and English as an additional language are supported well and they are encouraged to take part in all activities.

Parents are welcomed into the setting and responses from questionnaires indicate they have a good relationship with the staff and are happy with the care provided and the range of activities offered. There are many opportunities for parents to be informed of general information from the pre-school and policies and procedures are readily available.

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

The group agreed to ensure premises are secure there is a lock on the main entrance parents and visitors need to ring door bell to gain entry

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

- Strong team work between staff within the pre-school.(standard 2)
- Staff have good relationships with the children. They talk and play with them and provide activities to encourage them to learn.(standard 3)
- Planning of activities very good and evidence of activities taking place. Good displays of children's work.(standard 3)
- There is a good range of play materials both indoors and outdoors, which is appropriate to the ages and stages of the children attending. (standard 5)
- There is a strong emphasis on providing resources which promote positive images of culture, ethnicity and gender. (standard 5 & 9)
- Staff managements of children's behaviour is calm and appropriate to the ages and stages of the children attending. (standard 11)
- Comprehensive parents information booklet. Evidence of pre-school working in partnership with parents. (standard 12)

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

- ensure toys and equipment are organised so that children can select them easily;(standard 3)
- extend activity plans to allow children time to initiate their own activities and explore freely;(standard 3 )
- ensure sufficient outdoor storage available; (standard 4)
- ensure complaints procedure includes address and telephone number of regulator;(standard 12)
- child protection procedure includes procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation a ensure member of staff. (standard 13)

<b>Outcome of the inspection</b>
Good

<b>CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION</b>
<i>All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.</i>
<i>As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.</i>

## **WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?**

<b>The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection</b>	
Std	Recommendation
3	extend activity plans to allow children time to initiate their own activities and explore freely
4	ensure sufficient outdoor storage available
12	ensure complaints procedure includes address and telephone number of regulator
13	ensure child protection procedure includes process to be followed in the event of an allegation against a member of staff
3	ensure toys and equipment are organised so that children can select them easily

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

### **How effective is the nursery education?**

St Marks Playgroup provides a warm welcoming atmosphere for children, parents and carers. Children make very good progress towards the early learning goals. They make very good progress in communication, language and literacy, personal, social and emotional development, mathematical, creative and physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. This is as a result of the effective methods staff use to engage children's interest and to promote their independence.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff are enthusiastic and work very well together as a team to provide an interesting and varied curriculum. Planning is very good showing that staff have a clear understanding and knowledge of the foundation stage. Assessments are regularly completed for all children and are used appropriately to inform future planning. There are effective systems in place to support children identified as having special educational needs and who speak English as an additional language.

Leadership and management is very good. Staff are well aware of their roles and responsibilities and this results in the day to day running of the group working well. The commitment to continued development is strong and the staff work well together as a team. Staff practice and development is enhanced through a formal appraisal system and all staff are actively encouraged to attend further ongoing training.

Partnership with parents and carers is very good. Parents are well informed about the aims and objectives of the setting. There is a clear two way system for sharing information and parents are encouraged to share what they know about their child. Parents are very well informed about children's attainment and progress.

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

- Staff give high priority to nurturing children's personal, social and emotional development. Children are confident, sociable and have caring relationships.
- Teaching prioritises communication, language and literacy. As a result children initiate conversations, enjoy listening to stories and use books confidently. They understand the purpose of writing and use it in their play.
- Children's mathematical development is very good, they confidently recognise size and amounts, can estimate well and count reliably to ten and beyond.
- Staff plan very well for the provision of activities to promote the children's development in all areas of learning.
- Partnership with parents is very good having a positive impact on children's learning and making parents feel involved.

**What needs to be improved?**

- the extension of children's mark making experiences into other activity areas in the group;
- the planning and assessment to include evaluation of activities which informs future planning.

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

The overall quality of teaching and the level of staff knowledge and understanding in all areas of learning has improved. Staff practice and development has improved through the implementation of a formal appraisal system.

Staff expertise and confidence has improved particularly in aspects of language and literacy. Clear short term targets are now in place for each child. All members of staff, carers and parents are now aware of the targets set for children and all adults can reinforce this work and support the children in all areas of learning.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making very good progress in personal social and emotional development. They relate well to staff and each other and they initiate interaction with other people. Children are well behaved and respond to clear guidance from staff who provide good role models. The children display a good sense of community and confidently speak about their family life and demonstrate a positive self image. Children select resources confidently.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making very good progress in communication, language and literacy. They communicate confidently are able to both initiate and engage in conversation with each other and adults. Children make marks and practice writing for a variety of purposes. The mark making area could be extended throughout other areas to enhance children's opportunities for learning. They are developing their reading skills well, enjoy books and story time and see familiar words around the setting.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children's progress in mathematical development is very good. Most older children count up to beyond 10 confidently and the more able beyond this. Children's problem solving skills are developing well. They are beginning to learn sequencing and simple number operations as they match pattern and shape. Older children are able to problem solve through real life situations and use mathematical language confidently.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children's progress in knowledge and understanding of the world is very good. Children learn about the natural world and where they live through activities, visitors and trips to places of interest. Children show interest and enthusiasm in IT and are developing good computer skills. They frequently talk about past and present events in their own lives.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making very good progress in physical development. They can move confidently in a range of ways with increasing control and co-ordination using steps and equipment well. Children can use a variety of tools, large and small equipment confidently. They are developing a good sense of space as they move to action rhymes and practice for sports day.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children's progress in creative development is very good. They explore colour, texture, shape form and space in 2D and 3D. All children show good colour recognition. Children have good opportunities to explore sounds and songs. They have opportunities to use a wide range of musical instruments and move and respond to different kinds of music and dance. Children use their imagination well in role play and stories, and are confident at expressing and communicating their ideas.	

**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 two points for consideration;
- extend children's mark making experiences into other activity areas in the group;
- include evaluation of activities in planning and assessment.

*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.*