



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 127602

DfES Number: 543326

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 30/06/2003
Inspector Name Malini Parmar

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name St Martins Pre school
Setting Address St. Martins Church Hall
Northumberland Road
Maidstone
Kent
ME15 7LP

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of St Martins Pre school

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St Martins Pre school
Address 113 Sutton Road
Maidstone
Kent
ME15 9AA

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 Martins Playgroup is registered to provide sessional care for a total of twenty-four children aged between two years to five years. It operates from a church hall in Shepway, Maidstone. The group have been registered for approximately eight years. They are open from 09:30 to 12:00 daily during term times only.

The single storey building is used solely by the group whilst in operation. Children use the main hall and have access to two separate toilets on either side and a fully enclosed garden. Staff have access to a separate kitchen.

There are currently four staff members of whom two hold an appropriate child care qualification and two are working towards this. There are currently thirty- two children on the register.

The group is supported by an advisor from the Early Years Partnership and currently provides places for eleven funded three year olds and five four year olds. There is currently one child with special needs, this child is not funded. There are no children with additional language needs. The group have procedures in place to provide appropriate support and liase with other agencies if necessary.

How good is the Day Care?

St Martins Pre- School provides satisfactory care for children.

The premises are warm and welcoming; staff are available to greet all the children. Children enter with ease and confidence. Regular staff meetings are held to plan a programme of activities for children.

Children have access to a substantial range of toys and resources and they are familiar with the daily routine.

Staff are diligent about promoting children's safety and the layout of the group supports this. There are consistent hygiene routines in place and children are encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times. In the main, the children

generally behave well, however the groups rules are not consistently applied and this often leads to confusion and persistent negative behaviour.

Partnerships with parents are being fostered. Parents receive a copy of the group's policies and procedures and systems are in place to exchange pertinent information on a daily basis.

All necessary permissions are obtained and the majority of the relevant documentation is in place. The group are working towards obtaining the full compliment and ensuring that the necessary detail is in place to make the documentation effective.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the group agreed to, ensure the temperature of the radiators is safe and seek advice from Environmental Health with regard to the practice of using communal washing up bowls; for children to clean their hands. The temperature of the radiators is now regulated and thermostatically controlled. The group contacted the Environmental Health with regard to the use of the communal washing up bowls which has been assessed as safe.

What is being done well?

- Staff make the children feel welcome and children happily enter the premises. Children move from area to area with ease, confidence and with knowledge of how to use the designated areas.
- Children are confident, secure and they are familiar with routine. They have access to a range of toys, resources and activities.

What needs to be improved?

- the documentation, to ensure that all the policies and procedures reflect the group's practice;
- the operational plan to be complete;
- the child protection policy to include procedures to follow if allegations are made against staff;
- the nappy changing procedure;
- the recording of fire drills;
- the provision of all documentation on the premises and available for inspection;
- the staff recruitment and induction procedure;
- the behaviour management techniques to be consistently applied;
- the care of children aged five years and over so that they do not have an adverse effect on those aged between two - five years.

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 |
|-----|---|------------|
| 6 | record all necessary detail for fire drills and evaluate their effectiveness. | 30/09/2003 |
| 2 | complete an operational plan. | 30/09/2003 |
| 1 | ensure that effective staff induction procedures are in place. | 30/09/2003 |
| 6 | forward copies of the risk assessment not on the premises to Ofsted. | 30/09/2003 |

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

| Std | Recommendation |
|-----|--|
| 10 | develop staff's awareness and understanding of effective ways to manage children's behaviour, taking into account their age and stage of development |
| 1 | ensure effective procedures for the recruiting of staff are followed. |
| 2 | ensure the care of children aged over five years does not adversely affect the care of children aged between two and five years. |
| 4 | ensure nappy changing procedures are in place. |
| 13 | ensure there are procedures in place to follow if allegations are made against staff. |
| 14 | ensure all policies relate to the groups practice. |

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

How effective is the nursery education?

St Martin's Pre-school offers a provision that is acceptable but has some significant weaknesses, therefore limiting the children's progress.

Teaching has significant weaknesses. Although the links between early learning goals and records show the children's development, there is no link between activities offered and long and short term plans. Staff are aware of individual children's progress through the play plans produced for their future development. Children's independence is limited in creativity and literacy as staff do not encourage the children to make marks or produce self expressed pictures.

Children gain confidence in social activities, communicating with each other through role play experiences. Staff enable children, on a daily basis, to act out everyday situations through home corner and real world activities. Children's behaviour can be challenging. They listen to instructions but do not carry these out fully. Staff are seen to mis-use equipment, therefore children follow their example. Staff offer some independent opportunities for children, however this need to be extended throughout the session.

Leadership shows significant weaknesses. The team work well together within the session, supporting each other, however, volunteers do not have a directive in sessions, this needs to be addressed through clear guidelines on their role and responsibility. The committee's input into daily pre-school life, offers little support for the supervisor and her team. The supervisors role needs clarity towards responsibility in supporting staff's development as well as developing her own skills and knowledge.

Partnership with parents has progressed slightly, with brief written information in the parents prospectus about the E.L.G's. However, there is no reference to the topics that children are following or what they are learning. Children's work is displayed poorly giving the parents and children less pride in their work.

What is being done well?

- Children's personal, social and emotional development is progressing well due to the children's confidence to have a go. Children are very settled and secure in their environment.
- Children listen to staff's direction and instruction and show interest in the written word through books provided.
- Children have opportunities to develop mathematically through shape, and show a good understanding of number recognition.
- Children relate to every day situations through role play opportunities,

expressing themselves using their imaginations, acting out past and present events in their lives. They have a clear understanding and awareness of the their environment, particularly living things. They have a perception of change in animals and themselves.

- Children can use tools effectively with good results, using manipulative skills to produce an end product.
- Staff produce clear individual play plans for key children, assessing children's current levels of progression, they then plan for future aims within their stages of development. There is a clear link between evidence recorded in the children's records and pieces of work seen in their folders.

What needs to be improved?

- staff's knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals with regard to children's learning and linking this to effective planning;
- opportunities for children to express themselves independently through creative and literacy activities;
- opportunities throughout the session for the introduction of mathematical language, concepts and problem solving;
- the staffing structure; to enable a consistent, pro-active and knowledgeable leadership.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Early Learning Goals- some staff still lack confidence in understanding the impact and link between planning and implementation of activities

Planning and organisation of the sessions- planning lacks clarity to the activities offered, the structure of the setting has improved but needs consideration regarding the time following snack time

Children's independence- snack time offers opportunities for children to pour drinks, but not for the biscuits or cutting of fruit or for children to produce their own work.

Long term plans- each month has an emphasis on one area of learning, therefore learning is not consistent.

Assessment- this has improved, with the implementation of children's records and targets set for children's future development.

Partnership with parents- there is no information about topics and there is no link to the planning throughout parental information.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children make generally good progress in this area. Children are confident to try new activities. They show their independence in some aspects of learning, although opportunities for the children need to be increased. Children are recognised for their achievements through the staff's praise and encouragement. This enables children to be settled and content in their learning environment. However, children lack some respect for equipment and activities due to the staff's role model.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children's progress in this area has significant weaknesses. Children show an interest in the written word through the book corner. They have few opportunities to recognise their written names, although most four year olds can achieve this. Little opportunity is given to the children to freely express themselves by making marks or writing independently throughout the session, especially for the more able child.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children's progress in this area has significant weaknesses. Children can recognise both shape and number in structured sessions and in independent play, relating numbers and shape to everyday objects. However, staff miss opportunities to extend children's knowledge and understanding of comparison, quantity and capacity, although the activities to promote this are available. Very little mathematical language is used by both staff and children.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children make generally good progress in this area. Children re-live their experiences through role play and imaginary activities made available to them on a daily basis. Children can re-collect past events, especially with regard to trips and family members. They have an understanding of living things and how they change to other forms. However, due to ineffective planning and appropriate activities, the children do not have opportunities to experience other people's culture and beliefs.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children's progress in this area has significant weaknesses. Through the equipment available to them, children are skilful in the appropriate use of tools. Four year olds have an understanding of the effects and changes on their bodies and can express themselves clearly. However, the poor organisation and limited use of the large equipment limits children's development in gross motor skills, movement and coordination.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

| | |
|------------|------------------------|
| Judgement: | Significant Weaknesses |
|------------|------------------------|

Children's progress in this area has significant weaknesses. Children use opportunities to paint, draw and colour, although there is little opportunity for children to use self-expression in their work. This is also reflected in opportunities for children to make music. Staff offer many opportunities to explore colour, and children are aware of the uses of colour. Children enjoy acting out role play situations which links to their development in Knowledge and Understanding of the World.

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

- Further staff's knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals, with regard to children's learning, and ensure that planning is effective.
- Provide opportunities for children to express themselves independently, through creative and literacy activities.
- Provide opportunities throughout the session for the introduction of mathematical language, concepts and problem solving.
- Assess and implement a staff structure to enable a consistent, pro-active and knowledgeable leadership

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.