



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 974633

DfES Number: 543403

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 24/01/2005
Inspector Name Sue Taylor

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name St John's Playgroup
Setting Address St John's Church Hall and Community Centre
Victoria Road
Margate
Kent
CT9 1LN

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of St John's Pre School QR820SEPG

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St John's Pre School
Address St John's Church Hall and Community Centre
Victoria Road
Margate
Kent
CT9 1LN

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public 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 John's Pre School opened in 2001 and operates from two rooms within the St John's Community Centre in Margate. It is situated close to the town centre. A maximum of 26 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9:15 to 11:45 and from 13:30 until 16:00 on Tuesday afternoons. It operates during school term times with occasional days in the summer holidays. Children have access to a small outdoor play area.

There are currently 27 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 12 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area.

The playgroup employs five staff, four of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications, and a voluntary staff member who is appropriately qualified. The supervisor has a National Vocational level two qualification and is currently training towards level three.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

St John's Pre School provides nursery education that is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses in the provision.

The quality of teaching has significant weaknesses. The staff lack confidence and familiarity with the stepping stones and early learning goals. A variety of activities are planned for that show some understanding of the areas of learning and staff are involved with children's play. However planned learning intentions are not linked to the stepping stones and children's individual needs, whether for support or greater challenges, are not fully met. The use of everyday activities are not always used well to support children's learning. Staff make regular observations of the children and their achievements are recorded, though they do not show progress towards the early learning goals. The children's behaviour is managed well.

Leadership and management have significant weaknesses. The staff team are very supportive of each other and the supervisor. They are committed to the group and the children but without effective direction they lack a clear understanding of how children can progress and learn. Input from the committee is limited and relevant training for the staff has not been available. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is not being monitored effectively.

The partnership with parents and carers has significant weaknesses. They are able to view the planning and gain an awareness of their child's achievements under the six areas of learning. However this does not include detail about their child's progress to the early learning goals. The home contact books are helpful and informative but they lack information on how they can be more involved and support their child's learning. Good relationships are developed.

What is being done well?

- The staff respond to unplanned events. When it started snowing the children, who wanted to, were taken outside to experience it close up. There was good discussion with some children about the weather.
- Children are able to make free choices from the activities and resources that are put out each day. The weekly plan ensures that all six areas of learning are covered to provide a range of experiences for the children.
- The staff develop good and trusting relationships with the children. They spend time talking and playing with them. As a result children are settled and happy.
- All staff make and record observations about individual children's achievements. These are then used during the weekly staff discussions, with relevant information transferred to the weekly report sheets that are provided

for parents.

What needs to be improved?

- leadership and management systems to provide direction and support to staff
- the staff's knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones and early learning goals and how to use everyday activities and routines to develop children's learning
- the assessment records of children's progress through the stepping stones to the early learning goals
- parents and carers involvement in their child's learning
- the planning of activities to provide better links to the stepping stones and early learning goals, providing guidance for staff with regard to providing support or challenge for individual children.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children arrive happy and settle well at an activity of their choosing from those put out. They enjoy new experiences when supported by the staff. The children relate to the staff and make friends with other children. They generally behave well. They are beginning to take turns and cooperate with others. They have some opportunities for personal independence.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

The children communicate effectively to staff and friends. Their language development is helped through staff spending time talking to them. They are not fully involved in activities to help them link sounds and letters. They have easy access to books though the use of print is not fully explored in other activities. They have daily use of pencils and paper though this is not always used well to develop pre writing skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children have some understanding of numbers and counting. Useful resources are available, however children do not readily use or explore them. They show an interest in shapes and making arrangements. There is very little use of simple calculation or solving problems for children to learn from. They use size language easily such as big and little. They observe and use positional language well in their play.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children show interest in why things happen and explore objects. They use a variety of construction materials and can build with a purpose in mind. They remember and talk about significant things that have happened to them. They learn about the life cycles of the frog and butterfly though further opportunities to learn about the natural world and the environment are limited. They are not gaining much awareness about the lives of others in the wider world.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Most children move with confidence and control. The more confident child willingly tries different ways of moving. They are aware of their own space and generally, that of others. They are aware of their own needs in relation to eating. They use a range of equipment both large and small. They regularly engage in activities that develop their hand-eye coordination. Lack of effective assessment limits children's progress.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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The children know basic colours and get to explore how they mix. They show some interest in musical instruments though their use is not fully explored. They have few opportunities for singing. Children use their imagination in play and during role play. They use objects and construction models to represent props for their play. Children are not encouraged to use all of their senses in relevant activities. They are able to use own their ideas in some arts and crafts.

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's 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

- develop effective leadership and management systems to provide direction and support to staff
- develop staff's knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones and early learning goals, and how everyday activities and routines can be used to further develop children's learning
- develop children's assessment records ensuring that a child's progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals is shown, across all aspects
- encourage further involvement from parents and carers in their child's learning
- develop the planning to ensure children are appropriately challenged or supported in meeting their individual needs and link learning objectives to the stepping stones or early learning goals.

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.