



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 220282

DfES Number: 584159

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 27/04/2004  
Inspector Name Anne Archer

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care  
Setting Name St Michael's Playgroup  
Setting Address St Johns Ambulance Rooms  
Milner Road  
Finedon  
Northamptonshire  
NN9 5LW

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name St Michael's Playgroup 1041030

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St Michael's Playgroup  
Address St Johns Ambulance Rooms  
Milner Road, Finedon  
Wellingborough  
Northamptonshire  
NN9 5LW

## 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.Michael's Playgroup opened in 1984 and has operated from its current premises at the St. John Ambulance Rooms in Milner Road Finedon since 1996. It serves the town and surrounding villages.

There are currently 32 children from two years six months to under five years on roll. This includes 16 funded three-year-olds and eight funded four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15 until 12:45.

A manager and six part time staff work with the children. One has an early years qualification to National Vocational Qualification level 3. The group receives support from the Northamptonshire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and is affiliated to the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

### How good is the Day Care?

St.Michael's Playgroup provides satisfactory care overall for children aged between two and under five years in a warm and welcoming environment.

Playgroup staff take positive steps to promote children's safety and ensure proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents. Staff, space and resources are used well to meet children's individual needs. However, staff qualifications in childcare and first aid require attention. Children's good health is promoted by staff's maintenance of good hygiene practices. Policies and procedures are in place and underpin the safe running of the provision. Documentation is well organised with one minor exception.

Staff ensure that all children are included and their differences acknowledged and valued. The very good range of toys and equipment are used to provide interesting activities for the children although sometimes the more able children receive insufficient challenge. Staff manage children's behaviour well and good manners are encouraged.

Staff develop good working relationships with parents and provide them with regular opportunities to discuss their child's progress.

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

Not applicable.

**What is being done well?**

- Staff are deployed effectively to ensure the safety, welfare and development of the children.
- Staff are interested in what children do and say, talk and listen to them, ask questions to make them think, respond to their interests and offer encouragement and praise.
- Good behaviour is valued and encouraged, according to children's different stages of development.

**What needs to be improved?**

- staff childcare qualifications to meet minimum standard
- current first aid qualifications of staff
- arrangements for keeping a record of visitors
- the provision of challenging activities for more able children.

**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 should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection**

Std	Recommendation
2	Develop and implement an action plan detailing how at least half of all

	childcare staff will hold a level 2 qualification in childcare.
2	Ensure registration arrangements show when visitors are present.
7	Develop and implement an action plan detailing how at least one member of staff with a current first aid certificate will be on the premises or on outings at any one time.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

St. Michael's Playgroup provides good quality nursery education where children enjoy learning through a range of interesting activities. Children make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. They make very good progress in personal, social and emotional development.

The quality of teaching is generally good. The staff's knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals is generally good. Staff contribute to planning which highlights the stepping stones. Observations and assessments are made and used to inform future plans. Staff provide an interesting range of practical activities to help children progress in all six areas of learning. They interact well with children and extend individual learning through appropriate questioning. However while planned opportunities meet the needs of three-year-olds there is often insufficient challenge for four-year-olds and more able children particularly in relation to calculation and early writing.

The leadership and management of the playgroup is generally good. The manager and deputies share responsibilities and they are supported by a management committee of parents. Staff are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities and work well as a team. The staff appraisal system which was introduced after the last inspection has not been developed to its full potential.

Partnership with parents and carers is generally good. Parents are provided with information about the setting and the foundation stage curriculum. Although parents are provided with regular updates about their child's progress they are not actively encouraged to be involved in their child's learning. Staff are currently looking at ways to enable parents to more regularly contribute to their child's assessment and attainment record.

### What is being done well?

- Staff provide a stimulating learning environment for children to learn.
- Staff interact well with children and support their learning with appropriate questioning.
- Children's personal, social and emotional development is very good. Staff support new children while they develop personal independence and begin to form relationships with their peers.
- Staff make regular observations and assessments of children's progress and ensure parents are kept informed.

### What needs to be improved?

- planning to include extension learning for more able children particularly in calculating and early writing
- playgroup routines to ensure they do not affect or curtail children's learning
- opportunities for parents to regularly contribute towards their child's assessment and attainment records
- opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's learning
- the frequency of staff appraisal and its use to identify and monitor training needs
- labelling to ensure it is in the correct upper and/or lower case letters
- opportunities for children to self select materials and resources during creative activities.

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

The playgroup has made generally good progress since the last inspection to address the key issues.

They were asked to provide a more consistent approach for children to learn to recognise letters by shape and sound. Several activities have been introduced into routines to build on children's learning on a daily basis.

The playgroup were asked to introduce ways to increase children's awareness of number operations and language. Children now recognise numbers well and are developing mathematical language however planned activities do not provide sufficient challenge for more able children.

The third key issue was to provide a focus for circle time and carpet time at the end of the session. Staff have introduced group games such as 'honey bear' and 'postman' to ensure that these times are used more effectively.

The final key issue related to the support children receive while experimenting with writing and the consistency of the lettering on labels. This remains a key issue.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children separate from their main carer with confidence. They feel safe and secure and demonstrate a sense of trust with all staff. Most children display high levels of involvement in activities and demonstrate flexibility and adapt their behaviour to changes in routine. Children show care and concern for others and have an awareness of the boundaries set and the behavioural expectations within the group. Some children are beginning to initiate interactions with other people.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

All children listen to stories with increasing attention and recall. Most children hear and say initial sounds in words and know which letter represents some of the sounds. They use vocabulary focused on objects and people who are of particular importance to them. Some children use a widening range of words to express and elaborate ideas. Older and more able children engage well in activities requiring hand-eye coordination however they are not regularly developing their writing skills.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

All children willingly attempt to count with some numbers in the correct order. More able children can represent numbers using fingers, marks on paper or pictures. Children show an interest in simple number problems during a variety of activities however there is no extension learning for more able children. Some children are able to find the total number of items in two groups by counting them all. Some children are using language to describe shape, position and measure.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are developing skills of observation and are beginning to learn about change by looking closely at frogspawn and tadpoles. Children join construction pieces together to build and balance however they are not able to self select from a variety of resources. Children are beginning to develop a sense of time and place and are able to describe significant events. There are no regular opportunities for children to learn how to operate simple equipment or programmable toys.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children move confidently in a range of ways. Most children mount steps using alternate feet. They negotiate a pathway when walking and running and most children can judge body space in relation to spaces available. A few children are beginning to show awareness of healthy practices in relation to hygiene and eating and of the effect exercise has on their bodies. Children have increasing control over objects when throwing, kicking and catching.

**CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are beginning to explore the different textures of various foods and objects using a range of senses. Maintaining routines limits children's opportunities to join in with favourite songs. Children use musical instruments to make sounds in different ways. They use their imagination in role play situations by using one object to represent another and by noticing what adults do and imitating them. However children are not using their imagination during craft activities.

**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**

- Key Issues:
- provide opportunities for children to self select resources and materials during creative activities and ensure extension work is planned for more able children
- continue to develop ways for parents to regularly share what they know about their child to inform the assessment process and provide opportunities for them to be involved in their child's learning
- ensure those children who want to, have the opportunity to develop their writing skills and make sure that all labelling is in the correct upper and/or lower case lettering.

*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.*