

# St Clare's Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

---

**Unique reference number** EY415398  
**Inspection date** 14/02/2011  
**Inspector** Lynn A Hartigan

**Setting address** St James Church Hall, Tower Road, Clacton On Sea, Essex,  
CO15 1LF  
**Telephone number** 01255427629  
**Email** st.claresnursery@talktalk.net  
**Type of setting** Childcare on non-domestic premises

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2011

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

## Description of the setting

St Clare's Day Nursery has been registered since 1965. It operates from the church hall and rooms within St James's Church in Clacton, Essex. There are large enclosed gardens available for outdoor play. St Clare's nursery is registered to care for 38 children at any one time, aged from two to five years. The provision is registered on the Early Years register.

The nursery is open each weekday from 8.30am until 3.30pm. A variety of part-time sessions are also offered. The nursery operates during school term times. There are currently 89 children on register aged from two to under five years. There are strategies in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children learning English as an additional language.

The nursery employ's 17 members of staff, including the manager of whom 16 have appropriate early years qualifications. Several staff members are currently training to achieve a higher level qualification.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children experience good levels of care and attention and make good progress during their time at nursery. They are very settled and happy in their surroundings and enjoy a wide range of exciting activities which include some well planned play opportunities that promote children's awareness of diversity. However children's ability to self select resources to initiate their own play and learning is not consistent throughout the nursery. Safeguarding arrangements are good and staff ensure that children are protected and feel very safe. Excellent partnership's with parents and carers is valued by staff who have developed some good links with other early years settings. A systematic process to monitor and evaluate the provision continues to develop to ensure the outcomes for children are continually improved.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- review the organisation of toys and activities to provide children with more opportunities to independently initiate their own play and follow their own interests. This refers to the small playroom
- review the organisation of lunchtime to ensure every child receives an enjoyable and challenging learning and development experience that is tailored to meet their individual needs.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Children's well-being is safeguarded as good procedures are in place to ensure children are cared for by staff who have completed all required suitability checks. A safeguarding policy is understood by all staff who have a sound understanding of how to follow and support any concerns with regard to children's welfare. Some staff members have completed recent safeguarding training to refresh their knowledge and understanding around child protection issues. Detailed risk assessments are completed daily to ensure children play in a safe environment. Very good staff ratios ensure children are supervised well.

The nursery staff work well with the restrictions imposed within the premises and create a very welcoming and safe environment in which children can play and learn. Good quality resources and equipment that are appropriate for the children attending are mostly, easily accessible. The layout of the main playroom ensures all children are able to easily access resources and toys. However this is more limited within the small playroom. Posters, photographs and art work are displayed throughout the setting and mostly at children's height creating a real sense of belonging. Good opportunities to use a range of natural materials enable children to explore and discover for themselves. For example, young children excitedly listen with shells to hear the sea and make up stories about what they can hear. They enjoy the feel and texture of bark and logs and explain that these are good places for ants to live.

The staff team demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of continued improvement. A systematic procedure continues to be developed to ensure highlighted areas for improvement, such as, re-organising the lunchtime sessions are promptly actioned by management to improve outcomes for children. Staff training is encouraged and supported to ensure staff have the opportunity to build on their existing knowledge and further their qualifications.

Excellent opportunities are available for parents and carers to contribute to the decisions made within the setting that affect their children. The nursery is superbly supported by a strong parents and carers committee. Parents are warmly welcomed in to the nursery by staff that are friendly and approachable and happily discuss the children on a daily basis. The introduction of children inviting their parent/carer to nursery for the day is proving very successful. Parents are actively encouraged to contribute to the planning process and make comment with regard to their child's achievements outside of the nursery. This is used well by parents and carers as it is simple but extremely effective. Regular newsletters, superb parents notice boards and prospectus ensure parents are offered information in many forms.

The manager and her staff show a commitment to develop further relationships and links with local schools and nurseries. Some good links are already in place as the nursery is part of a network of settings delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result information is shared and continuity of care across different provision children attend is improved and transition in to school is supported

effectively.

Staff are skilful in identifying children who may require additional help and have very good strategies in place to share information with the parents and other agencies involved with the family. Good strategies are in place to support children who learn English as an additional language. Superb and regular communication with the parents, Makaton signs and visual prompts throughout the nursery ensure the outcomes for all children are good and that they progress to meet their full potential.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

All staff demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of how children learn and of the development requirements within the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children's progress is promoted to a good standard as a result. The superb and robust systems in place for communication with parents and carers ensure staff know the children well, and are able to effectively support children's individual needs. Good observations are recorded within the children's learning journey records, along with meaningful photographs. Staff use this information well to identify the children's next steps in learning. The staff are skilful in displaying children's work around the nursery and in the outdoor play areas. This enhances the environment creating an exciting but homely place to play and learn.

Children learn to sit quietly, listen, concentrate and take turns when they join in interactive story time. The use of a large story board and props makes this immense fun. Children are encouraged to predict or make up an ending to the story. Children take great pride in their creative work. For example, they have fun making flower arrangements for 'someone special' on Valentines day. They thoroughly enjoy playing with shaving foam and sit for some time at this activity whilst listening to music. Developing early mark making as they draw patterns and write with the foam. Opportunities to mark make outdoors are encouraged. For example, children can paint with water and brushes, use chunky chinks and clipboards. They are encouraged to think and problem solve as staff are skilful in the questions they ask. For example, children are asked how to mend a bike that has a wheel missing. They respond excitedly suggesting the use of Sellotape or asking their parents to help.

A good selection of treasure baskets and story sacks are available to children and these resources are stored at the perfect height enabling children to easily self-select and initiate their own play and learning. Cosy book areas are used well. Number lines and sequences displayed around the setting and singing favourite number songs re-enforce children's understanding of mathematics. Children are able to count and complete simple sums.

Staff listen with interest to the children who have formed close attachments. Staff are good role models and promote positive behaviour. For example, a friendship tree motivates children to be kind and helpful. They are familiar with its purpose

and are very proud when they are included on the tree. Staff are discreet when reminding children not to run, suggesting they use 'indoor legs' so that they do not bump into anyone. Children are chosen to be happy helpers of the day. They feel a sense of responsibility wearing a helpers badge and helping their friends. As a result children's behaviour is very good.

Diversity is reflected in every area of the nursery. Good resources are readily available such as a selection of musical instruments, books, dressing-up clothes and fabrics from around the world. Posters depicting positive images and text in different languages prompt conversation and children are beginning to understand about the wider world through topic work and celebrations acknowledged within the planning. Children plot flags of countries they have visited on a three dimensional world they have made. This helps support the children in making sense of the wider world. Each child's unique background is celebrated and children learning English as an additional language are supported well.

Through daily routines and real life situations children are beginning to understand the importance of how to stay safe. For example, when walking in the environment road safety is introduced and discussed. Organised visits to the nursery from the community police officer and visits from the fire brigade to discuss personal safety reinforce their understanding. Children participate in fire evacuation drills and are familiar with the routine.

Children benefit from healthy snacks such as bananas and bread sticks. The recent introduction of rolling snack ensures children's play is not interrupted and offers more opportunities for children to make decisions and support their independence. They choose when to eat and register their name, therefore staff can identify children who may need a drink but are engrossed in their play. However the organisation of lunchtime is not as effective. Children bring their lunch boxes from home. The arrival of children attending the afternoon session and departure of some morning children greatly impacts on the quality of the lunchtime session. Although no children are rushed to finish their food, slower eaters are left to complete their lunch whilst others begin to play and staff begin to tidy. As a result the potential for learning and meeting children's individual needs, at this time, is not maximised.

Opportunities for children to play outdoors ensure they have sufficient time for fresh air and exercise and children clearly relish their time in the garden. Children have a good understanding of how to stay healthy. For example, they take themselves to the bathroom and understand the importance of washing hands. They grow vegetables in the nursery garden and learn to care for their produce before tasting it at meal/snack time. Surplus vegetables are sold by the children to the parents and visitors to generate income to purchase new toys.

## Annex A: record of inspection judgements

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*  
*Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*  
*Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*  
*Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
--	---

### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:

Met