

# St Mary's Family Centre Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	125042
<b>Inspection date</b>	07 November 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Denys Rasmussen
<b>Setting Address</b>	Our Lady of Fidelity, 147 Central Hill, London, SE19 1RS
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<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	The Trustees of St. Mary's Family Centre
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care, Out of School care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St Mary's Family Centre is set within private grounds owned by the Convent of Our Lady Fidelity. This is a voluntary charity run by a management committee. The Chair is also the registered provider. The Family Centre have self contained accommodation on the ground floor of a converted school building. The after school club is housed in Virgo Fidelis Prep school on the same site. There is an adjacent fully enclosed outside play area.

The building is accessible by wheelchair users. The centre supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The Family Centre operates on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 09:00 to 17:00, and on Wednesday from 09:00 to 12.30, for 48 weeks of the year. It also provides a breakfast club from 07:30 until 08:55 The after school club is open from 15:00 until 18:00 term time only.

The day nursery is registered for a maximum of 20 children and currently have 23 children on roll aged from two to three years, of which seven are funded for nursery education. There are five staff, of whom four hold an appropriate early years qualification. The out of school club is registered for a maximum of 40 children and currently has 47 children on roll aged from four

to 10 years. There are six staff. Four hold an appropriate early years qualification. Two staff are on training programmes. This inspection focussed on the day care provision.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is outstanding.

Children learn about the importance of good hygiene practices through established daily routines and highly effective aids, for instance, they wash their hands while singing the hand washing song and look at the visual aids, carefully inspecting their faces in the low level mirror. Clear and accurate records are kept, for example, about any accident that has occurred. This ensures that children's health needs are met and information can be effectively shared with the parents. Most staff are trained in first aid and parents permission is gained to be able to seek emergency medical treatment in an emergency ensuring accidents are dealt with appropriately. Excellent procedures such as, staff consistently wiping tables with anti-bacterial spray before meal times, cleaning the toilets appropriately, wearing disposable gloves for the personal care of the children sustain high levels of hygiene which help prevent the spread of infection. Children are excluded if they have an infectious illness and are cleared by their doctor before returning to the nursery, this ensures children are well protected from the risk of infectious disease. Successful communication with the parents and clear record keeping about children's health guarantee children's needs are well met both in the day nursery and in the after school club.

Children are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle. They are offered healthy, nutritious meals which are prepared freshly by the nursery cook who accommodates the children's individual dietary needs. She holds a food hygiene certificate so is fully aware of and complies with regulations relating to food hygiene and safety. Children learn about healthy living through inspired topic work. They discuss healthy and less healthy foods, how to brush their teeth and why physical exercise is important to their good health. They have independent access to drinking water for the whole session. This all helps them to make healthy choices. Children in the out of school club are offered fresh fruit and vegetables every day and have independent access to milk and water. The children engage in excellent activities to develop their physical skills. They have daily access to the outdoor area which provides stimulating activities to support and promote their imagination and physical development. They balance on planks and cartons, run up and down the hill, crawl through tunnels and engage in imaginative physical games. The role play area is on two floors which enables children to practise going up and down stairs safely, helping them to learn valuable skills.

Children's emotional well being and stability is well nurtured by warm and affectionate staff and highly effective practice which provides a key worker system and excellent settling in procedures. Children's choices are valued, they confidently access the activities, play and experiment and go to the staff for support.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a clean, warm and welcoming environment. The creative organisation of toys and equipment means children can move around safely to independently access available resources from shelves, tables and boxes which are at child height are safe and appropriate for the age and stage of development of the children using them. The nursery is organised to it's full potential into areas of learning to offer all activities and facilities which promote children's

development effectively. The nursery and out of school club have excellent systems in place for ensuring the safety of the children which is given high priority. Clear risk assessments are completed ensuring measures are put into place to reduce the risk of potential hazards. Children are meticulously safeguarded through the excellent practice. For example, CCTV is used and viewed to ensure children's security is maintained at all times and all visitors are known. The escape procedure is exceptional and regular fire drills help children become familiar with the procedures so they learn how to leave the premises quickly and safely. Children's welfare is additionally promoted through the staff's extensive knowledge with regard to child protection. For example, all staff have attended safeguarding training and the nursery has on site social workers who are able to advise and support staff in caring for the children.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

Children experience a wide range of well-planned activities which contribute to their development both indoors and outdoors in both the day nursery and the after school club. Staff's sound understanding of child development ensures exemplary practice which leads to excellent outcomes for children. Children are encouraged to be independent through everyday routine, for example, self registration, self selection of resources, visiting the toilet, washing their hands and tidying up. Children make choices in their play and are actively encouraged to plan what they intend to do and recall what they have actually done. Children's vocabulary and sharing of thoughts is encouraged well through group circle times and meal times. All staff make good use of the Birth to three matters framework as part of their assessment process to plan a stimulating environment to ensure children progress. They provide a range of inspiring activities usually linked to a theme to stimulate children's senses. For example, using Tapioca in water to represent frog spawn so the children can feel and experiment with it. The staff play with the children at their level, they inspire their play by supporting and guiding them, being enthusiastic and knowing them well enough to know what interests them. Children learn to listen and respond while enjoying and sharing stories, songs and games which contributes to their developing communication skills. The staff know the children well and anticipate their needs. This increases their sense of wellbeing. Children's individual needs are thoroughly met through the exceptional range of toys, resources and equipment. They flourish through the stimulating and purposeful activities and experiences. Children's play is promoted through the staff's contagious enthusiasm and skilful interaction. The play opportunities in the out of school club are evaluated by the children so staff are aware of what interests them and what did not work so well, this ensures the children enjoy their time at the club.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Most children are keen to learn and quickly settle to become involved in activities. Children make good progress because the staff have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and give children any extra support they need. Staff value children's ideas and interests and incorporate them into the planning. There is a clear purpose for activities ensuring children progress well. They allow children time to solve problems, practise and consolidate their learning, with a good balance of free play and guided choices. The environment is exploited to its full potential and organised creatively with good use of labels to promote communication, language and literacy. The staff are calm, kind and polite and set a good example to the children. The garden and surrounding area is used imaginatively to develop children's physical skills, imagination, maths development and to discover nature. The imaginative topic work links all areas of learning well. The assessment system identifies children's achievements and next steps for learning in consultation with the parents, however, it is

sometimes hard to track a child's progress in the profile because the evidence has not been dated and evaluated. Nevertheless, the staff know the children well enough to ensure their individual learning needs are met.

Children learn about the world around them and are introduced to a variety of cultures and traditions through good topic based activities and good quality resources. They plant seeds and understand plants need sun and water. They look at life cycles and talk about their own growth. Children are introduced to simple technology when they use the computer. Children can differentiate colour and experiment at the easel. They use their imagination well when engaged in role play and develop their play through staffs skilful interaction and involvement in their play. Children are confident and independent because staff create opportunities to help children's self-help skills. For example they give children the responsibility of being the helper which gives them extra responsibilities such as setting the table for meals and counting heads at registration. Their independence is encouraged through direct accessibility of resources and equipment which they learn to tidy away afterwards. The children are enthusiastic and motivated and are keen to tell staff about their experiences outside of nursery helped by the staff's skilled questioning at greeting time. The children are well behaved and kind to each other, sharing equipment happily.

Children interact well with each other and involve their friends in their made up games. For example, running and diving into the ball pit pretending they are diving and swimming in the sea. The creative use of malleable materials offered such as cooked spaghetti, corn flour, play dough, tapioca and soil ensure the children are confident to explore with all their senses. Children learn about size, shape and measure through good practical activities. They experiment in the sand and research volume, capacity, floating and sinking in the water tray. They use size language to describe and compare and sing songs that introduce them to early addition and subtraction. Children use tools well such as scissors, rollers and pencils and are given good opportunities to develop good hand eye coordination. They gain control of their bodies when participating in music and movement and physical garden activities. Children have independent access to a variety of materials and create 3D models, they paint them and are very proud of them. For example, they made rockets with recycled materials which they painted. They showed staff and their friends proudly while they flew them around the room.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

Children's self-esteem, achievements and overall demeanour are good as a result of the exceptional commitment and understanding of the staff. The children have developed a good understanding of acceptable behaviour in the nursery and awareness of the boundaries set. Staff use positive handling strategies and seek advice from outside professionals to support individual children when required. The children behave well in response to the staff's exemplary interaction. Children have access to resources and visitors that promote a positive view of the wider world. For example by acknowledging a variety of festivals and traditions, inviting people to visit such as a mother with her new baby and providing play resources that reflect positive images of race, culture and disability. Detailed information and parent consultations are used to ensure individualised care is offered. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are welcomed and are extremely well supported because staff work closely with parents and outside professionals ensuring children's additional needs are identified and met. Staff attend relevant training courses to further ensure they can support individual children to the best of their ability. The nursery exudes a warmth and respect for individuality. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children benefit from the outstanding partnership staff have developed with parents, including the parents of children who receive funding for nursery education. They experience consistent care due to effective communication systems which guarantee children settle well and their individual needs are met. The staff go to a great deal of effort to ensure the individual needs of the children in their care are met by discussing the children regularly with their parents and using parent consultations to provide relevant care and education to ensure the children make excellent progress. Staff build good relationships with parents and children which means they are happy and secure in their environment. Parents are encouraged to be involved in topic work and are given information in regular newsletters. Samples of work and photographic evidence enables parents to have clear guidance on how their child is developing. Parents suggestions are highly valued and acted upon, they are gained through everyday contact, regular questionnaires and pro actively asking for suggestions. Parents are given clear messages and the nursery ensures parents have access to all information which is written comprehensively. Parents are given excellent information about the foundation stage in the form of a brochure. Staff have extensive experience and understanding of 'partnership with parents' and relationships with parents are both friendly and professional. This helps to promote children's development.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

Outcomes for children are excellent. Children's care is significantly enhanced by exceptional organisation. All policies and procedures are robust and fully support the expert practice of knowledgeable, committed and highly skilled practitioners. Children are cared for by suitably qualified staff who have been appropriately vetted, due to effective recruitment procedures and work above the minimum child to adult ratios. This ensures the efficient and safe management of the nursery and the out of school club. A superb partnership between parents and outside agencies ensures all work together in numerous ways to meet each child's needs and ensure their protection.

Leadership and management of the nursery education are good. There is a significant commitment to develop the provision and effective systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the teaching. This ensures that any potential weaknesses are identified at an early stage and improvements are made. The assessment system for children in the Foundation Stage is in it's infancy and is being developed, as there are minor weaknesses in the recording of children's progress. There is a clear vision for the nursery with a strong focus on inclusion and the development of all the children. There is a fully committed staff team and staff development is positively encouraged. This ensures practice is up-to date. Staff have a comprehensive understanding of the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage and how to creatively apply this in practice.

Children gain a high level of self control because of the realistic boundaries, excellent routine, and development of skills to promote independence and autonomy. Children's emotional development is nurtured ensuring they have a strong sense of well-being. Children become engrossed in a wide range of stimulating activities supported by staff who know them well and provide appropriate challenge depending on their individual needs, enabling them to develop to their full potential.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Since the last care inspection the nursery have improved the complaints procedure which now includes Ofsted's complaints department's address and telephone number. Since the last nursery

education inspection the nursery has improved children's independence at mealtimes. There is now a helper system which means two children lay the table and then all the children scrape their plate into the bin when they have finished and put their plate on the trolley; this encourages their self help skills. The nursery also agreed to develop the system for the recording of children's progress and the use of it to aid planning. This has been improved and children's next steps inform the planning. However, the tracking and evaluation of children's progress in the records needs further development and is a recommendation in this report.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

#### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- improve the assessment records to ensure children's progress is more easily tracked.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)