



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 110276

DfES Number: 582282

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 14/01/2005
Inspector Name Marilyn Joy

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name St Michaels Pre-School
Setting Address 258 Lower Farnham Road
Aldershot
Hampshire
GU11 3RB

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of St Michaels Pre-School

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St Michaels Pre-School
Address 258 Lower Farnham Road
Aldershot
Hampshire
GU11 3RB

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 Pre-school is managed by a voluntary committee and opened in 1996. It operates from within a church hall in Aldershot and children from the local community attend. There is an enclosed outside play area. The pre-school is open term time only. Morning sessions are from 09:15 until 11:45, Monday to Friday. There are some afternoon sessions from 12:30 until 15:00. Children attend a variety of sessions.

There are currently 53 children on roll and of these there are 48 children who receive funding for nursery education. It is the pre-school's policy to accept children from 2 years 9 months. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and also some who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs 8 staff. There are 6 who hold appropriate early years qualifications and 1 who is working towards a relevant qualification. The pre-school receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

St. Michael's Pre-school provides good quality care for children. The pre-school is well organised with effective operational systems in place. The environment is warm and welcoming. Reassuring settling-in routines help children and parents to feel confident and secure. The premises are clean, bright and airy and attractive displays of children's work decorate the walls. A good range of appropriate resources are available to challenge and interest children. They are clean and in good condition. Most documentation is in place and stored securely.

Staff have a very good knowledge of health and safety and promote an awareness with the children. Regular snacks and drinks are provided although healthy eating is not encouraged on a daily basis. Equal opportunities is promoted and strategies are in place to provide good support for staff and children with special needs.

A broad range of activities is offered and encourages children's learning in all areas.

Children are interested and enjoy their play. There is a clear behaviour management policy in place. Staff use praise and encouragement as well as consistent boundaries to promote positive behaviour. Most children play co-operatively and respond well.

A strong emphasis is given to partnership with parents. Information about the pre-school is given to parents and they are kept up-to-date with regular newsletters and information on the notice board. Staff form friendly relationships with parents and use daily discussions to ensure they have a good knowledge of individual children's needs and parent's wishes are respected.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

What is being done well?

- Comprehensive policies and procedures support the smooth running of the pre-school. Staff are deployed effectively and have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Children are happy and confident.
- Staff are vigilant about maintaining children's safety at all times. Careful consideration is given to all eventualities such as informing visitors of evacuation procedures and daily safety checks. Children are becoming aware of the rules of the setting and using resources safely.
- Staff observe and promote good health and hygiene procedures during their daily practise. Children are developing good practices for themselves. They wash their hands independently after messy play and toilet.
- Staff form positive relationships with the children and are interested in what they do and say. They encourage them to talk about what they are doing and introduce ideas to extend their language and understanding. Children relate well to each other and staff.
- The pre-school is pro-active in meeting individual needs. Advice is sought and staff attend training. Adaptations are made to the environment and they use Makaton as part of their daily routine. Respect for others is promoted and all children are valued.

What needs to be improved?

- the provision of healthy snacks
- attendance records for visitors.

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

There are no complaints to report.

Outcome of the inspection

Good

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
8	Ensure snacks are healthy and nutritious.
2	Ensure visitors attendance is accurately recorded.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

St. Michael's Pre-school provides good quality nursery education overall which enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Provision for creative, physical, and personal, social and emotional development are very good.

The quality of teaching is generally good. A stimulating programme of activities is offered. There is a good range of resources and many are easily accessible encouraging children to become independent. Staff have a good understanding of child development and know how to extend and challenge children's learning. They are less secure in their knowledge of the stepping stones so some learning opportunities are missed. Staff use their knowledge of individual children when planning activities as the new system for assessing and recording children's progress is not sufficiently developed to be working effectively. Support for children with special educational needs is very good. Staff form easy and trusting relationships with the children. They use varied teaching methods and promote positive behaviour well.

Leadership and management is generally good. Staff and committee work well together to provide an encouraging environment where children enjoy learning. Clear leadership provides good support for staff and ensures they have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Many areas of the pre-school have been evaluated and improvements introduced. The system for assessing children's progress, however, has not been effectively monitored.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Parents are provided with a comprehensive range of information about the pre-school. Details of the weekly topics are displayed on the notice board. Parents can discuss their child's progress with staff but have few formal opportunities to view their records. Parents are encouraged to become involved in the pre-school either through the committee or parent's rota. They appreciate the positive relationships with staff.

What is being done well?

- A dedicated and enthusiastic team of staff provide a well-planned curriculum that enables them to make good progress and purposeful play that children enjoy.
- Staff have high expectations for children's learning and behaviour. They use effective strategies to help them develop positive relationships with others and become aware of the behaviour expectations with the pre-school. Children show respect for others and behave well.
- Children are developing confidence and a positive disposition towards

learning. They are interested and motivated, moving around the pre-school with ease.

- Children's creativity is fostered well. They express themselves confidently with different media and materials and receive very good support to explore music and sounds.
- Staff work closely with parents and professionals to support children with special educational needs. They attend relevant training and develop strategies and resources to support individual needs.

What needs to be improved?

- staff's understanding of the stepping stones
- the system for assessment
- information shared with parents regarding children's progress and learning.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The pre-school has made generally good progress since the last inspection. They were asked to encourage the children to share their experiences and news with large and small groups. This has been achieved well. Staff encourage children to speak in different size groups. Many children confidently share their news.

They were also asked to provide opportunities for children to write for a variety of purposes thus extending their literacy skills. Children attempt writing and mark-making during structured activities although some opportunities are missed for example to name their paintings.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Most children arrive confidently and are keen to explore the activities set out. Many are becoming independent and select toys for themselves from the accessible shelving. They pour their own drinks at snack time and attempt to put on their coats. Most form positive relationships with others and are beginning to contribute at circle. They are aware of the behaviour expectations of the pre-school and respond well to staff. They are learning to play co-operatively and take turns.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children enjoy listening to stories and joining in with rhymes. Many contribute ideas and talk about their experiences in small and large groups. Topics are used to extend their vocabulary. Children choose books for pleasure and handle them well. They use a range of tools and resources to develop their pre-writing skills, forming shapes with small and large movements. Some attempt to write their name although few attempt writing for a variety of purposes unless it is part of a guided activity.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children enjoy counting and some are becoming aware of simple calculation during number rhymes and activities. Some opportunities are missed to introduce numerals and extend more able children. They explore shapes, space and measure when working out how many bottles to fill a container or which is the biggest. Some know a variety of shapes and concentrate on how they fit together when making puzzles or building. They explore patterns, speed and position during music sessions.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

A variety of topics engage children's interest in the world around them such as the seasons, their senses and winter festivals around the world. They find out about living things and the natural world. Many use technology and operate simple equipment. They use a variety of construction kits but have few opportunities to experiment for themselves with different equipment for designing and making. Children find out about their local environment and talk about places they visit.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Most children move confidently and with control. They negotiate space when riding bikes and moving to music. They use a variety of small and large equipment to practise and develop skills such as climbing, balancing and riding. They demonstrate increasing control when using different tools and materials. They practise pouring and filling in the water play and using scissors to cut out shapes. They are encouraged to notice changes in their bodies when active and observe good hygiene routines.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Most children enthusiastically join in with music and movement. They enjoy familiar songs and play a variety of instruments. Some are beginning to differentiate between different sounds and tempos. They march, dance and move imaginatively to music. Children use their imaginations and create their own storylines in the role-play area. They dress-up and play co-operatively with each other. They explore different mediums and colours when creating pictures, using malleable materials and painting.

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

- increase staff's understanding of the stepping stones and the system for assessments to ensure records consistently reflect children's achievements and can be used to inform the planning ensuring equal emphasis in all areas
- provide parents with more information about children's progress and achievements and involve them in children's learning.

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.