

# St. Marys Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY255251
<b>Inspection date</b>	11 January 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Amanda May
<b>Setting Address</b>	Norman Road, East Ham, London, E6 6HN
<b>Telephone number</b>	0208586 2461
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<b>Registered person</b>	Newham Pre-School Learning Alliance
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St Mary's Pre-school opened in April 2003. It operates from St Mary's Church Hall, which is joined onto the Nature Reserve Centre, and close to shops and amenities. The group serves the local area.

There are currently 56 children from two to five years on roll. This includes 24 funded three-year-olds and 1 funded four-year-old. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children who are learning to speak English as an additional language as well as children who have learning difficulties and disabilities.

The group opens five days a week during term times. Sessions are from 9:15 until 12:15 and 13:00 until 16:00.

There are three part-time and five full-time staff who work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualification to NVQ level 2, 3 or equivalent. The setting receives support from the

Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Secure procedures are in place to protect children from illness and infection. Staff ensure that children who fall ill whilst they are at the setting, are kept warm and comfortable whilst arranging for them to be collected by parents. This ensures that the health of the other children attending the setting is protected. Staff demonstrate their understanding of the importance of a good cleaning routine to promote children's health, as they wipe tables and surfaces with anti-bacterial cleaner before snack and meal times. Children who wear nappies are changed on changing mats which are wiped down after each use, and staff generally wear gloves in order to ensure the spread of illness and infection is minimised effectively.

Accidents which occur whilst children are at the setting, are dealt with very well. Staff record details of each incident which has occurred, and these are shared with parents when children are collected at the end of each session. The setting has documentation in place to record the administration of medication and staff demonstrate a good awareness of the importance of sharing information with parents, in order to ensure children's health and safety is protected at all times.

Children learn about the importance of a healthy diet, as they taste new fruits and vegetables from a variety of different cultures. Children enjoy tasting prickly pears and pineapple at snack time. Children sit at the table and choose from a wide range of exotic fruits to taste. They use individual chopping boards and child-safe knives to chop their own fruit, or they choose to prepare their own smoothie with staff supervision. Children visibly enjoy tasting different fruits, and are enthusiastic as they choose the ingredients for their smoothie. Once children have finished their snack, they put their used cutlery and plate away before re-joining their friends at play. Children benefit from a good range of physical activities which include walks in and around the local area where they sing songs as they go. Staff provide children with regular indoor physical activities such as use of a climbing frame and slide. Children learn to manipulate their bodies as they climb through and underneath it into a small den where they sit with their friends to hide in their secret location.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a setting which is welcoming, secure and safe both indoors and out. Good procedures are followed to ensure children can develop a sense of responsibility of their own safety as they practise fire drills every term. Staff ensure that drills are practised on a variety of days at different times, in order to ensure all children and staff have the opportunity to broaden their understanding. Fire drills are effectively timed and evaluated in order to develop each member of staff's full awareness of how individual children cope, and enable staff to support them fully as a result.

Children learn how to be safe as they play with resources, and are enabled by staff to take challenges safely. Staff gently remind children about safety issues as they are reminded not to run inside, and to be careful as they play. Children enjoy trips and walks within the local community, and to ensure their safety, children are provided with mini fluorescent jackets to ensure they remain safe and are easy to see by passing traffic. Children hold hands and know to walk together to keep themselves safe and secure.

Children are protected through the setting's secure safeguarding children policy. All staff demonstrate a clear awareness of their responsibilities in ensuring children's safety. Relevant documentation is in place which staff can refer to for support and guidance to help them develop their understanding. The supervisor understands the importance of recording any concerns of abuse and a record of any existing injuries is kept. However, confidentiality is not always fully maintained as records are currently stored with completed accident forms.

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

The provision is good.

Children experience a wide and varied range of activities which contribute very well to their development inside and outside. Staff learn about children's interests when they first join the setting through discussion with parents and competing tick-lists about specific skills and abilities. Children are very settled and confident at the setting. They have a good understanding of the routine in place, and enjoy waving hello and goodbye to their friends as they arrive and leave. Firm friendships are in place, and children enjoy talking to staff as they play, about the different things they have done at home.

Staff provide children with experiences and activities which provide encouragement and promote enthusiasm as they go for a walk, looking at the fungi growing in the garden. Children show interest in the world around them, and staff encourage children to think about new ideas through play. Children are confident and self-assured at their nursery. They access resources from a wide selection displayed for them, whilst also being able to self-select new resources whenever they wish. Children lead their play independently and enjoy taking part in activities such as imaginary baking with gloop. Staff provide children with bowls and spoons where they mix the bright pink dough and decorate it as they make a cake. Staff are caring and compassionate and take time playing with the children, listening carefully to what they have to say. Children are encouraged to give their friends a big clap when they have achieved a new skill, or they have been extra helpful. Children glow with pride as they stand up to hear their applause from their friends. This promotes children's self-esteem very well.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making appropriate steps in their learning, and are making sound progress through the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. Staff support children in their learning well, and spend time encouraging children to try new activities and to investigate new resources. Planning is completed by all members of staff, developing their own understanding of the Foundation Stage and the Birth to three matters framework. Children benefit from being allocated a Key worker, who ensures children feel welcomed and settled as well as taking responsibility for their learning and ensuring activities are appropriate for each child's individual needs. Staff plan together activities weekly, discussing each child's specific learning struggles. This ensures that individual children are moved on in their learning. Although many staff demonstrate a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage, planning lacks detail and fails to include learning objectives and links to the stepping stones for all activities. As a result, some staff do not have a full understanding of each child's development and how to best support children in their learning and play.

Children enjoy the opportunities which are provided for them. Communication, language and literacy is a strong area, where children are supported in learning phonics and in the recognition of letters and words. Children sit together in key worker groups and skilfully use their 'magic fingers' to write a letter of the alphabet in the air. Children develop an interest in written

language as they help themselves to books to look at independently and with their friends. Staff support younger children in their learning, and all children visibly enjoy singing simple rhymes together. Children are confident in speaking in groups and are encouraged to stand up in front of their friends who listen carefully to what they have to say. Resources are available to support children in developing their understanding of early mathematics. Children learn about shape as they make trips into the local community to look at shapes such as car tyres and road signs. Children increase their awareness of numbers as they complete puzzles with staff, counting the stars and learning about simple sums as children begin to understand the concepts of more than and less than.

Children develop their understanding about the world around them as they have visits to the supermarket in their local community. Children help to choose different fruits and vegetables which they then carry to the checkout, developing an awareness of money before packing up their purchases and taking them back to the setting to have for a snack. Children enjoy listening to bakery staff as they learn about the different ingredients used to bake bread, and children enjoy cooking activities at the setting where they help to measure the ingredients as they weigh them carefully before mixing them together and watch them rise in the oven. Staff encourage children to develop an awareness of their local community, as well as previously making good use of Information and Technology (IT) equipment such as computers and cameras. Children enjoy being creative as they play, making use of an imaginary area as well as plenty of art and craft activities. Children experiment with mark-making with a variety of media, making patterns in paint with toy cars, paint brushes and other utensils. Staff encourage children to label their own work independently, although help them when necessary if they struggle.

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

The provision is good.

Children who attend the setting behave very well. Close relationships are evident amongst children and staff alike. Children learn to share and take turns as they play and take part in group activities. A thorough and detailed procedure is in place to support staff in encouraging good behaviour as they praise and encourage children to try new activities and persist in their challenges. Children show consideration to their friends as they play, whilst older children show their younger friends how to behave well. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. Staff use symbols and pictures to encourage children's understanding of rules within the setting such as no running inside. This helps all children gain a good awareness of acceptable behaviour, whilst also supporting children with English as an additional language, and those with learning difficulties and disabilities in their understanding of the daily routines.

Children who attend the setting who have learning difficulties and disabilities, are supported well. A recently recruited Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is in place to support staff and devise Individual Educational Plans for each child. However, as these are not currently devised as soon as a child's needs are identified, staff are sometimes unaware of how best to support them. Staff demonstrate a good awareness that children have a variety of individual needs and know to support them by sharing information with parents and adapting activities to suit each child's specific requirements.

The setting celebrates diversity, with children and staff alike coming from a broad range of countries, cultures and religions. As a result, children have a good awareness of other people's beliefs and customs as they celebrate festivals from other cultures such as Ede and Diwali. Children make cards to take home to their families, and benefit from being able to access many books and toys which include positive images of people of different cultures or who have

different needs. As many staff are bilingual in a variety of different languages, children with English as an additional language are supported very well. Staff are aware that some parents may also require assistance in communication, and messages are therefore shared in a variety of ways.

The setting encourages parents to become fully involved through sharing skills and gaining a full understanding of what their child's day might include. A suggestion box is in place for parents to contribute ideas and a newsletter is sent out regularly to ensure parents are kept updated and involved in the setting and educational plans. The quality of partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents are pleased with the progress their children are making through the early learning goals, however, plans are not currently displayed for parents to view. Termly meetings are arranged by staff, for parents to come into the setting to discuss their child's development. Learning targets for each child are also set each term. These are shared effectively with parents, and staff encourage them to support children at home in practising skills and learning which children are being introduced to at the group. Staff share information about the Foundation Stage and the Birth to three matters framework with parents through regular newsletters and through a detailed prospectus. This allows parents to develop their own understanding of early child-hood education, and develop their awareness of how planned activities are supporting children in their learning. However, as plans are not displayed for parents to view, parents lack a clear awareness of how children are progressing, and what the learning objectives are for each of the activities provided for the children.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. It consists of an enthusiastic and positive group of staff, who work well together to provide children with an environment which is homely and fun. The supervisor has taken over the running of the setting in the last six months, and provides staff with inspiration in improving the setting and the care and education provided. However, the registered provider has failed to notify Ofsted of the change in supervisory staff. This is a breach of regulations. The registered provider lacks an awareness of their responsibilities to ensure Ofsted are made aware of all changes to supervisory staff. This is important to ensure that all relevant checks are undertaken and that staff are suitable.

Recruitment procedures of prospective new staff are thorough. New staff are encouraged to come into the setting to meet the children as part of the interview process. This along with requesting references and taking Criminal Records Checks ensures that staff are suitable to provide care to the children. However, full details of these checks are not currently available for the supervisor to view at all times. The setting manages time and space effectively, and children benefit from being able to investigate a variety of activities set out in specific areas of learning. Staff encourage and support children well, and deploy themselves effectively to ensure they can support children in their play and learning where necessary. Thorough policies and procedures are in place which are available for parents and staff to access to update their knowledge and understanding. This helps to ensure consistency of care between individual staff members.

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The supervisor observes and monitors the quality of teaching and learning well. Staff are developing their understanding of the Foundation Stage and the early learning goals, through support from the supervisor and the pre-school learning alliance. Key worker records are reviewed by the supervisor to ensure that

she is aware of how well staff are supporting individual children in their learning. As the supervisor provides a very hands-on approach to ensuring the curriculum for the Foundation Stage is addressed, she consistently observes staff informally in their work, and provides them with guidance and advice where appropriate. This ensures that less confident staff are supported in their development to ensuring that children's early educational needs are met.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the previous inspection the provider was recommended to record the arrival and departure times of children, ensure that children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that reflect positive images of gender and disability, ensure that radiators are safe or inaccessible to the children, make available to parents a written statement on special needs, and to update child protection procedures to include procedures to follow should an allegation be made against a member of staff.

The setting has now addressed these issues thoroughly. Children register themselves as they arrive at the setting, and staff ensure that the times children arrive and depart are recorded accurately. An appropriate range of resources are in place for children to gain a good awareness of social diversity, and a thorough policy is in place regarding the provision of care for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Radiators and heaters within the setting have been made inaccessible to children in order to ensure their safety. The setting has also developed the safeguarding children procedure to make clear what procedures should be followed if an allegation was made against a member of staff. This is effectively shared with parents.

In respect of the provision of nursery education, the provider was recommended to improve staff knowledge of the early learning goals, further develop plans to clearly show how activities are modified or extended for children of various abilities, provide more opportunities for children to develop their mathematical understanding, provide more opportunities for children to investigate and experiment how and why things work, and to regularly use IT to support their learning. The provider was also recommended to place greater emphasis on communication, language and literacy by providing more opportunities for more able children to recognise the sounds alphabet letters make.

The setting has enhanced planning to ensure that activities cater for children of all abilities and interests. Staff are constantly developing their awareness of the Foundation Stage curriculum, although some staff lack confidence in this area. Children have many opportunities to develop their understanding of phonics and enjoy experimenting with IT equipment such as cameras and computers to develop their awareness of the wider world. Plans are being developed to show how activities can be adapted for children of varying needs, and staff demonstrate their awareness of how this can be achieved well.

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

Since 1 April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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

#### The quality and standards of the care

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

- ensure that records relating to existing injuries of children are acknowledged by parents, and stored effectively to ensure confidentiality is maintained at all times
- ensure that children with learning difficulties and disabilities are well-supported and that individual learning plans are in place for each child
- ensure that the regulatory body (Ofsted) is advised of all changes to supervisory staff in order to confirm their suitability
- ensure that records listing staff vetting checks are thorough and include the dates and numbers of criminal disclosures.

#### 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):

- ensure that plans include learning objectives for all activities on offer, to ensure staff can support children effectively at all stages of their play and learning
- ensure parents can easily view the various activities on offer, and can make clear links to the learning objectives and desired outcomes for each of these.

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)