



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 224193

DfES Number: 583364

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 26/11/2004  
Inspector Name Dianne Andrews

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care  
Setting Name St Mary`s Playgroup  
Setting Address St Mary's C of E School  
The Grove, Lodge Lane  
Bridgnorth  
Shropshire  
WV15 5EQ

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of St Mary's Playgroup

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St Mary's Playgroup  
Address St Mary's C of E School  
The Grove, Lodge Lane  
Bridgnorth  
Shropshire  
WV15 5EQ

## 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 Mary's Playgroup has been registered since 1993. It operates within St Mary's School in the Low Town area of the market town of Bridgnorth. The children are accommodated in two rooms, with the younger children in the 'playgroup' room and the older children in the 'nursery' room. Children attend the group from the local rural area and most go on to join the school nursery class.

There are currently 65 children on roll, this includes 41 children in receipt of funded nursery education. The group operates each week-day during term times, from 09:00 to 15:00. The group supports children with special educational needs. No children within the group speak English as an additional language.

There are nine members of staff working with the children throughout the week, seven staff hold recognised childcare qualifications.

### How good is the Day Care?

St Mary's Playgroup provides a good standard of care for children. The setting is generally well-organised and staff are deployed effectively within their activity rooms, however there is limited scope for the manager to gain an overview of how the setting is operating. Staff make good use of space and plan activities to ensure they are undertaken in an appropriate environment. Children's enjoyment of activities is enhanced by the wide range of equipment, the majority of which is displayed effectively to enable children to make their own selections. Most documentation is maintained appropriately to promote the safe management of the service.

The staff have a good awareness of safety issues and effective procedures are in place to ensure the well-being of children. The daily routine encourages children to be independent and have good personal hygiene standards. Food provided is healthy and nutritious, although drinking water is not readily available. Staff are aware of their role and responsibility to protect children in their care. The policy for the administration of medication does not consider the needs of children in full-day care.

Children are given choice in their activities and staff talk and listen to children, using praise and encouragement to support their learning. Children are confident, well-settled and good relationships have been formed with staff and each other. Their behaviour is good and staff have high expectations, using praise and small reward strategies to promote desirable behaviour.

The relationships with parents have been improved in the last term. There are now effective procedures to keep them well-informed about the provision and daily events. Staff are organising parents' meetings to enable parents to be actively involved in their children's' progression through the playgroup.

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

The group have satisfactorily addressed the issues raised at the last inspection.

The register now contains information about the children and details of staff's attendance, although times of attendance are not clearly recorded.

The complaints policy and the child protection policy have been reviewed and now contain the relevant information to promote the welfare of children attending.

### **What is being done well?**

- Staff have a calm and consistent approach towards the children and when dealing with behaviour. Children receive encouragement and are praised for their achievements and they respond well to requests made of them.
- The partnership with parents has been developed well. Written information, parents evenings and verbal feedback ensures that parents are well informed about their child's progress.
- Children access a broad range of interesting activities and resources, including those that promote positive images of diversity, they are used well to provide many stimulating play opportunities. Children's independent learning is valued, supported and encouraged.
- Staff are effectively deployed to ensure high standards of safety and hygiene throughout the setting.

### **What needs to be improved?**

- the arrangements for registration to include times of children's attendance
- the medication policy to ensure that the needs of children attending on a full-day-care basis can be met and further information from parents to ensure that children's specific needs are understood and can be appropriately catered for within the setting
- children's access to drinking water throughout the day
- opportunities for the manager to gain an overview of the daily practice and organisation across the setting.

**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
2	Ensure that registration arrangements show the times when children are present.
7	Ensure that the medication policy takes account of the full day care registration and enables staff to meet the needs of children attending.
8	Consider arrangements for making drinking water available to children throughout the day.
10	Request further written information from parents to ensure that staff have sufficient knowledge to effectively meet children's special(health) needs.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

St Mary's Playgroup provides generally good quality nursery education for children. They are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals, through a range of activities that they are eager to participate in.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Planning is generally effective in ensuring that the curriculum is well covered, although there are inconsistent opportunities for children's physical development. Some activities do not effectively meet the developmental needs of younger children attending, however, taken overall the observation and assessment system is used well to inform planning. Staff provide opportunities for children to self-select activities and strong emphasis is placed on the importance of independent learning. They are continuing to develop the environment, for instance by improving accessibility to creative resources, but some areas, such as role-play props, remain disorganised. This limits children's ability to make informed selections. There are effective strategies in place to support children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

Leadership and management are generally good. Staff work well together, however only key staff members are involved in the planning of activities and the organisation of resources, this hampers the smooth running of the session. The voluntary committee are supportive and the group work closely with the nursery and Foundation Stage staff within the school and are keen to act on any advice given. Thought should be given to the development of systems which enable evaluation of the setting's overall effectiveness.

Partnership between parents and staff is generally good. The staff have begun to encourage parental involvement and provide regular information about activities and other early years issues. Opportunities for keyworkers and parents to share information about children's progress are continuing to be developed.

### What is being done well?

- Children with special educational needs are given good support and encouragement, staff work with parents and outside agencies to provide effective learning opportunities for individual children.
- Staff encourage children to develop as motivated, independent learners.
- Children are interested and eager to participate in activities and have a positive approach to learning. They are keen to try new experiences and are interested and confident in their play. They have opportunities to take part in activities based on first-hand experiences that stimulate their curiosity.
- Children's mathematical understanding is supported well through a wide

range of planned and spontaneous activities.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- opportunities for children to develop in all areas of their physical development, regardless of their pattern of attendance
- opportunities for younger children to develop their mark-making skills and to use writing for a purpose, within all areas of the playgroup and to offer differentiated learning in routine activities, which meets children's individual developmental needs
- continued development of the environment, to make all areas attractive and easily accessible to children
- the system for planning of activities and the use of resources, offering opportunities for the active involvement of all staff
- systems to allow the senior staff to monitor and evaluate the quality of the educational provision throughout the setting
- the presentation and accessibility of information for parents.

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

Generally good progress has been made since the last inspection, the two key issues have been met, with continued developmental opportunities brought forward in this inspection.

Written information for parents has been developed and they are now provided with good quality information about the educational provision. A recently introduced booklet has been provided for parents, which details information about the playgroup curriculum and offers parents ideas for helping to develop children's learning in the home environment. Some parents, however, have limited access to parents' information displayed on the noticeboard, due to its present location within the building.

Children are now regularly observed and assessments are formed on their stage of development. These are generally used effectively to inform the planning for the focus activities. Gaps in observations made within some areas of children's physical development have not been picked up and further work is needed in this area.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Strong relationships with staff have a positive effect on learning and children respond to staff's guidance. They behave appropriately and are aware of the rules within the setting. Children confidently express their needs and ideas and relate well to each other and adults in the group. Most children concentrate effectively when working alone or at a group activity. Personal independence is encouraged well in many areas, especially through child-initiated learning.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are becoming confident and fluent speakers, they engage easily in conversations with their peers and adults. Most listen to adults with interest and respond appropriately. Children's interest in books is developing with the introduction of a comfortable, welcoming book area. Older children make marks and practise writing for a variety of purposes during a range of activities, opportunities for younger children in this area are more limited and are not always stage-related.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Staff provide a range of activities, both planned and spontaneous, to encourage children to extend their learning in number recognition, shape and counting. Children are becoming familiar with number rhymes and explore in a practical way the concepts of addition and subtraction. They confirm their learning by using mathematical skills within their play and simple problem solving.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children have planned and spontaneous opportunities to use their senses to explore and investigate natural materials. They plant, grow and care for plants, enabling them to discover how things change. They build and construct with a variety of mediums and their design skills are encouraged effectively. Children refer to their families, discussing experiences and recalling events in their lives. Technological resources are used well to support children's learning.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children access and use a range of tools and large and small equipment on a daily basis, which helps them to develop specific control skills, such as cutting effectively. Older children have consistent opportunities to learn about movement and develop a sense of space during weekly gym sessions. However planning is limited for activities to offer developmental experiences in this area for younger children and those who do not attend each day. Construction toys are used with increasing skill.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children express their ideas freely through a range of activities such as role-play, painting and modelling, although resources are not always attractively presented. In the nursery room, creative materials are varied and accessible, allowing children opportunities to develop their creativity. The same opportunities are being developed in the playgroup room. Children confidently recite simple songs in a group situation and individually and make good use of musical instruments to explore sound.

**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**

- develop opportunities for children to progress in all areas of their physical development
- develop the system for planning, encouraging all staff to be actively involved in order to promote the smooth running of the sessions
- promote opportunities for younger children to develop their mark-making skills and to use writing for a purpose, within all areas of the playgroup and ensure that activities meet younger children's developmental needs
- consider the development of systems which allow senior staff to monitor and evaluate the quality of the educational provision.

*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.*