



Office for Standards  
in Education

## NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 301777

DfES Number: 547284

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 10/02/2004  
Inspector Name Karen Ling

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Out of School Day Care, Full Day Care, Sessional Day Care  
Setting Name St Mary's Nursery  
Setting Address St Mary's Roman Catholic First School  
Hencotes  
Hexham  
Northumberland  
NE46 2EE

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of St Mary's Nursery Hexham Ltd.

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name St Mary's Nursery Hexham Ltd.  
Address St Mary's Roman Catholic First School  
Hencotes  
Hexham  
Northumberland  
NE46 2EE

## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public 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 Nursery is a privately owned non-profit making childcare provider which first opened in 2000. It is situated in the grounds of St Mary's Roman Catholic First School in Hexham, Northumberland. In the main it serves the local community. The nursery occupies a two story building. It is registered for 49 children and takes children from birth to 14 years of age; of these, 20 three-year-olds and 13 four-year-olds are in receipt of funding. The nursery supports children with special educational needs. It currently has no children with English as an additional language.

The nursery is open Monday through to Friday 08.00 until 18.00 for 50 weeks of the year. The pre-school funded sessions run term-time only each day week from 09.00 until 11.30 and 12.30 until 15.00.

Of the four staff who work with the funded children, three hold appropriate qualifications for working with children and one is working towards a level three childcare qualification.

The nursery has close links with the school and incorporates the school's religious education programme into its own curriculum.

Qualified teacher support is received via the Early Years Development Childcare Partnership and the school through the Qualified Teacher Support Scheme.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

St Mary's Nursery offers high quality provision in a caring and stimulating environment. Children enjoy learning through a wide range of interesting activities. Effective teaching helps children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals.

Teaching is very good. Staff interact skilfully with children to help them develop a range of skills and help them to think about things and solve problems. Staff clearly value children's contributions, build on their ideas and care about their welfare and progress, which in turn fosters self esteem. Behaviour is very good. Staff's good knowledge of the foundation stage enables them to plan a wealth of appropriate and engaging activities. They ensure a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated opportunities. Good support is provided for children with special educational needs. Staff plan thoroughly and the developing assessment system is used effectively to trigger further planning.

Leadership and management are very good. There is a shared understanding of good early years practice and a commitment to ongoing professional development through training. Continued staff effort ensures an effective staff team who seek to develop their practices daily.

Partnership with parents and carers is very good. Parents are well informed about the nursery, its aims and ethos. They receive good information about the foundation stage and how children will learn. Staff work well to develop good relationships through regular dialogue with parents and carers.

### What is being done well?

- Effective teaching including support for children with special educational needs, engages and sustains children's interests and efforts. Staff's skilful interaction encourages children to think and problem solve.
- Both three and four-year-olds are happy and settled in the group and keen to learn.
- Children develop good speaking and listening skills and confidently hold conversations with each other and adults.
- An interesting and stimulating range of activities enables children to develop their knowledge and skills across the curriculum.
- Effective leadership and good teamwork ensures continual improvement through a commitment to staff development.

### What needs to be improved?

- the outdoor area so that it stimulates learning
- dance and drama opportunities so that they are appealing to boys and girls
- information from parents about children's learning.

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

Not applicable.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children clearly enjoy coming to the nursery. They settle quickly to task and show good levels of concentration and perseverance as they engage in purposeful play and activities. Children's efforts and contributions are valued and their work is well displayed which in turn builds self esteem. Children respond well to adults who set clear boundaries and behaviour is good. Children develop independence as they access resources and manage themselves in matters of dressing and hygiene routines.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are developing good speaking and listening skills. The support for those with special educational needs effectively encourages children to participate and contribute during activities. Three and four-year-olds receive appropriate opportunities to develop early reading and writing skills through fun activities, for example in role play situations. They enjoy listening to stories and use information books to support learning. They learn new words and their meanings in context.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children show good awareness of number and use mathematical language during activities and daily routines, such as cutting icing 'in half'. Some confidently count beyond ten and recognise some numerals. Children are asked questions which help them to think and solve simple problems, such as how many cups of water are needed to fill the jug. They learn about concepts such as 'lighter' and 'heavier' as they balance shells in scales. They learn about shape and measure through games.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children extend their knowledge through interesting topics. They receive good opportunities to explore and investigate their world, for example as they make maps. They particularly enjoy the current topic about 'People who help us' and have designed and made small and large fire engines and ambulances from boxes. Their learning is supported by the range of visitors to the nursery, such as nurse, fire-fighter and paramedic. They learn about the Catholic faith and aspects of different cultures.

### **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement: Very Good

Children experience a good range of equipment and activities both indoors and outdoors. They regularly access apparatus in the school hall and take part in dance and drama activities from a specialist dance teacher. They show good spatial awareness as they access different areas and play in the fire engine they made. They handle tools such as scissors, the computer mouse and knives as they cut icing, safely and with increasing skill. Three and four-year-olds show an awareness of health needs.

### **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement: Very Good

Children experience a rich environment. They have good opportunities to explore colour, sound texture and form using all their senses. They know a good repertoire of songs and show enjoyment as they sing along and join in with action songs. Children use their imagination well and have lots of fun using props, some made by themselves, to support their play.

**Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.**

## **OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION**

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very 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**

*There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:*

- Following this inspection there are no key issues. However, the following points should be considered:
- consider ways of developing the outdoor curriculum by enhancing the available enclosed space
- develop further dance and drama opportunities so that boys and girls benefit fully from the planned sessions
- develop ways of receiving information from parents about what children know and can do so that staff and parents can work together more closely to promote 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.*