

St. Michaels Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	07/07/2011
Inspector	Mauvene Burke
Setting address	St. Michaels Church Hall, Stockwell Park Road, London, SW9 0DA
Telephone number	020 7274 0783
Email	
Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

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Description of the setting

St. Michaels Pre-School opened in 1960. It operates from St. Michaels Church Hall which is located in Stockwell in the London borough of Lambeth and serves the local area. It operates from one main room but children have access to the large hall and an enclosed outdoor play area. It is open each weekday from 9.15am to 12.15pm during term time only. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 34 children aged from two to four years on roll, some in part-time places. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with who speak English as an additional language. There are four members of staff, of whom all hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least a National Vocational Qualification to level 3. A number of volunteers also work alongside the full-time staff.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

This is an inclusive provision that successfully meets most areas of children's safety and welfare. Children are happy, settled and form good relationships with each other and adults. They have access to a good range of age-appropriate toys and resources which help them make positive progress in their learning and development. Partnership with parents is strength of the setting and partnerships with outside agencies is developing. Self-evaluation processes are good, demonstrating the pre-school's capacity for continuous development. Required documentation is in place but some lacks the relevant detail.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- ensure that an accurate record of children's hours of attendance is maintained (Documentation) 21/07/2011

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop planning and assessments through evaluation to identify learning priorities for each child and to ensure that next steps are planned consistently so there are no gaps in children's learning
- improve children's understanding of healthy practices such as washing their hands before eating their snacks.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The pre-school is led and managed effectively and all practitioners are fully involved with the running and future development of the provision. Practitioners in this setting have a clear understanding of the safeguarding policy and procedure and a commitment to working with other agencies to protect children, this means that children are safeguarded well. In addition to this, robust recruitment procedures helps to further protect and safeguard children from harm as adults are suitably qualified and vetted. The staff team give good priority to keeping children safe. An effective written risk assessment of the environment means prompt action is taken to manage or eliminate risks. Comprehensive assessments are also in place before practitioners embark on any outings. The required documentation including policies and procedures are in place and shared with parents as required. However, the setting has yet to improve the way children's hours of attendance is recorded to make sure it is an accurate record of the children on the premises. This is a breach of requirements. The present system does not lend itself enough to ensuring children's safety should there be an emergency evacuation of the premises.

The manager communicates her expectations to her team with regards to securing future improvement and shares with them her vision for the setting. For example, she is keen to develop the outdoor play area and has started to plan for this by ordering some exciting new play equipment. Children are making good progress in relation to their starting points. However, the team are aware that improvement is required in the area of observations and assessments to ensure consistency and to ensure that the environment is continually challenging for all children. Improvement has been made following the last inspection. Processes for evaluating the impact of the practice on children's progress and development are well implemented. The current self-evaluation is an accurate analysis of strengths and areas for further development which is focused and targeted ensuring continuous improvement. Practitioners contribute to the evaluation of the setting. Their views and skills are valued and respected by the management. This has resulted in a team that is eager to attend training. For example, one member of staff has recently completed an Early Years Foundation Degree.

The resources available to children are good and fit for purpose and conducive to the children's learning. Children are being introduced to recycling through the use of junk modelling and through the collection of rainwater to water the plants and flowers growing in the garden. They choose resources freely and easily as these have been suitably labelled and stored within easy reach. This is a rich setting in regards to diversity and staff promote inclusion very well. Every child is respected for who they are regardless of their background. They are learning about customs different from that of their own. For example, parents are involved in bringing into the nursery foods from their own cultures and as a result children taste Sushi when they celebrate Japanese Girl's Day. They are shown how bread from Ethiopia is made and help to celebrate the Chinese New Year by eating 'Pandan' cake made by one of the parents. The linguistic skills of some staff are used efficiently to

promote effective communication with children and their families where English is spoken as an additional language.

Partnerships with parents and carers are good. A notice board displays information for parents about the setting. Leaflets, newsletters and information on how to help their child learn and develop is also provided. Parents express their delight in the service being provided. Words such as 'phenomenal' and 'politically correct' are used to describe the setting. Parents say their children have 'definitely made progress since coming here' and 'every day my child learns something different'. Where an individual child requires additional support, practitioners build working relationships with other professionals such as speech and language therapists and consider a range of strategies for ensuring that each child can participate and achieve through targets that are set. The setting has yet to establish relationships with other settings that the children attend who are delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is an area that the manager and her team have identified as an area for improvement.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children clearly enjoy their time in the pre-school and on arrival they self-register by 'signing' themselves in after identifying their name cards. Children form positive relationships and play collaboratively with each other showing a good understanding of sharing and taking turns. Practitioners have a good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and competently put this into practice. They know how children learn and so are able to plan a good range of activities and experiences to cover all areas of their development. Practitioners use open-ended questions to effectively promote children's thinking and have set out the room to stimulate children's interest in activities. As a result, children are motivated and interested in their play and learning. There is a good balance between adult-led activities and free play. Planning is flexible, generally clear and covers all areas of learning in the curriculum. Systems are in place to observe and monitor children's achievements, but these are not consistent, some with significant time between observations. Next steps are not always identified or followed through resulting in possible gaps in the children's progress.

Children are confident and are able to express their own needs. They display high levels of involvement in activities, persisting for extended periods of time at an activity of their choosing. For example, some children spent almost the entire morning at the creative area, mixing together paint for the crocodile that are created and designed. Other children enjoy being in the role play area where they are in 'deep and meaningful' conversations whilst speaking on the telephone; others are busy dressing up as princesses whilst others are busy getting ready to go shopping with their 'baby'. Children at this setting enjoy listening at stories and again, spend periods of time in the book corner area where they use props such as puppets to help re-tell and create stories. They receive good support from the adults. Children are using mathematical language in their play. The use words such as 'measure', 'bigger' and 'smaller' as they try to determine which one of them is

the tallest whilst working out their age, demonstrating this by holding up their fingers to represent their age.

Children know about the uses of everyday technology and learn how to operate a laptop and other electronic toys. There are good opportunities for children to find out about the local environment and community as children are taken to places of interest such as the Brixton Market. Children develop a good understanding of the natural world through topics and focussed activities and recently visited London Zoo which helps them to make links with the core books they have been looking at as part of the settings theme. Children learn about keeping themselves safe through practical activities and staff reinforcement. They understand about sun protection and road safety, for example. Children behave well and are praised for this by the practitioners, thus encouraging them to behave well at all times. The steps taken to promote children's good health and well-being are generally effective, however, not all adults are consistently implement good hand washing routines with the children in order to fully protect their health and prevent the spread of infection. Children receive fresh fruit and raw vegetables to snack on and have access to fresh drinking water. Children have access to the outdoor play environment where they have access to fresh air and are learning about growing as they water the plants and vegetables that they helped to plant.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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