

St. Michaels Pre-School

St. Michaels Church Hall, Stockwell Park Road, London, SW9 0DA

Inspection date	13/11/2013
Previous inspection date	07/07/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	3
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision requires improvement

- Staff share affectionate and caring interaction with children, creating a welcoming environment where children are developing confidence, feel secure and enjoy socialising and learning with each other and staff.
- Partnerships with parents are a consistent strength of the pre-school and result in parents being reassured that their children enjoy their time at pre-school.
- The manager uses self-evaluation and her experience appropriately to identify where improvements are needed and to support staff in developing their skills and confidence.

It is not yet good because

- Staffing arrangements do not meet requirements at all times regarding staff qualifications and ensuring there is a named deputy to take charge in the manager's absence.
- The manager is in the process of supporting staff in developing confidence and consistency in the use of ongoing observations and assessment to help children make progress.
- Strategies to engage and involve parents in their children's learning at home are not extended to their full potential.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector spent the inspection time observing staff and children in the pre-school.
- Safeguarding was discussed with staff, the manager and the pre-school's policy was sampled.
- The inspector shared a joint observation and discussion with the manager regarding leadership and management.
- The inspector sampled children's information and development records.
- Parents' views were gathered through discussion with several parents.

Inspector

Jane Nelson

Full report

Information about the setting

St. Michaels Pre-School opened in 1960 and operates from St. Michaels Church Hall in Stockwell in the London Borough of Lambeth. The pre-school serves the local area and is managed by a management committee. It operates from a main room, with access to a large hall and an enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register.

The staff team comprises of the manager who has an Early Years Degree, and three members of staff. Two members of staff are currently working towards childcare qualifications at level 2 and one member of staff, who works part time, has a childcare qualification at level 3. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two, three and four and currently supports children who learn English as an additional language. The pre-school operates each weekday from 9.15am to 12.15pm during term time only.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- ensure staffing arrangements meet requirements at all times, particularly regarding at least half of all staff holding at least a full and relevant level 2 qualification; and ensure there is a named deputy who is capable and qualified to take charge in the manager's absence
- improve consistency and staff confidence in the use of ongoing observations and assessment, how these are used to identify children's next developmental steps and opportunities to extend children's learning.

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- develop and extend the existing strategies to engage and involve parents in their children's learning at home.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

The staff create a welcoming, and interesting environment. They share caring and affectionate interactions with children and plan a varied range of play and learning experiences that cover all the areas of learning. This helps children make sound progress

in their learning and development. The quality of teaching varies according to staff experience and confidence. This results in some inconsistencies in practice and the effectiveness of assessing children's development and planning to help them progress.

The staff follow a familiar routine which helps children feel secure and involves them in routines, such as snack time, washing hands and tidying away. This provides familiarity and encourages children to participate in group activities, develop confidence and independence. For example, children know the day the dancing teacher comes and this a favourite activity that most children participate in. Children follow instructions and copy actions using coordination, and develop their small and large physical skills during the dancing activity. They enjoy the physical exercise and move up, down, fast, slow, run, walk, stretch and crouch. These routines and skills, for example listening and waiting, also help prepare children for the next stage in their learning such as the move to nursery class or school.

Some staff are confident and skilled in planning and implementing activities that engage children and promote their active learning. For example, the manager initiates a discussion around a number book with children in an informal group. She involves children in finding a particular number of 'fishes' linked to the story. Children show excitement and concentrate as they search for and find toy fishes in a storage drawer. They are helped by the manager to count the fish, who asks 'how many more do we need?' Children count as their friends add more fish, observing and commenting on the line getting longer. Older children count confidently up to 16, calculating 'one more is 17'. This encourages children's communication skills, use of different vocabulary, understanding of simple calculation and helps build children's confidence. However, some staff who are less experienced are still developing their skills and are not as confident in consistently planning and extending children's play and creating imaginative learning opportunities. This sometimes results in missed opportunities to continue discussions and actively involve themselves in children play.

The staff use strategies, such as simple signing and repetition, to support children's developing language, including children who may have additional languages at home. This encourages children to communicate and make their wishes known to staff. Staff use their sound knowledge of individual children to follow interests and respond to children's particular preferences, routines and learning styles. For example, children's requests for play dough are included in planning and this activity linked to encouraging turn taking. However, systems to routinely use observations and assessment to identify children's next developmental steps and help children progress is less consistent and still in the process of being developed.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children form secure attachments to staff and their friends. They demonstrate they feel happy and safe at the pre-school and are familiar with the daily routine. Staff generally support children appropriately in playing, learning together and developing independence. Children are interested in most aspects of their play and show a developing awareness of

what is expected of them, such as sharing and taking turns. Overall children behave well as they enjoy the activities and resources the staff provide. Generally children move about safely and use equipment and utensils with care to keep themselves safe. Staff are developing their skills at encouraging children to participate in discussion, and to increase confidence. For example during short group times, which helps children to develop skills for the next stage of their learning.

Children have daily opportunities to play outside and use small and large physical skills during their play. For example, children move their bodies and limbs inside and outside different colour hoops during the weekly dance session. They also use their small physical skills as they squash, roll and cut play dough. Children follow routines that help them learn about their own health and hygiene. For example, washing hands before eating and putting tissues in the bin after use. Children recognise that they are thirsty during the dance session and some help themselves to drinks of water from their own water bottles. Staff encourage children to eat healthily by preparing and serving a snack of fresh fruit. Children are able to make some choice about when they have their snack, and are learning the challenge of waiting their turn when the table is full.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The pre-school management committee is in the process of change and there have also been some recent changes to the staff team. As a result, requirements relating to staff qualifications and the pre-school having a suitably experienced deputy in place are not met. The manager has worked at the pre-school for many years. She demonstrates a strong commitment to identifying and generating improvement, supporting children in making progress and developing the staff teams' skills. The manager provides consistency and continuity and has increased her qualifications over the years, achieving an Early Years Degree. She is an effective role model to less experienced staff and is in the process of helping them develop confidence in their roles. Appropriate recruitment procedures are implemented to establish staff are suitable to work with children. Staff understand their responsibilities regarding safeguarding children and have all attended safeguarding training. The manager has recently updated the safeguarding policy following input from a local authority advisor. The policy now contains all required elements. Staff are able to identify issues that raise concern and understand the procedures to follow if concerns regarding children's welfare arise, or they have concerns about a colleague.

The manager uses self-evaluation appropriately to monitor and reflect on where development is best targeted. For example, she accurately identifies through her observations, discussion and the staff appraisal system, how to support less experienced staff in developing. The process to implement this through training, gradually increasing staff responsibilities, and demonstrating through her own practice is in progress. Overall, staff accurately assess where children are in their development, identify where support may be needed and plan activities linked to this. However, there is some inconsistency in the depth of observations, assessment and how staff identify and plan for all children's next stages in their development.

The required records and documentation are maintained, including the record of children's attendance. The manager is aware of the required progress check for two year olds and the current assessment of children's development is used to contribute to this. The manager is aware of meeting the required staff ratios and identifies the maximum numbers of children the pre-school can accommodate.

The pre-school has a range of play resources and materials which staff set out daily creating a welcoming and inviting environment for children. Space is organised appropriately to enable children to play safely indoors and outside. Staff are deployed appropriately to supervise children and generally move with children between the two indoor areas and the outdoor area used by the pre-school. Risk assessments are used appropriately to monitor safety issues and minimise potential hazards. Risk assessments are undertaken prior to any outings and staff keep records of these.

Partnerships with parents are a continuing strength of the preschool. Parents' involvement in the management committee is valued and processes are in place through the local authority to support parents new to their role in understanding their responsibilities. Information with parents is shared effectively through daily discussion, regular newsletters, and termly parent meetings. Information is shared with parents in the newsletter about themes children are learning about, and some information is shared to help parents continue the learning at home. Although this information is not always extended to include practical resources to support this. Parents praise the pre-school staff highly and refer to how much their children enjoy coming. Some parents also used the pre-school for their older children, and refer to how this helped prepare children for the move to school. Parents particularly comment on the pre-school helping children to socialise and develop their communication skills.

The pre-school is developing partnerships with other settings. They have links with some local schools and local children's centres, where the staff team attend training. The process of working with other professionals involved in children's care is in the early stages.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	144065
Local authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	918078
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	16
Name of provider	St Michaels Pre-School Committee
Date of previous inspection	07/07/2011
Telephone number	020 7274 0783

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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