

# St Mary's Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122676
<b>Inspection date</b>	18 March 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Ann Moss
<b>Setting Address</b>	Parish Room, Betchetts Green Road, South Holmwood, Dorking, Surrey, RH5 4JX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01306 740135
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	St Mary's Pre-School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional 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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St Mary's Pre-school was registered in 1980. It operates from a single storey building in the grounds of St Mary's Church in South Holmwood, near Dorking, Surrey. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each week day from 09:15 until 12:15 and Monday and Wednesday from 12:45 until 15:45. An enclosed area is used for outside play during good weather. The pre-school serves the local area and nearby villages.

There are currently 43 children from two to four years on roll. This includes 23 funded three year olds and seven funded four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting makes provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, or for whom English is an additional language.

The pre-school employs six members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualification. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receives support and advice from Surrey Early Years and Childcare Service.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean environment. Clearly written policies and procedures are in place to support children's continuing good health and staff implement these well, minimising cross infection.

Children follow daily routines which effectively support their understanding of simple good hygiene. They learn about healthy eating options as staff talk to them about why some foods are good for you and why others are not. They become involved in aspects of food preparation and confidently cut up fruit for snack time. Children enjoy a variety of healthy snacks and a plain biscuit, and try unusual dishes such as rice and noodles. Snack times are social occasions when children and staff sit together around a table, enjoying their food and one another's company. Children individual dietary needs are met following discussion with parents. Drinking water is freely accessible and children help themselves, if needed. This ensures children remain hydrated. Children develop independence as they manage their own lunchboxes and eat in a healthy eating order.

Children enjoy the freedom to explore and investigate the outdoor play environment. They have good opportunities to use their body and move in different ways because staff plan a range of activities which challenge and motivate them. For example, children ride on tricycles, throw bean bags, play ball games and hang washing on a line. As a result, children gain confidence and self esteem as they build on existing skills and master new skills in areas such as balance and co-ordination. Children are becoming aware of the effects activity has on their body as they talk about their heart beating faster or feeling hot, and rest when needed.

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

The provision is good.

Staff create a welcoming environment for children and parents/carers with children's art work, photographs and information boards displayed for their enjoyment, creating a sense of belonging. Staff organise space indoors and outdoors very well, enabling children scope for free movement. However, the lack of shade restricts outdoor play on hot days. Children use a wide range of toys and equipment that are of good quality and safe. These support enjoyable activities that stimulate and challenge the children attending.

Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised as staff are inducted in the settings health and safety policies and procedures, and clearly understand their role and responsibility to keep children safe. Staff carry out documented and visual risk assessments, both indoors and outdoors, as a matter of routine. Security procedures prevent children from leaving the premises unsupervised and control the arrival and departure of adults. There are clearly defined procedures for emergency evacuation, which are known to staff, and fire drills are carried out periodically. Children take some responsibility for keeping themselves safe as they sit on chairs sensibly, bounce on the trampoline and ride tricycles safely and with control.

Staff have a good understanding of child protection issues. Ongoing training and effective procedures promote and safeguard children's welfare within the setting.

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

The provision is good.

Children arrive happy. They are well motivated and eager to participate in the wide range of activities set out by staff. They have daily opportunities to explore and investigate their environment, indoors and outdoors. For example, they freely use sand, water and paint. They have good opportunities to be individually creative through music, art and craft activities, and the well resourced role play area. Staff actively encourage children to initiate their own play and learning, and where necessary spend their time working closely with children, promoting their self-esteem through the use of praise and encouragement. Children thrive as they benefit from warm, close and supportive relationships with staff. They approach staff willingly for support and assurance, demonstrating that they feel secure, settled and ready to learn.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning for children receiving nursery education is good. Staff are qualified, experienced early years practitioners. They have a good understanding of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage and indoors they plan a wide range of worthwhile activities that are enjoyable and help children to develop in all areas of learning. However, the teaching and learning environment for outdoor play is underdeveloped. Staff get to know the children well, and become familiar with their individual levels of development through discussions with parents. They observe the children during their free play and focused activities and use this information to record achievements in the children's profile. This information is then used to inform and plan each child's next steps in learning so that they continue to make good progress.

Children gain increasing independence as they think about and take care of their own needs. For example, most choose to take themselves to the toilet, pour their own drinks, and select and change activities according to their interest. Children relate well to others and build positive relationships. They confidently speak to staff alone or in small groups. They communicate well with their peers through spoken language and gesture, and adapt to different play situations. Children show good listening skills in both small and large group activities and able to follow instructions well. Children handle books carefully and enjoy looking at books and being read to. They use good vocabulary and express their needs and ideas as they talk through their activities and explain what is happening during role play. Activities support early emergent writing and children ascribe meaning to marks. Mark making equipment is freely accessible and used well, although staff do not sufficiently encourage older, more capable children to write for purpose. Children have many opportunities to link sounds to letter. Most children can identify their written name and are beginning to recognise letters on labels, developing their understanding that words carry meaning. Children use mathematical and positional language well in their play. They are beginning to gain an understanding of shape, space, measure and simple calculations through songs and rhymes like 'Five little ducks'.

Children confidently talk about their home lives and events and are recognising that not all families are the same. They recognise and comment on the changes to the weather, discuss unpleasant smells like smoke, and show curiosity as they dig in soil and explain how a dumper truck is used. Children shown an awareness of technology. They use simple computer programs and most understand simple processes such as clicking and dragging the mouse to effect change. Children show good hand-eye coordination and fine motor skills when using small tools and equipment such as scissors, cutters and glue sticks. Through movement children learn to refine

and improve their motor skills, coordination, balance and body awareness. Children know regular exercise helps to keep the body and heart healthy.

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

The provision is good.

Staff warmly welcome children and parents/carers into the setting. Children develop positive attitudes to others through the use of resources that positively represent social diversity, and from staff's positive attitude. Children develop an understanding of their own and other cultures as they celebrate birthdays and festivals such as Easter and Chinese New Year. Children's individual needs are known to staff who work closely with parents.

Children benefit from staff's commitment to inclusion. Staff are enthusiastic about attending relevant training. They are secure in their knowledge of the code of practice and there are good systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Individual educational plans, progress reports, and close liaisons with parents and other professionals ensure all children are included and their needs are fully met.

Children behave very well because activities stimulate and maintain children's interest. Children understand the need to share and how being kind prevents others from being hurt as staff gently talk to them and have high expectations. Children enjoy taking responsibility. They confidently take the register and freely help to tidy up. They show kindness and consideration as they ask about their peers, help others with the water cooler and invite others into their play. Staff act as good role models. They are calm, consistent, polite and respectful. They praise and encourage children's achievements. As a result, children follow their example. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children benefit from the positive partnership staff develop with parents. Young children settle well because staff gather relevant information from parents to gain a good understanding of their needs. They provide parents with information about the children's care and learning each day. Staff display planning for parents to see, showing how they are using the Birth to Three Matters guidance and the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Partnership with parents/carers of children receiving funded nursery education is good. Staff encourage parents to be involved in their child's learning from the time their child arrives in the setting; through the parent committee and rota, for example. There are good opportunities for a two way sharing of information through informal and formal discussion at hand over, or during the parent's meetings, when parents can contribute to their child's development records. All records are open, accessible and shared regularly with parents.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the thorough processes in place for the recruitment, vetting and induction of staff. This means suitable, qualified and experienced staff look after children. Staff deployment ensures children are appropriately supervised and receive adult support, if needed. Management and committee continually review practice, policies and procedures for the benefit of all children and staff. All mandatory documentation is in place and well maintained, to ensure the safe and effective management of the setting.

Leadership and management are good. The manager and committee have a clear understanding of their individual role and responsibilities. Staff are enthusiastic, committed and work well as a team. They have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and keep their skills and knowledge up to date with current developments through attending courses. This supports them in their role and ensures they have the latest and most relevant information available. The setting's clear aims, in addition to the good levels of communication and guidance, allow staff to provide a stimulating well-balanced programme of activities. Teaching is monitored through informal observations and discussion. Ongoing evaluations identify strengths and areas for improvement. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

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

At the last care inspection, the provider agreed to ensure a written record is kept of when children arrive with existing injuries, ensure all records relating to accidents are comprehensive and include first and last names of the children involved, and improve the condition of the premises to ensure they are appropriately decorated and well maintained.

The provider has made improvements to documentation which means all required information is now recorded. The premises have been redecorated and maintained in a suitable state of repair.

At the last nursery education inspection the provider was asked to improve the daily routine to enable older/more able children to participate in activities which require them to show sustained concentration, improve the range of activities available to extend older/more able children's understanding of simple calculation, and to improve the appearance of the physical environment to enable children to see their own work on display.

Good progress has been made on the areas highlighted at the last inspection. Resources are readily available which require them to sustain concentration both in activists and play situations. Children are given opportunities to strengthen their understanding of simple calculation through song, rhyme and daily activities. Staff display children's art work for their enjoyment, although displays are limited due the constraints imposed on the provider. Staff have agreed to re-assess the 'purpose' of the display boards.

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

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.

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provide or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

## 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):

- make provision for providing shade in the outside play area when necessary

### **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):

- further develop the teaching and learning environment outdoors with particular reference to planning, organisation, managing and resources (also applies to care)
- further develop opportunities for children to write for purpose.

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