

St Mary's Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	318678
Inspection date	20/01/2009
Inspector	Julie Firth
Setting address	Church Hall, Vicarage Road, Davyhulme, Urmston, Manchester, Lancashire, M41 5TP
Telephone number	0161 747 2216
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Description of the setting

St Mary's Playgroup was registered in 1992. It operates from St Mary's church hall in Flixton, a borough of Trafford. It is managed by committee and has close links with the school. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area within the church grounds.

The playgroup is registered to provide care for 28 children aged from two years to under five years. Currently there are 42 children on roll, of these 27 are in the early years range. The playgroup operates from 09.00 to 11.30, Tuesday to Friday, term time only. There are four staff employed which includes the manager; are all qualified to level three. The playgroup is supported by Trafford Sure Start.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Children are provided with a wide range of positive experiences, which enable them to make good progress in a warm, inclusive environment. On going planning challenges children in most areas of their learning. There are good, effective working relationships with parents and others involved in the child's care. The group has recently developed systems in relation to self-evaluation and planning to help them to monitor the service provided. The setting's capacity to improve is good and strong emphasis is placed on links with the school and transitional arrangements.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to plan activities around the six areas of learning
- continue to use the systems for identifying strengths and areas for improvement to raise the quality of care and education.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

An enthusiastic team staff team are supported in respect to their own professional development and work very well together. Children's welfare is supported through the key person system, together with adult-child ratios consistently being maintained and effective deployment of staff. Well-organised documentation is used effectively to promote children's health and safety. For example, rigorous recruitment and vetting systems are followed vigilantly to ensure high levels of safety for children. Staff have clear knowledge of safeguarding children and of their role and responsibilities in reporting concerns.

The organisation of the premises and accessible resources effectively support children's learning and development whilst promoting their welfare and well-being.

The group has recently set up formal systems for evaluating the effectiveness of the provision and is beginning to identify some gaps and areas of development. However, this is not fully developed.

Very good links with parents are forged which enables staff to meet children's individual needs and provide consistency for them. Information is sought prior to admission regarding their starting points and information from parent questionnaires is monitored regularly. Parents receive detailed information on their children's progress and are invited regularly to view their children's work and to discuss progress. Furthermore, newsletters and informative notice boards ensure information is regularly updated and include ideas for supporting and extending the children's learning and development. There is a strong emphasis and good working partnership with the local primary schools. Detailed reports indicate children's development, which ensures a smooth transition for children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are welcomed by caring staff who greet them with kind words and a cuddle. They are confident and happy in the setting. A well-organised environment enables them to follow their interests, develop independence, initiate, and extend their own play. Children participate in a variety of interesting activities and are making good progress in their development.

Staff interact and question children to support their learning. They have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and are beginning to plan around the six areas of learning. A new system for observation and planning has been introduced. Assessments identify children's attainments and predict their next steps of learning. Areas of continuous provision are organised throughout the rooms to consolidate children's learning and they have access to sand and water through tabletop activities.

Children are engaged in the circle and talk about the weather and events that have happened at home. They sit in small groups to show and tell an item to each other, enhancing their confidence skills and helping to make friends. Children recognise their name as they take their name card to the playroom. They handle books well and take home a library book. Children have opportunities to attempt to write letters of their name. Print around the room describes words used during their play. Staff provide good opportunities for the children to use numbers, to count sequence and match. However, there are limited opportunities for children to problem solve which results in the more able children not being challenged enough.

Children have good opportunities to promote their creative development; they thoroughly enjoy joining in messy activities such as paint, glitter and glue which are readily available throughout the day. They have use of the role-play areas, dress up, and small world, which promotes their imagination and social skills when playing together.

Planned activities provide a good basis for children to understand the wider world.

Visitors are invited to talk to the children such as, the local police and fire officer. Children explore the local environment, go out on nature walks to collect leaves and look at objects through a microscope. They confidently use computers and skilfully navigate around the screen using the mouse. Young children watch ice melt and look at the different weather conditions using a barometer.

Children benefit from the use of the outdoor play areas where they use some equipment to promote their physical skills. However, the outdoor play area is not being used at present, which restricts children's access to fresh air. Children enjoy playing games with the parachute indoors and stretching their bodies. They behave very well and staff manage behaviour sensitively and positively. All staff support children with specific needs very well and a designated staff member devises a strict individual educational programme and works very close with the outside agencies. Children who speak English as a second language are well supported throughout the session by staff that use additional aids to support their learning.

Children learn how to manage their own health and hygiene. They are beginning to independently manage their personal care in the bathroom and activities, posters, and discussion support their understanding of good habits. A healthy lifestyle is encouraged through activities and nourishing snacks. Risk assessments and vigilant supervision are highly effective in enabling staff to keep children safe. Children are learning about keeping themselves safe, for example, not running indoors and adhere to their boundaries within the large room.

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action.

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.