

St Marys Playschool

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 650135
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Inspector Jenny Howell

Setting address St Marys Church Centre, The Chase, Great Baddow,
Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 7JU

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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 Marys Playschool is committee run. It opened in 1968 and operates from St Mary's Church Centre. It is situated in the centre of Great Baddow, near Chelmsford. A maximum of 90 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each week day from 09:15 to noon and from 13:00 to 14:45 on four afternoons during term-time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The playschool is accessed via a ramp to the main entrance and has disabled toilet facilities.

The playschool is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 90 children at any one time. There are currently 116 children aged from two to under five years on roll. The playschool currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The playschool employs 20 staff. Over half the staff hold appropriate Early Years qualifications and two members of staff are working towards a higher level of qualification. The setting receives support from the Pre-School Learning Alliance and the local authority.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The setting is very effective in meeting the needs of all children, through recognising them as individuals. All children receive good levels of support in order to effectively promote their welfare and ensure they make extremely good progress in their learning and development. Good partnerships are established with parents and other professionals help the setting to support all children. The setting is able to bring about improvements and keep up to date with changes to relevant regulations and guidance.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- establish and maintain a regular two-way flow of information with other providers of the EYFS when children also attend other settings
- ensure that snacks are always healthy, balanced and nutritious
- develop the self-evaluation process in order to support continuous improvement.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The effective maintenance of records, policies and procedures contributes to the safe and efficient management of the setting. Staff have good levels of experience, qualification and training, allowing them to provide children with extremely good

learning and development opportunities. A robust recruitment procedure ensure that staff are suitable to work with children and have a good understanding of their duties and responsibilities. Staff are deployed very well to ensure that all children receive high levels of support. Very good use is made of space, toys and equipment to provide children with a stimulating and varied learning experience. Staff work very well together as a team to ensure that children are cared for to a high standard in a welcoming and inclusive environment.

Both the manager, and committee members are involved in monitoring the quality of the setting, with improvements made accordingly. Good progress has been made since the last inspection, with action taken in each of the areas raised, including by making improvements to the system of planning. However, no formal system of self-evaluation is yet in place to fully support continuous improvement. An appraisal system is in place to support staff in developing their own practice and making good use of their skills and knowledge. Regular risk assessments take place to ensure that children are safe, and good procedures are in place to keep the setting secure. Trips are well planned to ensure safety, with individual risk assessments in place for each type of outing.

Inclusive practice is fully promoted to ensure that all children have their needs met regardless of their background, ensuring that all children make good progress and achieve well. Links with parents ensure a regular exchange of relevant information. Newsletters and notice boards keep parents well informed about topics and learning opportunities, with staff available to speak to in person at any time. Staff are aware when children also attend other settings. However, there are not yet any formal procedures in place to ensure that all relevant information is shared between providers when children also attend other settings on the Early Years Register.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Learning is extremely well supported. Staff working with children are highly skilled, allowing them to provide support through effective questioning, discussion, encouragement and role modelling. Interactions with staff are extremely valuable, as staff encouraging children to think for themselves, to explore and investigate and to take pride in their progress and achievements. The learning environment is also highly effective in supporting learning. Children are able to choose freely from a very good range of toys and activities, which are set out for them to access with ease. Excellent use is made of space to provide children with opportunities to learn alone, as part of a small or large group or with an adult. The outdoor space is also used well to allow children to play and learn through the natural environment. Each day is very well planned to provide a good balance of opportunities for independent, child-led learning as well as adult-led, focused tasks.

Long, medium and short term planning is of an extremely high standard, leading to high-quality play and learning experiences. Long term planning is in place to ensure consistency throughout the playgroup, as well as supporting staff in helping children of all ages to make good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning. Short terms plans are focused upon the ages of children present,

allowing staff to tailor activities to the learning and development needs of individual children. As a result, children are actively engaged in meaningful and enjoyable play, taking obvious delight as they learn and interact with others. A highly effective key person system is in place. This allows staff to get to know children extremely well which supports them in making accurate and meaningful observations and assessments of what children can do. This information is then put to very good use as staff plan what individual children need to do next in order to make further progress. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well supported. Individual plans are in place to support children in their play and learning and good use is made of the expertise of professionals and outside agencies to provide staff with advice and practical suggestions.

Children behave extremely well. They are beginning to develop good social skills as they communicate confidently with others and are learning to share and take turns, with older children demonstrating early negotiation skills as they decide what to make with the play dough and where to play next.

Good procedures are in place to promote children's welfare. Staff follow simple routines, such as, cleaning tables before serving food, to reduce the risk of children becoming ill. A large number of staff are trained in first aid and first aid kits are available in each room, ensuring that children can be cared for appropriately if they become ill or have an accident. Children have good opportunities to exercise, both indoors and outdoors throughout the day as well as walking around the local area, for example, to visit the library. Snacks help children to learn about healthy eating as most children enjoy fresh fruit and vegetables on a daily basis. Staff have a keen awareness of safety, and support children in learning how to keep themselves safe, for example, by explaining the reasons for not running around the room or showing children how to use scissors safely.

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?	1
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?	1
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

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted 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.