

St Mary's Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	143117
Inspection date	05/02/2009
Inspector	Michelle Tuck
Setting address	Church Rooms, Church Street, Ilchester, Yeovil, Somerset, BA22 8LN
Telephone number	07796 763855
Email	
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 Pre-School opened approximately 40 years ago. It is a committee run group situated in a church hall in the centre of the village of Ilchester in Somerset. The pre-school has sole use of the premises. There is also a secure outside play area at the rear of the premises. Access to the building is via a step.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register to care for 26 children aged from two years to the end of the early years age group at any one time. There are currently 22 children on roll. The pre-school is open five days a week during term time, from 09:00 to 12.00 and currently two afternoon sessions which operate from 13.00 until 15.30.

Five members of staff work with the children. Two staff have level three qualifications in early years and two other staff are undertaking training. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is inadequate. Children have access to a generally good range of resources, however, activities are not always stimulating or planned according to children's individual interests to motivate them to learn. This impacts on inclusive practice and the setting's ability to make continuous improvement. Children benefit from outside play and parents are generally informed of their children's achievements and experiences.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the following action by the specified date:

- undertake a thorough risk assessment of the premises, which clearly identifies potential hazards and the action taken to minimise these (Suitable premises, environment and equipment) 23/02/2009
- plan and provide a suitable range of activities for children, which are appropriate for their stage of development and based on their individual needs (Organisation) 23/02/2009
- ensure children's assessment records are regularly reviewed to identify gaps, inform planning and set clear targets for their progress (Organisation) 23/02/2009
- assign a key person to each child (Organisation) 23/02/2009

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded sufficiently as the staff have a satisfactory understanding of recognising signs and symptoms of abuse and the procedures to follow with concerns, which helps to protect children from harm. Risk assessments are not completed, however, some checks are made on a regular basis, such as the staff check the outside area prior to children accessing it.

There are basic systems in place to help identify some areas for improvement, such as staff appraisals. However, there is a lack of monitoring of everyday practice and the informal self-evaluation system is not fully effective in identifying when requirements are not met, nor used effectively to identify weaknesses. For example, not all children have been allocated a key person and some children are not assessed or their progress monitored.

Staff maintain ongoing communication with parents, which helps meet children's welfare needs. Parents are supplied with suitable information about the provision by way of news letters and information displayed on a notice board. Staff make themselves available to parents as children are delivered and collected to discuss children's well-being. Parents have some input into their child's learning, as information is sought from them about their knowledge of their child's development.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are not making sufficient progress in their learning as activities are not tailored to meet individual needs or linked to children's individual interests. Key workers have started to develop a system which includes recording observations of children's achievements. However, these are not used effectively to help staff plan the next steps in children's individual learning and not all children have a designated key person. There is a generally good range of resources available and children are encouraged to make choices. Most children engage well in their chosen activity, however some children wander from one activity to the next, because staff do not always set appropriate challenges to support children's progress towards the early learning goals. This all results in children lacking focus and purpose in their play. Children are developing an awareness of healthy lifestyles through their daily routines as they enjoy regular exercise outside, eat healthy snacks and are reminded to follow appropriate personal hygiene procedures. Children learn about safety as they take part in practising the evacuation procedures, learning the routine so they are confident in the event of an emergency.

Daily routines and practical activities are not always used well to support children's learning further. For example, children are unable to pour their own drinks at snack time to increase their independence. There is time during the session when children come together as a group for discussion or for activities such as stories or singing. Most children take part enthusiastically, however, younger children

sometimes wander from the group or want to sit on the lap of the staff member reading the story, which results in some children complaining they cannot see the pictures. Most children are confident in using language to communicate with peers and adults, using words to describe what they are doing or the texture of materials. They use mark-making materials at times during their play and can access mark making materials freely throughout the session.

Children generally behave well. They learn to take turns and share resources, receiving praise from staff which helps to boost their self-esteem. They learn about the rules of the setting, as staff constantly remind them, for example, by being told not to run inside. Children thoroughly enjoy a music session where they learn songs from different countries and have the opportunity to play along with instruments. They answer to their name at registration and can name other children who are not in attendance. Although staff do make observations on children, take photographs and collate their work, this is not completed for all children and assessments are not regularly reviewed in order to identify gaps and plan for children's continual development in all areas of learning. This impacts on their ability to reach their full potential.

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?	4
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	4
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	4

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	4
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	4
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	3
How well are children safeguarded?	3

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	4
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	4
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	3
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	4
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	4
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

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

On 11 August 2008 concerns were raised in relation to the suitability of staff at this setting. These concerns related to National Standard 1: Suitable person, Ofsted liaised with another agency in relation to these concerns. On 10 September 2008 Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit to this provider. As a result of this visit actions were set under the following Welfare Requirements: Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare and Suitable people. A reply was received and welfare requirements are now being met. Ofsted took no further action. This provider remains qualified for registration.

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.