

St Mary's Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY379776
Inspection date	24/02/2009
Inspector	Karen Elizabeth Screen

Setting address	St. Mary's Youth Centre, Church Road, Yate, BRISTOL, BS37 5BG
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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 Pre-school has been managed by a private limited company since September 2008. They operate from St. Mary's Youth Centre, a semi-residential area in Yate, South Gloucestershire. There is an enclosed outside play area. They are open each week day during school terms, between 09.00 and 14.45. The pre-school is on the Early Years Register and may care for a maximum of 24 children aged from two to five years old, at any one time. There are currently 51 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age range. Of these, 44 receive funding for early years education. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties/disabilities and a number learning English as an additional language. They employ nine members of staff, all of whom work part-time hours. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications, including one with Qualified Teacher Status. Another is currently undertaking an Early Years qualification. The setting receives support from the Local Authority. Partnership arrangements are in place with other settings.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is good. The pre-school is effective in ensuring that children integrate and achieve well. Efficient systems are in place for gathering and using vital information, in order to help promote children's welfare and developmental needs. Good arrangements are in place for monitoring and promoting improvements in the quality of the provision. Children's safety is promoted well, but measures taken to promote their good health are not always completely effective.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that children are provided with suitable facilities to wash their hands and to rest if tired
- consider ways to further support children in adapting activities for their own purpose and in developing their understanding of subtraction through practical everyday activities

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Good quality provision helps children to make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff are skilful and work well as a team, guided by the confident and well informed managers. They have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), evident in planning, evaluations, observations and assessments, which are used well to support different stages of children's individual development. Identification and support for children with learning disabilities/difficulties is very good. Similarly, for those learning English as

an additional language, support is also very good, for example, through the use of dual language books. Staff are constantly striving to improve provision and are keen to tackle the points identified for improvement through inspection.

Children's safety is strongly promoted through comprehensive records, policies and procedures. The staff at the setting also undertake regular risk assessments for all areas used by the children. This helps to identify and quickly address potential areas of risk to children. Robust staffing arrangements, recruitment procedures, induction and training, mean that children are always cared for by well qualified staff, who have undergone appropriate checks to establish their suitability. In addition, children are ably protected by staff who have a secure understanding of their role and responsibilities in safeguarding children. Children's good health is not always fully supported, because they are not always provided with suitable facilities to wash their hands, or rest if tired.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. Excellent relationships between children, staff and parents help children to settle well. Parents feel involved, valued, able and welcome to contribute to their children's learning. They are provided with valuable information about the provision and the curriculum their children are following. Children's files contain good quality information about their progress towards the early learning goals. Many parents also add their own comments and observations. For example, through 'Wow' vouchers, which are used to share information about the children's learning and development at home. This means that parent's knowledge of their children is fully exploited, to support and develop the learning opportunities provided by the pre-school. Strong links are established with external agencies and other early years providers. These help to foster progression and promote continuity of care and learning.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children exhibit self-confidence and a positive attitude. They enjoy excellent relationships with the staff, who provide positive role models and have reasonable and realistic expectations of children's behaviour. This helps children learn when to listen and to follow instructions carefully. Children explore the different sounds of instruments with enthusiasm, linking sound and movement through eager participation in music sessions. For example, they listen carefully to the sound of an instrument being played by a hidden staff member and hold up the picture card matching the instrument they think they have heard. Staff model the pretending process well, supporting children to develop their own ideas as they play along side other children who are engaged in the same theme. For example, taking and 'writing down' orders from children using the café.

Children benefit from broad and stimulating activities and experiences, such as predicting and measuring how far and fast cars will travel down plastic guttering, if they adjust the gradient. They also use information and communication technology well to support their learning, such as operating a software programme to 'paint' a picture on the pre-school computer. Children know and understand about life-cycles and about past, present and future. They notice the shells crack and the 'egg tooth' appear first as chicks struggle to hatch from their eggs. Children also

remember that the brown chicks will grow up to be hens, whilst the white chicks will become cockerels. However, the environment does not always support children in adapting activities to their own design. For example, only yellow paint is provided for children to use to paint pictures of chicks.

Children are helped to recognise their own unique qualities and to identify the characteristics they share with other children. They learn about features of their local community, as they take part in outings to the shops to buy ingredients for cooking and for snack-time. However, these first-hand experiences do not extend to learning how to prepare the fruit to eat. Children's understanding of how to keep themselves safe on the roads is reinforced through road safety talks and props to support their play. Children show a keen interest in numbers and counting. Their understanding is reinforced as they take part in routine tasks, such as, checking that all of the children have been counted in the register. However, there are few such opportunities to promote their understanding of subtraction.

Thoughtful organisation of the environment provides good opportunities for children to be physically active and to choose to play inside or outside for most of the day. However, children who wish to rest, are not able to do so in a comfortable and hygienic manner. Mealtimes are enjoyable and sociable learning experiences, where children benefit from good opportunities to take part in discussions with staff and other children. Children's understanding and ability to keep themselves free from infection, is not always fully supported through independent access to safe and suitable hand-washing facilities. Staff keep the children safe from the very hot tap water through close supervision. However, at times when many children need to use the toilets at the same time, they share the same basins of water.

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?	1
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?	3
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

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 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.