

St Marys Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Setting address

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Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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 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).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

St. Mary's Playgroup has been registered for over 20 years. The present owner took over in 1989. It operates from the main hall of the centre adjacent to St Mary's Church in the Oldswinford area of Stourbridge. There are local shops within easy walking distance. There is a fully enclosed area for outdoor play.

The group is registered to provide care for 26 children in the early years age range. There are currently 56 children on roll who attend for a variety of sessions. It is registered on the Early Years register and both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the childcare register.

The group opens Monday to Friday, 9.15am to 11.45pm and Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 12.30pm to 3.00pm. It operates during term-time only.

There are seven members of staff working directly with the children, all of whom hold relevant early years qualifications. The group receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Practitioners work well together to create a welcoming and caring environment. Children make good progress in their learning because practitioners plan and provide a wide range of activities which meet their interests and development. Practitioners are fostering good partnerships with parents to ensure that the individual needs of all the children are very well met. The setting has made exceptionally good progress since the last inspection and they are currently developing systems to monitor and evaluate the practice within the setting to ensure that continuous improvement is maintained.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further methods of observation and assessment and link these to planning in order to ensure that children progress to the next steps of learning and development at a pace suitable to their individual needs
- develop further the quality and improvement processes to monitor and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the provision.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Robust safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and practised effectively to ensure that children are well protected. Practitioners are diligent in child

protection matters and procedures for vetting and assessing the suitability of practitioners are stringently implemented. Risk assessments are in-depth and cover all areas of the premises and equipment used by the children. They are regularly updated and added to as situations change, for example, when work was carried out on the outside area.

Practitioners are well motivated and skilled and are committed to ensuring that children receive a high level of childcare and education. Good systems are in place to support professional development and practitioners regularly attend training courses to extend their knowledge and expertise. There is a genuine commitment to improvement and members of staff work together to find and implement ways to move the setting forward. They have totally embraced the changes implemented since the last inspection which have resulted in enhanced working practices including child-initiated learning. The use of a Self-Evaluation Form for monitoring and evaluating the provision is currently being implemented to identify further areas for improvement and needs to be developed further to ensure that continuous improvement is sustained. Practitioners are effectively deployed to ensure that children are well supervised and supported at all times. Resources are well maintained and stored to enable children to safely and independently select activities for themselves. Practitioners promote equality and diversity well within the setting to help children to develop an awareness of the society they live in.

Practitioners work well in partnership with parents and other agencies in order to develop a consistent approach in meeting children's needs. Parents are welcomed into the setting and their suggestions and comments are valued and acted upon. They are informed of planned activities and events through newsletters and a notice board. The setting is endeavouring to develop links with other provisions which children attend, however, this is not always reciprocated.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are settled and content. Practitioners ensure that children have fun and enjoy all aspects of their time in the setting. Children enjoy, and benefit from, a balance of adult-led activities and opportunities to initiate and develop their own learning through freely chosen activities. They are well motivated and excitedly join in both new and familiar activities such as putting up the Christmas tree and singing their favourite songs. The learning environment is well planned and resourced with a variety of easily accessible equipment and materials to support spontaneous play. This enhances children's opportunities to develop independence and enjoyment and ensures that children are able to participate in activities at their own level of understanding and development. Practitioners discuss children's starting points with parents and use this information to plan and provide a range of experiences which further enhance development. Planning and observation has been implemented and practitioners work closely together to plan activities which cover all areas of learning. However, at times practitioner's knowledge of how to link observation and planning together is not wholly embedded to ensure that children's progress fully at a pace suitable to their individual needs.

Children interact positively both with adults and their peers and actively seek them out to participate in activities or to show off their achievements, for example, when constructing. They play happily together pretending to take the dolls for walks to the shops and communicate excitedly as they talk about when Santa is coming and what presents they want. Children enjoy a range of creative experiences and are able to select from a trolley filled with resources such as glitter, stencils, sellotape and glue. One child asked to do "rollering" and practitioners spent time finding out what activity they wanted. Children enjoy planting bulbs and make reindeer bags to take them home in. They explore different materials which melt such as jelly and ice and look at them in both solid and liquid forms. They use mathematical language and concepts in everyday activities, for example, as they count in order the braches on the Christmas tree and know that six comes after five.

Children's behaviour is managed well through clear and concise behaviour management strategies. Practitioners act as positive role models. They foster children's self-esteem and offer praise and encouragement at all times as they sensitively remind children to share with their friends and be kind to each other. Children's health and well-being are promoted effectively. They wash their hands before eating and after messy activities. They are well cared for if they become sick or have an accident and there are stringent procedures in place to protect them from infection. They enjoy healthy snacks which consist of a variety of fresh fruit and the implementation of a café system further promotes children's independence in this area. The setting is wholly inclusive and all children are welcomed. Children learn about their own community and the wider world as they celebrate festivals such as Christmas, Diwali and Chinese New Year and access a range of resources which portray positive images to help them to learn about diversity. Children are beginning to understand about staying safe as they practise evacuation procedures and learn about stranger danger. They are helped by supportive and caring practitioners to feel secure and safe in their environment.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:

Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:

Met