

# The Mulberry Bush at St Augustines RC Primary School

Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique reference number</b> | EY399928  |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 04/03/2010  |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Anna Davies   |
| <b>Setting address</b>         | St. Augustines RC Primary School, Kesteven Road,<br>STAMFORD, Lincolnshire, PE9 1SR |
| <b>Telephone number</b>        | 01780 762 423   |
| <b>Email</b>                   |   |
| <b>Type of setting</b>         | 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**

The Mulberry Bush at St Augustine's opened in 2009. It is a sister group of an already established early years provision within Stamford. It operates from St Augustine's Roman Catholic Primary School in Stamford, Lincolnshire. The group has use of the pre-school room, dining hall, technology area, toilets and an enclosed outdoor area. The setting operates from 8.00am to 6.00pm Monday to Friday throughout the year, except public holidays and Christmas week. There is disabled access to all indoor and outdoor areas used by the setting, as well as disabled toilet facilities.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 56 children aged from two to under eight may attend the group at any one time and of these a maximum of 30 may be in the early years age range. There are currently 26 children on roll aged from two to the end of the early years age range. Children up to age 11 may attend before and after school and during the school holidays. The setting supports children who speak English as an additional language.

There are nine members of staff working directly with the children on a full and part-time basis. The manager holds a Level 4 qualification and is currently working towards a Foundation Degree in Early Childhood Services. Five other staff hold National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) at Level 3. The setting employs three apprentices, all of whom are working towards either a Level 2 or Level 3 qualification. The setting provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The inclusive nature of the setting ensures that all children receive a warm welcome, settle well and build warm relationships with staff. Children are safe and secure at all times and enjoy their time in the child-centred, indoor and outdoor environments, which supports the good progress that they make in their learning and development. Secure partnerships with parents enable staff to meet children's individual needs and ensure that they are kept informed of all aspects of their children's care and learning.

The registered person, manager and staff have worked hard to quickly establish a good quality provision, meeting the needs of all children who attend. Strong systems of self-evaluation are in place, which clearly and accurately identify the settings key strengths and areas for development. A sincere commitment to maintaining continuous improvement, drives this setting forwards.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

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

- develop planning and assessment arrangements, this relates to linking the identified next steps of learning for individual children to the planning and exploring ways to give parents ongoing opportunities to contribute what they know about their children to assessment records
- ensure that staff make effective use of spontaneous opportunities to fully promote, challenge and extend children's learning
- consider how to develop closer links with other settings providing for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), to further promote a consistent experience in terms of children's welfare, learning and development.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

All staff are clear about their duty and responsibility to safeguard children. They demonstrate a good understanding of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse and the procedures to follow should they have concerns. Robust recruitment procedures and good induction and appraisal arrangements all serve to ensure that those working with the children are suitable to do so. All staff have undergone appropriate criminal record bureau (CRB) checks, and it is company policy that these are renewed every three years. Children are kept safe within the setting and outdoor play areas are secure. Comprehensive risk assessments are in place, which ensure that potential hazards are identified and appropriate action taken to minimise risks to children.

All policies, records and procedures, required to ensure children are safeguarded and their needs are met, are in place. The main room of the setting has been fully refurbished in order to better meet the needs of young children. For example, an internal door with a high lock has been installed so that children cannot leave unsupervised, appropriate toilet facilities have been added and lots of low-level storage units have been purchased to enable children to be able to freely access toys and resources of their choosing, both indoors and outdoors. The outdoor area is well-resourced, providing children with a stimulating learning environment.

Much work has gone into training the staff team to ensure that they are conversant with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Equal opportunity is promoted well within the setting. Staff are proactive in seeking the help of outside agencies, who, for example, have the knowledge and skills about supporting children with English as an additional language. The setting liaises well with the adjoining school, joining the school for class assemblies and meals in the dining hall. However, the setting has yet to consider and explore ways of sharing information and developing links with other providers who may also provide care for children in their setting. Good information is available to parents about the setting and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). An informative notice board and regular newsletters keep parents up-to-date about events. Children's assessment records are kept in each child's drawer so that parents can access them when they wish. Monthly, written reviews of children's progress keeps parents fully informed about their child's learning and development. Parents speak

highly of the setting, in particular the warm relationships observed between the staff and children.

The registered person and manager share the same vision for this setting; to nurture and support all children in the best way that they can. The registered person in particular has worked hard to provide refurbished premises and a good standard of care and education in the relatively short amount of time since opening. Plans for the future are well-targeted as well as challenging, and seek to continuously improve outcomes for children. Secure systems of self-evaluation demonstrate that the staff and registered person are very aware of the setting's strengths and areas for further development. These systems are monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure that improvements continue to be made and in a timely manner.

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

Staff interact with children comfortably and children enjoy their company. Staff support planned activities well. For example, they challenge children to think of items relating to different shapes. Some children rise to this challenge, offering that a birthday cake looks like a circle, a fish tank is like a square and a church is like a rectangle. Planning incorporates children's choices, interests and adult-led activities. These are well-documented, although it is not clear how the next steps of learning, that staff regularly identify, link in to the planning to ensure that highly individualised learning opportunities are always promoted. Assessment procedures are established. Staff make regular observations as children play, and clearly monitor the progress children are making towards the Early Learning Goals. However, there is no effective system in place to enable parents to contribute to their children's assessment records on an ongoing basis so that staff have a complete picture of each child.

Children are very familiar with routines. For example, they remind staff that they have forgotten to use the name cardboard at snack time. Children enjoy their time in the setting and are fully engaged in the activities provided and of their own choosing. As a result, behaviour is good. They learn to become more independent as they peel their own bananas, spread their own butter on their raisin bread and pour their own drinks. Children enjoy reading stories, with each other, on their own and with staff. They have good opportunities to mark-make, for example, using the interactive whiteboard and practising drawing shapes and the initial letters of their first name with chalks outside. Children enjoy interesting problem solving activities as they look for shapes in the outdoor environment; finding tyres that are round, and square shapes in the rope ladder. They show an understanding of size comparison as they select 'mummy' and 'baby' toy animals, as well as a basic knowledge of calculation when they shout 'look, one more' when a member of staff arrives after they have already counted the number of grown-ups present. However, these types of spontaneous opportunities and others like it, are not always effectively used by staff to extend children's knowledge and learning. Children learn about different cultures, countries and festivals through a good range of activities, resources and positive images displayed throughout the setting.

They demonstrate good information technology skills, for example, as they use the interactive whiteboard and the laptop linked to it. These simple activities begin to lay the foundations to support the children's future economic well-being.

Children have regular access to the outdoor area, and they particularly enjoy this learning environment. They have opportunities to negotiate and steer on bikes and roller boards, to balance on the trim trail, and play on tyres or small climbing wall. They enjoy art and craft activities, such as making Valentine hearts, while at the same time thinking about how their own heart works and looks. They enjoy dressing-up, especially to help mark significant dates such as World Book Day, and this stimulates their imaginary ideas and play.

All documentation relating to the recording of accidents and the administration of medication is well-maintained, which safeguards children's health and well-being. Most staff hold first aid qualifications which ensures that minor injuries are able to be dealt with effectively. Children eat meals altogether in the school dining hall, where they have the option of sharing a healthy, balanced school meal or a packed lunch from home. Snacks provided by the setting are nutritious, and water is freely available for children throughout the day. Children are learning to keep themselves safe. They take part in fire drills, are reminded to sit down when using scissors and to take their time when using large equipment. Staff have a consistent approach to behaviour management, acting as good role models.

## 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

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|--|---|
| <b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b> | 2 |
| The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement                                     | 2 |

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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|--|---|
| <b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>                          | 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  | 3 |
| 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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|--|---|
| The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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|--|---|
| <b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b> | 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