

# St Mary's Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

---

**Unique reference number** 315245  
**Inspection date** 14/07/2010  
**Inspector** Debra Dahlstrom

**Setting address** St Mary's Church Hall, Crouchley Lane, Lymm, Cheshire,  
WA13 0AS

**Telephone number** 07947 692 003

**Email**

**Type of setting** Childcare on non-domestic premises

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## 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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

## Description of the setting

St Mary's Pre-School opened in 1976. It operates from two rooms in the church hall which is a detached wooden building. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school serves the local community.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of Childcare Register. A maximum of 28 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 37 children aged from two years to five years on roll. Children attend a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting opens five days a week during school term times. It operates on Monday, Tuesday and Friday from 9.15am until 12.45pm and on Wednesday and Thursday from 9.15am until 12.15pm.

There are seven staff who work with the children, of these, six hold early years qualifications from National Vocational Qualification at level 3 and above. The setting receives support from the local authority early years advisor.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The setting values and meets the unique needs of each child well to ensure all children make good progress in their learning and development. Through self-evaluation, the setting is aware of its development needs and demonstrates a strong capacity to continuously improve. Partnerships with others involved in children's care are strong and effective. Areas for further development centre on continuing to develop consistent systems in order to support children's ongoing learning, and updating relevant policies and procedures.

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

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- review the policies and procedures to ensure they contain all the relevant details in line with Early Years Foundation Stage requirements, with particular regard to safeguarding and actions to take in the event of allegations made against staff (Safeguarding and welfare) (also applies to both parts of the Childcare Register). 02/08/2010

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

- develop further the systems to summarise more effectively children's progress.

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

Children are suitably safeguarded, with robust procedures in place for the vetting of staff and good arrangements for ensuring parent helpers are secure in their role. Risk assessments are thorough to help prevent potential hazards both on and off the premises. Staff complete daily checks to ensure that children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. Staff protect children well. They are knowledgeable about the possible signs of abuse or neglect and have a clear understanding of the steps to take. Policies and procedures although detailed, have not been updated sufficiently well to take into account changes to the framework. This is particularly evident in the written safeguarding procedure as the actions to take in the event of allegations against staff is missing. This is a breach of requirements and compromises children's safety.

Leadership and management is strong and effective overall, as the manager is supported well by both the staff team and parent committee. There is a clear drive for improvements as the whole team are motivated with recognised roles and responsibilities and a commitment to share best practice to raise standards for children. Systems for assessing children's progress are continually evolving and while some are very detailed, some are not used to their full potential. The recommendations raised at the last inspection have been successfully met. For example, considerable work has been undertaken to improve observation and assessment systems and mathematical skills for children. Physical play has also been extended to include more opportunities to use outdoors in order to help children develop greater skills in movement and coordination.

Significant improvements to the layout of the setting ensure that children are welcomed into a warm and inclusive environment. Children arrive happily and confidently move around and make good use of a variety of good quality toys and resources. Attractive areas both indoors and outdoors ensure continuous learning provision for children. In using children's individual tracker records, staff ensure children can access their favourite resources to follow their particular interests. Staff can then use this information to plan, support and extend children's individual learning journey.

Partnerships with parents are strong, as they actively contribute to the smooth running of the setting. Their individual skills are valued and they have significantly enhanced the children's environment. Good quality information is shared with parents through newsletters and the notice board. A web site, recently set up with parents input, helps ensure that information about the setting can be readily available on line. Children's individual files, with observations, photographs and achievements, are shared on site or taken home. Parents regularly contribute with their own comments. A regular two-way flow of communication between local

schools enables relevant information to be shared to ensure continuity of care and learning.

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

Staff create a warm and welcoming environment for children, therefore, children feel safe and secure in their care. Children are confident and active learners, making good progress in their learning and development. Staff are secure in their understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and they know their children well. Therefore, they skilfully divide their attention between the children to actively support learning through effective questioning that challenges children's thinking. For example, a small group of boys spend considerable time building a 'long bridge' and are encouraged to consider how long they want to make it and if they need more bricks to finish.

Every child is valued as an individual, as staff place great emphasis upon working with them to enable each child to reach their potential. In working closely with other agencies, staff ensure children's individual needs are readily identified, and practical and effective steps are put in place to help successfully meet them.

Language, communication and literacy skills are promoted very well within the setting. Linguistic diversity is valued as families who speak English as an additional language are encouraged to share basic words in a child's home language. The use of simple sign language ensures all children learn a means of communicating effectively with adults and their peers. Outdoor play has developed considerably since the last inspection and the staff are skilled in delivering a wide range of activities that are both meaningful and challenging to children's thinking. For example, mark making features strongly as children learn from a young age that their work has meaning. They make good attempts to write their names using water and brushes and watch in fascination as it dries in the sunshine. The use of number is promoted as children are encouraged to record and count the assortment of birds seen in their gardens for the RSPB bird watch campaign, or they listen with staff and count the church bells as they chime from the village church.

Physical skills are promoted as children spontaneously draw recognisable shapes with chalk on the ground. They ask their friends to correctly identify the shapes and throw bean bags into them. They are competent in their abilities to play safely as they carefully negotiate their way around the painted road in the playground in their sit and ride cars, avoiding others around them. Children confidently climb fixed equipment such as the 'pirate ship' and remind each other of the 'three pirates at a time' rule when using the equipment.

The pirate theme resonates throughout the setting as children are preparing for their leavers party. They have designed their own pirate T-shirts and tie dyed them choosing their own colour combinations. Children intend to wear them with pride on the last day of term. Children are full of excitement at the prospect of digging up the vegetable patch on the day of the party. They are to hunt for 'treasure' in

the form of new potatoes and carrots they have carefully tendered since the Spring. Staff have carefully secreted extra potatoes in the ground to ensure there is enough 'treasure' for everyone to be included.

Regular hygiene routines enable children to learn good practice. Healthy lifestyles and food choices are encouraged in the setting as staff consistently look at ways to broaden children's experiences. Children enjoy sampling from a range of fruits and vegetables for their snacks, recently tasting some of the lettuce leaves grown in their garden. Children likened it to 'cucumber' because it was 'crunchy' to taste.

## 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

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <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

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</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  | 3 |
| 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

|  |   |
|--|---|
| The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
|--|---|

### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <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 |

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



## Annex B: the Childcare Register

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

Not Met (with actions)

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

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Arrangements for safeguarding children). 02/08/2010

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Arrangements for safeguarding children). 02/08/2010