

St Marys Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Gill Bosschaert

Setting address Orchard Place, Faversham, Kent, ME13 8AP

Telephone number 01795 536803
Email info@stmarysplaygroup.net
Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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 opened in 1985. It operates from three rooms in a detached demountable cabin on the grounds of St Mary's of Chantry Primary School in Faversham, Kent. A maximum of 30 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 9.00am to 11.30am and 12.30pm to 3.00pm, term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area and have use of the school playing field. The playgroup serves the people of the local area and surrounding villages. There are currently 60 children aged from three to under five years on roll who all receive funding for nursery education. The playgroup employs ten members of staff to work with children; two are supply cover, plus an administrative officer. All staff who work with the children have appropriate early years National Vocational Qualifications. Two have National Vocational Qualifications at level 4, seven have National Vocational Qualifications at level 3, two are currently working on the Foundation degree for Early Years Development. The playgroup receives support from the local authority, it is a registered charity and is managed by a parents' committee.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The manager, leaders and staff are well trained to meet the welfare of the children in their care. The setting offers a warm, caring environment, which is organised to promote their needs and interests. The needs of all children are met well including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language. Parents are made to feel welcome and are encouraged to contribute. The management has a clear vision of the setting's strengths and areas for development and has therefore a good capacity to improve.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop more links with the wider community
- develop multicultural resources to further promote children's understanding of diversity.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Leadership and management are good. Welfare arrangements are good and all safeguarding requirements are met. Staff are suitably qualified and appropriately vetted and trained. Photographs of all staff, qualifications, training and CRB numbers are clearly displayed for parents to see. Risk assessments take place daily to ensure that the environment is safe for the children. Fire drills take place

regularly and all fire doors are kept clear. The self-evaluation has been completed with the staff and is now online. This shows a very accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the setting. Training is appropriate and regular. All staff are first aid trained and there is a regular cycle for keeping this up-to-date.

Partnerships with parents are well established; they are kept informed by newsletter, via the notice boards and by regular discussions with their child's key person. They are warmly greeted at the beginning and end of the sessions. There is also a suggestion box for any further thoughts or ideas. A good range of policies and procedures is readily available for parents to see and are updated regularly although not all are clearly dated at the time of signing and the review date not stated. The recommendations from the last report have been implemented and the manager is speaks proudly of the work undertaken on the 'free-flow' to the outside area. Planning is flexible and key people focus on their group to observe and re-plan where necessary in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage areas of learning. Supervisors evaluate planning daily to ensure that all children have equal access to activities for them to grow and develop well. The setting takes great pains to ensure that there are equal opportunities for all children and that there is no discrimination. There are good links with the primary school and the playgroup children are frequent visitors to the reception class and main school. The setting is well resourced which, in part, reflects an inclusive curriculum but more multicultural resources are still needed, however, a very good start has been made in this area. The manager is reflective and all staff are motivated to ensure the club maintains a high standard. The staff work happily as a team ensuring continuous capacity to improve.

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

Provision at St Mary's playgroup is good. Good use is made of the inside rooms and the secure outside area. Staff are well deployed in both learning environments which promotes easy, safe access to the outside area and the children are able to 'free-flow' in and out as they wish. There is a rich variety of apparatus to cater for the needs of all the children in both learning environments which are organised well into wet, messy areas, construction and quiet areas. Great care is taken for the children's welfare needs, the outside area has a large shaded area in which they can play and children know how to keep themselves safe in the sun and respond positively when sun hats are offered when they play outside. Sun cream is offered to parents at the beginning of each session if they have not already put some on their child. The setting promotes healthy living well. Water is freely available and a healthy snack offered. Children are reminded to wash their hands after toileting and before eating their snack. Children are encouraged to use the bikes and scooters outside to ensure they take regular exercise. The children also have the opportunity to use the school's play area when not being used by the school.

All areas of Early Years Foundation Stage learning are reflected both inside and outside. Staff are very effective at ensuring that all children are integrated and that no child is upset or without something to do. Careful assessments are

evidenced with photographs and placed into a 'Learning Journey folders to which the parents have access and are able to make comments. The children were delighted to be able to pick some of their 'home-grown' lettuce for snack time and see that the recently emerged butterflies were ready to be released. The children had seen them through the life cycle from caterpillars, which was evident from the delightful paintings displayed. A good selection of tubes and funnels enabled some investigative water play and a large area for digging and playing in the soil was enthusiastically used. Books are readily available and well used. Different types of 'mark making' with a good selection of implements are provided both inside and outside. The large number of staff who are constantly engaged in conversation with the children ensure that communication skills and logical thinking are developed well. Small world toys, the home corner and the large selection of dressing up clothes offer opportunities to role play and explore emotions. A good balance of adult and child initiated activities are offered throughout the session. Number and shape are particularly developed at snack time when skilful questioning enable children to discuss colour shape and number while selecting pieces of fruit or biscuits.

Children are developing independence and contribute to the smooth running of the setting by helping themselves to milk or water and selecting a piece of fruit or raisins. They then stack their mugs and plates ready for washing and could even wash them in a bucket of water. At the end of the session clearing up time is indicated by music to which most of the children readily respond and with guidance begin to put apparatus away. They are very well behaved at all times. The playgroup has links with the Early Years Advisory teacher, Child Development Officer, Special Educational Needs Coordinator, Speech Therapist, Dentist and the local Librarian. The playgroup needs to develop further links with the community. Children have positive relationships with staff who dedicate their time to supporting the children in their play. This is a happy, safe, secure place to be, children develop well in order to be ready for the next stage of their education.

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	2

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	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

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