

# St Michael's Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 220282  
**Inspection date** 03/02/2011  
**Inspector** Emma Bright

**Setting address** St Johns Ambulance Rooms, Milner Road, Finedon,  
Northamptonshire, NN9 5LW

**Telephone number** 0786 7742606

**Email**

**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*.

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## Description of the setting

St Michael's Playgroup opened in the 1987. It is managed by a committee of parents and operates from the St John's Ambulance Hall in Finedon, Northamptonshire. The playgroup is open five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9am to 3pm. All children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 24 children may attend the playgroup at any one time and there are currently 56 children on roll who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register. Children come from the local area. The playgroup currently supports a small number of children who have English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs six staff, five of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Staff provide a warm and welcoming environment and children enjoy their time at the pre-school. Children make satisfactory progress in their learning and development and staff ensure the individual needs of children are appropriately met. The environment promotes children's welfare and the required documentation is in place to promote their health and safety. Staff form positive relationships with parents and other carers. Systems to monitor and evaluate the provision are evolving.

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

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

- develop staffs' knowledge and understanding of the learning and development requirements so that they can confidently support and extend each child's learning in a range of challenging experiences
- develop the use of information gathered about children's learning so it can be used effectively to identify learning priorities and plan relevant, motivating experiences and so that parents have opportunities to contribute to these records
- maximise the use of the environment to support children's learning so that they confidently explore and truly make choices about their play in challenging indoor and outdoor spaces
- ensure staffing arrangements are organised so that staff can engage with children and effectively support their learning
- provide opportunities for children to use, hear and see their home language in their play and learning.

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

Robust recruitment arrangements are in place to ensure staff who work with children are suitable to do so. Adults demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of Safeguarding Children procedures and help children to understand how to keep themselves safe. For example, they practise the fire drill regularly so that they know what to do in an emergency. Clear risk assessments are carried out on a regular basis to ensure that hazards are identified and minimised to safeguard children. The required documentation is in place for the safe running of the setting and the implementation of this promotes and safeguards children's welfare.

Staff work in partnership with parents and carers to ensure children's individual needs are met. Suitable information is provided to parents about the setting and sound systems are in place for staff to gather information about children's individual needs. Staff offer daily verbal updates to ensure parents are informed about their child's care and progress. Although staff ensure that they find out about the children's home language and gather key words, children have fewer opportunities to use, hear and see their home language in the setting. This potentially affects their ability to confidently use their own language outside the home and build strong bilingual foundations when learning English. Appropriate systems are in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The management team provides suitable leadership and staff work well together. Systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the early years provision and this is an evolving process. Recommendations from the previous inspection have been addressed and this demonstrates a commitment to maintaining continuous improvement. Staff are effectively deployed to ensure children are safe and supervised at all times. However, staff are often busy carrying out chores and this affects their ability to support children's learning effectively. Staff demonstrate a positive attitude to liaising with other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage and are developing links with them in order to support children's learning.

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

Children enjoy a sound range of activities and this enables them to make satisfactory progress across the areas of learning and development. Although staff understand about delivering the learning and development requirements in the Early Years Foundation Stage, they are not confident enough in their knowledge to enable them to support and extend each child's learning in all areas. A system for planning and assessment is in place but not fully effective. Children's achievement records are not used to inform individual planning in order to effectively identify the next steps in children's learning and build on what they know. Parents have

fewer opportunities to contribute to their child's records.

Children are able to make some choices about what they do, however staff do not always make full use of the learning environment to effectively support children's learning both indoors and outdoors. Snack time is offered on a 'rolling' basis so that children can choose when they want to eat, allowing them to continue their activities uninterrupted. Staff have warm and caring relationships with the children. They behave well and staff praise their achievements and this helps them to feel good about what they do. Children have some opportunities to explore their imagination in role play and they enjoy some creative activities.

Children are becoming confident communicators and they confidently initiate conversations with adults and each other. They have opportunities to select books and enjoy listening to stories in the book corner. Children are beginning to understand that print carries meaning as they explain that they know which one is their peg because it has their name on it. Children develop their small-muscle skills as they manipulate play dough, using utensils to cut and shape it. These simple activities satisfactorily lay the foundations to begin to support children's future learning.

Children are beginning to learn about the importance of a healthy diet and they are provided with a range of suitable snacks. Clear information is gathered about children's dietary requirements and this ensures they can eat safely. Children are cared for in a clean and healthy environment and appropriate hygiene routines are followed, by the staff and children, to help to prevent cross infection. All staff hold current first-aid certificates, which mean that they can respond appropriately if children have an accident whilst in their care. Children enjoy opportunities to play outside and they access the outdoor area throughout the session.

## 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> | 3 |
| The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement                                     | 3 |

### 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>            | 3 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement         | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources                                           | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity                             | 3 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding                                                                    | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement | 3 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships                                                                    | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers                                | 3 |

### 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 | 3 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|---|

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

|                                                                  |   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b> | 3 |
| The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning    | 3 |
| The extent to which children feel safe                           | 2 |
| The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles            | 3 |
| The extent to which children make a positive contribution        | 3 |
| The extent to which children develop skills for the future       | 3 |

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