

St Matthias Church Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 139479
Inspection date 14/04/2011
Inspector Linda Dawe

Setting address Babbacombe Road, Torquay, Devon, TQ1 1HW

Telephone number 01803 215 068

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.

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.

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

© Crown copyright 2011

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).

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

Established in 1997, St Matthias Pre-school is set in the heart of Torquay in Devon, and is managed by a committee made up of representatives from the church and local schools. The pre-school follows a Christian ethos. Parental representation on the committee is welcomed. The setting is open from 8.45am until 3.15pm on Monday to Friday during term time. The group is registered on the Early Years Register to provide care for up to 20 children in the early years age range, none of whom are under the age of three. At present there are 38 children enrolled. The group offers free early years education to children aged three to five-years-old.

Children attend mostly from the nearby surrounding area and most go on to attend one of the two nearby schools. The group supports children who have English as an additional language and children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are many groups who use the rooms in the church complex but during a session the group has the sole use of The Pine Room. They have the use of secure outside play space and other associated facilities within the church premises. There are five members of staff who support the provision, all of whom have appropriate childcare qualifications at NVQ level 3 including the manager who is currently undertaking a Foundation Degree in Early Years Care and Education.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are cared for by a highly skilled and committed staff team. As a result all children make excellent progress in their learning and development. The setting works extremely well with parents and other professionals to ensure all children's needs are fully met. Overall, they are very effective in identifying their strengths and weaknesses and demonstrate a very strong capacity for continued improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve consistency in the way each child's identified next steps are recorded in order that this can be easily shared with all staff and parents
- improve systems for informing Ofsted of any changes; such as changes to the premises.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety is a high priority and effective steps are taken by staff to ensure children play in a safe and secure environment. Other people do use the building at different times of the day but this is managed extremely well by the staff. Staff are very clear of their responsibilities to safeguard children and effective procedures are in place to do so. There have been some recent unforeseen changes to the management committee, which resulted in some lapses in informing Ofsted of some changes within the setting. However, these changes were managed very well internally with positive impact on children's care and learning. For example, a new entrance and outdoor play area have been created.

The deployment of staff and the use of equipment within the setting is excellent. Children are extremely well supported in their play and the addition of the outdoor area has provided an excellent resource for children's learning; particularly for boys. Staff are skilled at knowing when children need additional support and their comprehensive understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework enables them to respond to naturally occurring situations in order to extend children's learning. For example, responding with resources when children want to make a spider's web and spider in the outside learning area..

Staff are highly effective in ensuring all children are well integrated and make good progress in all areas of their learning and development. There are effective systems in place to identify if there are any concerns about any area of a child's welfare or learning. Staff are proactive in seeking support for children with additional needs or English as an additional language. The excellent partnership working with both parents and other professionals ensures that each child has their individual needs fully met. Parents are extremely positive about the care that their children receive and appreciate the information shared with them regarding extending their children's learning at home. As a result parents are actively involved in their children's care and learning.

Staff complete a comprehensive self-evaluation, which is rigorous and overall clearly identifies the setting's strengths and areas for development. All recommendations from the previous inspection have been fully met; improving outcomes for all children. In addition the setting have addressed suggestions for improvement from the local authority. Their robust knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework has meant that they have identified for themselves areas for improvement that will have the most positive impact on outcomes for the children in their care. Comprehensive assessments and highly effective partnerships with parents ensure that each key person knows their key child extremely well. Clear targets for development are identified for each child but not always consistently written in their individual record so that every person can see what they are and when they are achieved.

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

Every child makes significant gains in their learning as a result of the environment in which they play. They clearly have strong relationships with all staff and particularly with their key person meaning they feel safe and secure. They play an active part in their learning as a result, contributing ideas for activities that they would like to take part in. Children demonstrate a clear understanding of how to stay safe. They are enabled to take risks, which they clearly enjoy doing, to learn how to keep themselves safe. Boys, in particular, love to climb the trees in the outside learning area, which they do under close supervision. They express great achievement when they reach the high branch, which boosts their positive self-esteem. Children behave extremely well and are clear about the rules in place to keep them safe, such as not waving sticks in the air.

Children are given many opportunities to problem solve and gain an understanding of numeracy as they play. For example, a group of boys in the tree house develop both their imagination and problem solving skills as they work together to make a 'roof' using string and material. All children have great fun building 'houses' using real bricks, straw and sticks, linking with their theme about the story of the Three Little Pigs. The setting is rich in print and children are constantly picking up pens and pencils to begin 'writing'. They enjoy listening to stories and gain an understanding that print carries meaning as a result. Staff are sensitive to children for whom English is not their first language and ensure that story time is enjoyable for them too. They communicate with children using pictures and signs and as a result they quickly become integrated. Although there is a strong Christian ethos in the setting, staff ensure that children are aware of other religions by exploring festivals such as Diwali.

Children have innovative opportunities to engage in a wide range of physical activities. Much of their learning takes place outside in the fresh air. The setting works very well with parents to encourage healthy eating and children enjoy healthy snacks and packed lunches. Children are active and inquisitive learners who enjoy a broad range of self-initiated and adult-led play. They develop an understanding of the wider world in this community setting through activities provided for them. For example, when visitors come to the setting to help them plant and grow vegetables.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
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	1
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
--	---

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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

