

# St Marys Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

EY259279

**Inspection date**

25/01/2011

**Inspector**

Tom Radcliffe

**Setting address**

Church Rooms, Church Street, Chesham, Buckinghamshire,  
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**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*.

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**

St Mary's Pre-School is run by a committee of mainly parents. It opened in 1968 and registered with Ofsted in 2003. The pre-school operates from a main hall and two additional smaller rooms in a modified church hall. St Mary's is situated in a residential area in Chesham.

A maximum of 38 children may attend the setting at any one time of which no more than 38 may be in the early years age group. The pre-school is open each weekday from 9.30am to 12.30pm on Mondays and to 1.30pm Tuesdays to Fridays when an optional lunch session is offered. The setting opens in term time only. Younger children aged two years old can attend the pre-school twice a week on Tuesday and Thursday mornings.

All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 48 children in the early years age group on roll. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The setting is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early years education to children aged two, three and four.

The pre-school mainly provides for children in the local area and supports some children with learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs 11 members of staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications and three are working towards a qualification. The manager is qualified to degree standard.

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

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The setting works with a good understanding of children as individuals and a very evident passion to provide them with high standards of care and support. As a result children's welfare and learning needs are mostly given good or outstanding attention. Children thrive in a well organised play environment where they make choices and show good levels of independence. The setting has very effective partnerships with parents, other settings and professionals which help to ensure that most children make good progress. Effective and all embracing processes of self-evaluation enable the provider to build on what the setting does well and set targets for improvements. This enhances the level of provision and outcomes for children.

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

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

- continue to develop the children's use of available outside space to provide them with additional learning and play opportunities.

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

The setting takes great care to inform parents about its service through the use of informative written policies and procedures. This has a very positive impact on the safe and efficient management of the setting which is very child-centred and committed to meeting the needs of all its users. Children are well safeguarded as well trained and experienced staff implement effective practice consistently. Staff are well led and their work shows a good understanding of how to protect children's interests. All staff are vetted for suitability, supervision is caring and children's safety is enhanced through the use of effective risk assessments to minimise potential hazards. Children are able to explore all available spaces and make decisions about what they want to do. This allows children to become independent and learn about the value of using their time engaged in purposeful activity. Children's good health and well-being is promoted by staff, for example, in cases of illness or minor injuries and by their use of hygienic day to day routines.

The provider and manager use highly effective processes of self-evaluation to gain an accurate understanding of the setting's strengths and relative weaknesses. All staff readily contribute to this and feedback from both parents and children gives important information which is used sensitively to bring about improvements. The setting is very comfortable in target setting and all staff feel that they actively influence the improvement agenda. This level of participation means that there have been improvements made since the last inspection. The setting has an excellent partnership with parents, who greatly value its work, which helps most children make progress. In addition the setting has a good understanding of the need to have partnerships with other providers and professionals to support children's ongoing learning and development. This is very helpful where children may have specific learning needs or difficulties.

Children play in a spacious and stimulating environment which is carefully planned to meet their needs. They are able to access resources and take part in activities that generally promote their all round learning. Staff play a very prominent part in facilitating children's choices and where required they take a more direct approach to enhance children's learning and understanding. This is a high quality feature of the setting's work which impacts on children's achievement and enjoyment. The setting is very inclusive in its approach as all children are treated as unique individuals who have the ability to build on what they can already do. This ensures that all children are able to make progress and includes, for example, children who use English as an additional language. In addition children learn about their diverse world through well planned play opportunities.

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

Children make progress as they access learning opportunities which are mainly child-led with a significant input from adults. The setting has very efficient and effective processes in place to understand children's starting points and staff use careful observations to gain an understanding of the progress that they make. Written records are maintained which enable staff to provide children with future learning activities which are interesting and challenging. Development information is shared with parents and staff have specially arranged meetings to discuss how their work with children has the maximum beneficial impact. Staff support child-led play well, as a result children use messy play resources, mark making in role play and discover a world in their darkened den as they use torches and invent imaginary scenes. Children respond well to adults as they listen to guidance, advice and suggestions about what they could do. When using mathematical equipment children became more expertise at understanding value and when outside children use a number trail to help their understanding. Children have opportunities to learn about their world as they grow plants from seeds, talk about the weather and have hands on practical experiences. In addition children are able to access books which they enjoy sharing with adults and they use language in a written form as they use labels, signs and their own names. The setting has a very good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and of how young children learn as they play. A strength of the setting is it use of resources and deployment of staff. This is generally of a high quality and accounts for children's progress. However the setting's own analysis of its work shows that outdoor spaces require ongoing development to ensure that children access an appropriate range of play experiences.

The setting promotes children's welfare very well. All children are safeguarded and they have an understanding of their own safety and that of others. Children's behaviour is managed expertly by adults and most children show a willingness to share, take turns and include each other in their play. Children often manage their own behaviour as they play together, for example, when using boxes as imaginary vehicles they decided who would try first and who would wait. Children are able to understand the varying needs of other children as they play together, for example, that different children will have different abilities and strengths. In addition children of all ages are able to concentrate and use existing skills while understanding that different activities require different responses. For example, when having a snack at a table or when playing freely outdoors.

The setting promotes outcomes for children very well and often outstandingly. Children are fascinated as they play and they thoroughly enjoy their time in the setting as they have conversations, use their imaginations and interact with adults. Children are motivated to explore and think about how they spend their time. They also feel very safe and understand how to keep themselves safe. Children's relationships with adults are very secure which forms a very firm basis for learning and development. Children have a good understanding about their own health as they talk about healthy foods and enjoy physical activity. In addition most children enjoy facing challenges and they respond well to the expectation that they will

make decisions for themselves. Children generally acquire skills and abilities which are appropriate to their age and their progress ensures that most children are prepared well for future learning needs.

## 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	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
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	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

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
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	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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