

St Catharine's Under Fives

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	101639
Inspection date	05/07/2011
Inspector	Hilary Tierney
Setting address	St Catherines Church Hall, London Road, Gloucester, Gloucestershire, GL1 3HW
Telephone number	07783054039
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 Catharine's Under Fives opened in 1969 as a committee-run group. It operates from the church hall in the grounds of St Catherine's Church in a residential area in Gloucester. The group is registered on the Early Years Register and may provide care for a total of 24 children in the early years age group at any one time. The setting is open on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9.30am until 12.30pm and on Thursdays from 11.30am until 2.30pm and on Fridays from 9.30am until 2.30pm during term times only.

There are currently 43 children aged from two-years-nine-months to under five years on roll. Of these, 21 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area. The group currently supports children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

The group employs six staff, of these, five are qualified to level 3 and one is qualified to level 2. The group is currently completing the Bristol Standards Quality Assurance scheme. The group has close links with two local primary schools.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff meet children's individual needs well and there is an effective key person system in place. Children enjoy a warm, welcoming and interesting environment where they feel safe and as a result they make good progress in all areas of their learning. The partnership with parents is outstanding. They are fully involved with the group and information is regularly shared with them. Partnerships with other early years settings children attend are good and the sharing of information helps all adults contribute to children's learning. The self-evaluation process has been effectively completed with strengths and weaknesses identified clearly, however some paperwork lacks details.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the links between sensitive observational assessments and planning of activities that include children's next steps, so that all children's individual needs continue to be met and they continue to make maximum progress in each area of learning
- implement a robust system for recording any existing injuries that children may arrive with.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff are fully aware of safeguarding procedures. Effective procedures are in place for identifying any child at risk of harm and liaising with the appropriate child agencies. However, the system for the recording of any injuries that children may arrive with lacks some detail. The environment in which children are cared for and educated is safe and supportive. Children are taught to be safety conscious without being fearful. They show a strong understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Effective annual risk assessments ensure the premises are safe both inside and outside. Staff conduct a daily check before children arrive which ensures all areas are safe for children to play.

Resources are good, fit for purpose and able to support children's learning and development. The available resources are used well to achieve the planned goals in learning and development. The environment is conducive to learning and children achieve well as a result of the warm, welcoming environment they are in. Staff actively promote equality and diversity and fully include all children in activities. Children are able to develop their independence and interests through the wide range of activities and the easily accessible resources provided. Staff have a good knowledge of each child's background and needs and ensure that their own knowledge about different cultures is up to date. Staff make the most of diversity to help children understand the society they live in. Staff identify children's need for additional support as early as possible; they share information and records with colleagues, parents and where appropriate, with interagency teams to ensure that each child gets the support they need.

The setting has a highly positive relationship with parents and carers. Parents and carers are heavily involved in decision-making on key matters affecting the setting through well-established and highly inclusive procedures, including regular questionnaires. These views are actively taken on board by the staff and are developed to enhance the provision and improve outcomes for children. Parents are very well informed about all aspects of their children's achievements, well-being and development. Parents and carers spoken to comment on the exceptional staff and the high quality of care they provide. They also commented on the amount of detailed information they receive and how they are made to feel very welcome when doing rota duty. Partnerships with other early years settings that children attend are well established and make a strong contribution to children's achievement and well-being. Verbal communication takes place between providers which helps to support individual children's achievement and well-being.

The self-evaluation process is effective and has clearly identified the group's strengths and weaknesses and areas to improve. The action plan is well planned and targets the areas to improve where it is needed most. As a result the recommendations from the last inspection have been effectively addressed. Both the staff and committee communicate drive and ambition for the future of the setting. They are highly motivated and work hard to provide high quality childcare.

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

Staff have a good knowledge of the learning and development and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage which helps them promote children's learning, social, physical and economic well-being. The interesting, well-equipped, and welcoming environment successfully reflects children's backgrounds and the wider community. The staff are deployed well to support children's learning and welfare. Good quality planning and organisation ensures that every child is suitably challenged by the learning experiences provided. However, it is not always clear to identify how children's next steps are targeted in activity planning to help staff continue to provide support and extension for the children.

Children have good relationships with adults. They play well on their own; they are motivated and interested in a broad range of activities and take responsibility for choosing what they do. For example, children enjoy selecting their own paints, brushes and paper to paint their own pictures. They thoroughly enjoy being able to mix the paints themselves and experiment with the colours. Children's progress in communicating, literacy and skills relating to information and communication technology is developing well. For example, a group of children enjoy listening to a story being read to them on a disc. They sit with headphones on looking at the book and turning the pages at the correct time. They laugh and giggle as the story progresses. Children play and work alongside their peers successfully understanding the need to co-operate and resolve situations by themselves. Children play well independently becoming active, curious and inquisitive learners. Children are very well equipped with the skills they need in order to secure future learning.

Children often share responsibility for decisions about routines. Staff encourage children to become heavily involved in self-evaluation by contributing their views and suggestions about the provision and activities they would like or want in the future. Children show that they feel safe and that they are confident to share concerns with their key person. They have a good understanding of safety issues and are able to confidently talk about dangers and how to keep themselves safe. Children have a sense of belonging to the setting and their behaviour is very good. Good quality interaction with both staff and each other and well organised routines help the children to become confident in the setting.

Children show a good awareness about what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. They adopt good personal hygiene routines and understand the importance of healthy eating. Children engage in a wide range of physical activities, both indoors and out, increasing their understanding about the importance of regular exercise as part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Children thoroughly enjoy outside play, for example, a group of children enjoy water play exploring what sinks and floats, how much water it takes to fill different containers and how water wheels turn when water is poured on them. Children enjoy riding bikes and cars, they ride round the circuit with a member of staff joining in, they all laugh and talk about what would happen if they crash and how much petrol they need for their cars.

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	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	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

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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