

St Mary's Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Marcia Robinson

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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 was registered in 1994 and is managed by a committee of local people and parents. The preschool provides suitable disabled access. It runs from a church hall situated in Peckham and serves the local community. The premises consist of a large hall and a group room. There is a small outdoor area for supervised play. The preschool opens five days a week during school term times, from 9.30am until 12 noon. It is registered on the Early Years Register and both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register to provide care for a maximum of 26 children aged from two years to under five years at any one time. There are currently 35 children in the early years age group on roll. Children aged three and four years receive funding for free early education. The setting currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The preschool employs five members of staff and all, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. They also receive support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in a safe, secure and inclusive environment where they are making good progress in all areas of their learning and development overall. They are successfully supported by a caring and enthusiastic staff team who have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is a good working relationship with parents and others, and parents are involved in their children's learning overall. A good range of policies and procedures are in place, which helps to promote children's welfare. The preschool has effective working relationships with the local authority advisory team and training programmes are in place to further support continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- encourage parents to review their child's progress regularly and contribute to their child's learning and development record
- strengthen systems for observation and assessment to monitor the effectiveness of planning children's 'next steps' for individual learning as they progress towards the early learning goals.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting is well led and managed and children are cared for by a consistent staff team. Robust systems are in place to ensure the suitability of all staff; this includes appropriate vetting checks, induction and supervision. The management and staff are able to take prompt action if they have any concerns regarding children's welfare. For instance, the majority of staff have attended relevant safeguarding training and the remaining staff are booked to attend in the near future. There is a comprehensive safeguarding policy in place, which gives clear information to staff and parents that children's welfare is a high priority at the setting. Effective risk assessments and regular fire drills take place to ensure that children are cared for in a safe environment. The risk assessment documents are quickly reviewed when hazards are identified. This demonstrates that the setting gives high regard to children's safety. Staff also conduct risk assessments prior to any outings, including trips to the local park. These measures ensure that children play in a safe and secure environment at all times. All required documentation that promotes children's health, safety and well-being is in place and all requirements are met.

Staff have clear roles and responsibilities, they share tasks effectively throughout the session and work well together as a team. This helps the sessions run smoothly. Children access a good range of well-chosen resources, which support their learning across all areas. Children's cultural and ethnic backgrounds are recognised and acknowledged by staff through the range of resources and activities that reflect positive images of diversity and inclusion. Staff build good relationships with parents, who receive a comprehensive range of information through the policies and procedures and the notice boards, for instance. They are kept up to date with their child's progress. This is achieved through a combination of daily discussions when children arrive and leave, as well as regular review meetings. Parental contribution and involvement is not fully established in the ongoing observation and assessment process to support their children's learning. Staff work closely with parents to ensure they are familiar with all children's individual needs so they can provide the care they require. If children require extra support, there are good working links with external agencies and other providers. This ensures children receive the support they need and benefit from continuity in learning and care.

The systems for self-evaluation are developing well and are being used to mostly good effect to identify areas for improvement. The management and the staff team make good use of feedback from parents. They have the support of the local authority which helps to broaden their view of their service and to act on any feedback. For instance, questionnaires are provided for parents to complete at regular intervals and those sampled as part of the inspection process gave positive responses. Recommendations made at the last inspection have been addressed, which impacts positively on children's well-being and their learning and development. The management team is committed to continual improvement and plans for the future are well targeted to improve outcomes for children. For instance, staff are making ongoing improvements to the planning system.

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

Children are happy to attend and enjoy learning in a caring environment. They are provided with many opportunities to make their own decisions about their play and learning and this enables them to follow their own interests and extend their learning. They behave well and they are beginning to understand the consequences of unacceptable behaviour towards others. Staff have good strategies in place for managing behaviour, which are appropriate to the children's ages and stages of development and understanding. Thoughtful planning ensures children's individual needs are taken into account and as a result children are developing at their own pace, with activities that are fun and that maintain their interests. For instance, while studying the theme of emotions, children had their photographs taken. They then enjoyed describing their emotions and making their own self portraits out of a range of creative materials. Key persons know the individual needs of children well and make regular observations of their achievements. They identify next steps for their development, but these are not always clearly followed up and reviewed in order to track progress towards the early learning goals. Children's activities involve them in sorting and matching and they complete puzzles and count during play. Children enjoy playing with a wide range of information and communication technology equipment and staff sit with them at the computer to assist and support them where needed. Children have access to activities that help them to develop the skills that they need for their future learning. Children take part in activities that help them learn about the lives of others. Parents are invited to contribute their ideas and specialities during important festivals. Furthermore, staff have trained in and are aware of the benefits of Makaton sign language which can be used to communicate with all children.

Children are cared for in safe, welcoming premises where they settle quickly. Children grow in independence as they find their name at the start of the session, look after their own belongings and use the cloakroom independently. They adopt good hygiene routines when they wash their hands at appropriate times, which helps protect them from the risk of cross-infection. Staff are vigilant in keeping tables clean and all hold food hygiene certificates which ensures good hygiene guidance is followed when storing and handling food. Children enjoy healthy options at snack time, helping themselves to a selection of fresh fruit such as raspberries. They happily play outside in the fresh air every day, where they explore, test and develop physical control when they use a range of outdoor equipment both at the preschool and at local parks. Their knowledge about personal safety is encouraged as staff use situations that arise to draw their attention to potential hazards and possible consequences. For instance, they explain to younger children to move away from the edge of the climbing frame in case they fall. This is further extended on outings where they practise road safety and talk to children about 'stranger danger'. Children regularly participate in fire drills so that they know what to do and how to behave in an emergency. These experiences, positively contribute to children developing a sense of danger and how to keep themselves safe.

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	2

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