

St Mary's Osterley Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date

14/09/2010

Inspector

ISP Inspection

Setting address

St Mary's Osterley Parish Centre, Osterley Road, Isleworth,
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Type of setting

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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 Osterley Pre-school Playgroup is managed by a voluntary management committee made up of parents of children who attend, or have attended the playgroup and is a registered charity. It opened in 1970 and operates from a purpose built community hall adjacent to St Mary's Church Isleworth, in the London Borough of Hounslow. A maximum of 26 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. It is open each weekday from 9:30am to 12:30pm, and on Wednesday afternoon from 1:30pm to 4:30pm, during term time. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 42 children aged from two to under five years on roll, some in part time places. The setting is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four. The playgroup currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and also supports children who speak English as an additional language. It is registered on the Early Years Register, compulsory part and voluntary part of the Childcare Register. The playgroup employs six staff, of whom four hold appropriate early years qualifications, with one member of staff working towards a qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children enjoy their play and make good progress in their learning and development within a clean and safe environment. The pre-school offers an inclusive provision, in which each child is valued and respected as a unique individual. Staff engage effectively with parents to ensure the needs of all the children are met. The manager has effective systems in place to monitor the work of the group, and is highly motivated to continuously develop practice for the benefit of the children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the system of self-evaluation in order to include the views of the parents
- provide garden equipment and apparatus that offers physical challenge to older and more confident children

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding the children has high priority with the manager and her staff team. They have a thorough understanding of child protection matters, including the indicators of abuse and the procedure to follow to report concerns. The manager also has a robust recruitment procedure in place and takes all the appropriate steps to check the suitability of the staff to work with the children. The efficient security measures employed by the group ensure intruders to the building cannot gain access to the children unchallenged, and that children cannot leave unsupervised. All the procedures and records required for the safe and efficient management of the nursery, and the child's welfare are maintained.

The manager has a very clear vision of how she intends to continue to develop the work of the pre-school and enhance the existing good practice for the benefit of the children. She is enthusiastic about her plans to move forward, and communicates her ambitions effectively to staff. Self-evaluation of the work of the pre-school is ongoing. Areas of weakness are identified, and strategies devised to bring about improvement. The manager has gained a National Vocational Qualification in management at level 4 since the last inspection and has introduced an appraisal system for her staff to identify training needs to enable them to further develop their skills. She has also developed effective systems to monitor the developmental progress of the children. These, and other changes recently implemented have had a positive impact on the outcomes for children. Plans for the future are well targeted to continue to bring about further improvements and benefits for the children. They include remodelling the garden to provide a sensory area. The manager welcomes support and input from the local authority development workers, but the views of the parents are not currently sought as part of the evaluation process. However, the manager has identified this as a weakness and has plans to address it.

The nursery's effective engagement with parents contributes towards ensuring the needs of the children are met. Parents receive a 'parent pack' containing the group's policies and procedures when their child joins the group. This ensures that they are aware of the service the group provides. Parents and carers are made very welcome by staff, and consequently there is a routine exchange of relevant information about each child on a daily basis. Newsletters help to keep parents up-to-date with nursery events, and the wealth of information displayed on the notice board also helps make parents aware of how their child spends each session. Parents commented at the inspection that they were very happy with the group, and felt that their children were in a safe environment and making progress in their learning. Parents and carers are invited to stay with their children to help them settle, and are able to add their names to the 'parent rota' to volunteer their help. Highly effective links are also established with other agencies involved with the care and education of the children. This ensures that children with additional needs are fully supported and a coherent approach to their development is achieved.

The nursery promotes equality and diversity as each child is valued as a unique individual. The key person system enables staff to gain good knowledge and understanding of the background and needs of all the children. Staff speak a range of community languages, such as Urdu, to help settle children who have English as an additional language. The staff help children learn about different faiths within society as the group acknowledges festivals, such as Eid Christmas and Diwali.

The pre-school environment is conducive to children's learning as it is clean and safe. The play space is organised to give children plenty of room to fully explore the play resources and to move comfortably from activity to activity. Play resources are in good condition and support children's learning in all areas. The deployment of staff around the hall and garden ensures children's safety is monitored and their learning and development is supported appropriately.

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

Children settle quickly and are content in the pre-school. Staff have a good understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how to implement them in their practice. They observe the children at play, and assess their stage of development. The next step in each child's individual learning journey is identified and the information used to devise play plans that ensure every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences that are tailored to meet their individual needs. Each child has a book containing photographs of them at play, examples of their work and the observations. These are given to parents when the children leave the group. In addition each child's progress is 'tracked' in order to clearly monitor and demonstrate their progress towards the early learning goals.

Children become active learners, as they are curious and keen to engage in activities. Children develop important skills for the future as they have ready access to a variety of mark making materials, such as paint and pencils, to foster pre-writing skills. Communication and language is promoted using books and the introduction of the 'Letters and Sounds' phonics system to help children learn to read and spell. Children have routine access to a computer to enable them to learn the purpose of information and communication technology. They enjoy using this facility, and quickly learn how to manoeuvre the mouse and operate simple programs.

Children benefit from and enjoy regular opportunities for physical exercise. They dance to music they create themselves with a wide variety of instruments, and clamber up and down the indoor climbing frame. They also have great fun in the garden peddling the bikes and building structures with large wooden bricks. However, the garden does not contain any apparatus of sufficient height or complexity to challenge and dare the older and more confident children.

Children's independence is promoted at snack time as the staff assist and support them to prepare the fruit and pour the drinks. Projects are carried with the children to develop their understanding of healthy eating. Children's health is further promoted as they learn about the importance of washing their hands at appropriate times. The clean and well equipped cloakrooms facilitate this. The group helps children begin to learn how to keep themselves safe. They talk about how the 'lollipop lady' is there to help them cross roads safely. Children also participate in regular evacuation drills from the premises and become familiar with what is expected of them, should an emergency arise.

The atmosphere within the group is calm, all children engage enthusiastically in their play. The structure of each session enables children to settle and feel comfortable as they know what is expected of them within the familiar routine. Children also develop good self-esteem and confidence as they learn social skills, such as sharing toys and taking turns. Staff manage any behaviour difficulties using age appropriate and positive strategies. Staff treat children with care and kindness, consequently, the children feel safe and demonstrate this by happily interacting with them as they learn, laugh and have fun together.

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