

# St Mary's Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	101569
<b>Inspection date</b>	02/12/2011
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<b>Email</b>	
<b>Type of setting</b>	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 Playgroup opened in 1986. The playgroup is run by a voluntary committee of parents and volunteers. It operates from one room in the Roman Catholic Church of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour. This is in the grounds of St. Mary's Roman Catholic Primary school in Churchdown. Children have access to a secure enclosed outside play space. The children attend from the local area. St Mary's Playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 42 children from two years old to four years old on roll. The playgroup provides funded early education for two, three and four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The playgroup supports children with special educational needs, physical disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. St Mary's Playgroup opens on Monday and Wednesday, for a pre-school session for three to five year olds, from 9am to 12.30pm. There is a pre-school session on Friday from 9am to 12 noon. The playgroup opens on Tuesday and Thursday, for a pre-school session from 12.30pm to 3pm. The playgroup opens on Tuesday and Thursday, for a rising threes session, from 9am to 11.30am. There are four staff employed to work with the children; of these, one has an early years qualifications at level 2, two have early years qualifications at level 3 and one has an early years qualification at level 4 or above. The playgroup receives support from the local authority.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Children are happy, confident, settle well and make good progress in their learning and development. The learning environment is safe, largely well planned with good resources within easy reach of all children. It generally positively promotes equality and diversity. The manager and staff have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and take effective steps to improve it. Leaders and managers communicate ambition and drive and secure improvement well. There are effective arrangements to safeguard children and promote their health and safety, including links with other professional agencies. Strong links with parents and carers help to involve them in their children's care and education, and they are kept well informed of their children's progress.

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

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

- enhance assessment methods to ensure children's future learning is consistently reflected within the weekly programme of activities

- enhance use of positive images in the daily environment, to promote children's awareness of difference and diversity.

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

Robust safeguarding procedures and strong recruitment strategies assess the appropriateness of staff working with the children. Staff fully understand their safeguarding responsibilities, so that children are protected and cared for in a safe and secure environment. Comprehensive risk assessments ensure effective actions are taken to minimise or eliminate risks to children and a designated health and safety officer ensures these are maintained. Self-evaluation involves the staff team and identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the provision well. Continuous reviews of the quality of the playgroup take place through consultation with children and parents. Leadership and management are confident about what the playgroup needs to do to improve further and have been successful in making and sustaining improvements. Staff are well deployed and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. An in-depth range of policies and procedures guide staff practice and are implemented effectively to promote children's health and ensure their welfare.

There is a strong partnership with parents, who comment very positively on the provision. Staff work closely with parents to settle children and ensure that individual needs are addressed effectively. Parents are included in the life of the playgroup. This is through newsletters, daily discussions, e-mails and notice boards. The notice boards display useful information such as the activities children have taken part in and the learning opportunities from these events. Staff show a good awareness and understanding of equality and diversity, enabling them to provide a service which is inclusive to all. For example, parents are invited to share information about their culture or religion within the playgroup. Thorough information is obtained from parents initially, when settling in, to ensure that staff are fully aware of and can meet children's individual needs. The centre has established strong links with school and effective liaison with other agencies supporting children with particular needs. Expertise can be shared with families requiring additional support. Resources and equipment are clearly labelled and allow children easy access. As a result, there are exciting opportunities for children to make choices and to take shared responsibility for their own learning and play. There is an overall stimulating and enabling environment created, both indoors and out, which promotes children's independent learning.

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

Children are happy and settled and understand the routines of the day. They demonstrate good levels of independence and a willingness to tackle self-chosen and adult-led play. The playgroup is attractively presented and offers a stimulating environment for children. Staff use spontaneous and focused observations

consistently to help in planning next steps, so that activities are appropriate to each child's stage of development. They record and track children's progress systematically. Carefully planned activities take into consideration the individual interests of children and offer new and interesting challenges across all areas of learning. However, assessment methods do not ensure children's future learning is consistently reflected within the weekly programme of activities. There are daily opportunities for outdoor play. Children are constantly praised and their achievements valued, helping them develop an understanding of expected behaviour, like being kind, sharing toys and taking turns. Children are highly motivated and interested in the activities and resources available to them, showing good levels of concentration and playing purposefully. Children behave well. There are good procedures in place to support those families with English as an additional language and input from other professionals has enabled staff to develop effective strategies, when managing children with additional needs. Young children's language is good. Staff model language thoughtfully, increasing children's vocabulary. For example, children repeat words being used by staff whilst drawing with chalks on the playground. Staff give praise as children use their own words and form simple sentences whilst playing on the computer. Children use language well to explain why they are undertaking their chosen activities. Staff help children to deepen their understanding and develop their explanations by effectively questioning. Staff appropriately and actively promote equality and diversity and tackle unfair discrimination. They identify a child's need for additional support as early as possible. However, there are limited resources to enhance children's awareness of equality and diversity through positive images in the daily environment. Children confidently recognise numerals and count when playing. Children count the animals in a book they are sharing with staff. Children use developing mathematical ideas well as they wrap parcels and count objects that they throw into the middle of a rubber tyre. Children enjoy number songs and rhymes. These enable them to experiment and practise their number skills with growing confidence. Children show delight in their play as the climbing frame becomes an imaginary pirate ship. The playgroup environment has resources that enhance the good development of children's skills for the future. For example there is a digital camera that children use to record activities. Children activate sound by pushing, pulling and squeezing toys. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them is promoted through engaging daily play resources. For example, clothes and dolls in the role play area.

Children's independence is promoted well as they decide for themselves which fruit to eat at snack time. They get a cup and pour their own water competently when they want a drink. Children confidently move around the setting choosing and directing their own play and learning because resources and activities are readily accessible to all. Children are supported effectively to begin to read and write through the use of visual signs, symbols, notices, numbers and words around the playgroup. There are attractive, well-resourced quiet areas both inside and outside for children to sit and make marks. Good hygiene practices are fostered. Snacks are nutritious. Children are confidently learning about how to keep themselves safe and take risks within a safe environment. Children have good opportunities for physical exercise outside using a range of high quality outdoor play equipment where they can improve their balancing, jumping, and climbing

skills.

## 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	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

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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	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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