

St Mary's Under Fives

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY432371
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Inspector Karen Prager

Setting address St. Marys C of E Infant School, George Lane,
MARLBOROUGH, Wiltshire, SN8 4BX

Telephone number 07593928949

Email

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*.

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Description of the setting

St Mary's Under Fives is a Committee run Community Preschool first established in 1964. Since September 2011 it has operated from a building within the grounds of St Mary's Infant School, which is located near the centre of Marlborough. It is close to shops and other amenities. There is an outdoor play area and the premises are accessed from street level. The setting is open daily from 9.15am to 11.45am, Monday to Friday, term time only. In addition afternoon sessions are run 12.15pm to 2.45pm as required. Currently there are afternoon sessions operating on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons. Children may attend a variety of sessions.

The setting is registered with Ofsted on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 28 children may attend at any one time. There are 59 children on roll, all are within the early years age range. The setting supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The setting is in receipt of funding for the provision of early education for three and four-year-olds. The setting employs six members of staff. One member of staff has Qualified Teacher Status, four have level 3 qualifications and remaining member of staff has a Swiss childcare qualification which is the equivalent to level 3. The group has had Bristol Standard accreditation since 2005 and receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The pre-school provides an inclusive learning environment that, overall, meets the needs of its children. Staff successfully work with parents and relevant professionals and provide a mostly stimulating learning environment for the children, enabling them to make good progress in their learning and development. Records are generally well maintained. The established staff team has a strong commitment to improving the provision and continually seeks to enhance the outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- strengthen procedures to make sure the suitability of all committee members is known and the documents relating to this are readily available for inspection
- extend the range of activities and resources available to provide children with rich and diverse learning and development opportunities in the outdoor environment.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

This well-established staff team managed the move to new premises successfully and are driven to make further improvements. Children's safety is a high priority. Risk assessment and daily checking procedures ensure that hazards are identified and minimised to keep children safe. The premises are secure and staff are vigilant to ensure that children do not come to any harm. Records are generally well maintained. Staff are cleared as suitable to work with children and appropriate action is taken to inform Ofsted of changes to the committee as required. However, procedures to follow through suitability clearances are not robust and the record of suitability is not regularly updated to be available for inspection. The pre-school environment is calm and conducive to learning. The premises are clean and well-maintained and equipment is of a high quality. Children play largely with the selection of toys set out for them, though they are able to request a change of resources. The provision outdoors is less well developed. This means that children who learn better when outside are not so well provided for, although they still make good progress overall. The well-qualified staff work well together as a team and are passionate about providing a high quality service for the children. Staff attend relevant training and link with local support services to ensure they are kept informed of current developments. They undertake ongoing detailed evaluation of the pre-school and have achieved external accreditation. They have been successful in making improvements since the previous inspection and have clear plans to implement further changes to raise the standard of the provision for the children.

Staff have a high regard for the individuality of each child and they provide an inclusive environment where each family is welcomed. The key person system is effective in supporting each child and positive caring relationships are developed. Staff identify a child'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 he or she needs. Partnerships with the school and other agencies are well established and make a strong contribution to the children's well being and achievement. Staff initiate contact with support services to ensure children receive appropriate support for their welfare and development. During the summer term staff from the school visit the setting and reciprocal visits are undertaken to aid a smooth transition when children leave the preschool.

The staff develop highly positive relationships with parents and carers. Parents views are welcomed and are periodically sought through a questionnaire. Parents speak very highly of the pre-school and its staff, and have identified one of its key strengths, which is the inclusive, knowledgeable staff team. Clear information is shared with the families before children start attending and notices in the pre-school are regularly updated. The on-going verbal communication is highly valued by both staff and parents. Many parents take up the offer of assisting in the pre-school and take this opportunity to read their children's developmental records. Parents regularly add to these with 'wow' moments recognising the achievements

their children make at home.

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

Staff working with the children have a good knowledge of the welfare, learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. Children make good progress. Staff observe and assess the children on a continual basis and record their progress in learning journals. Children engage mostly in free play using resources selected by staff. Some activities are planned and staff use their good knowledge of the children to help them develop further. Children are developing particularly well in their communication and language skills as staff spend much time talking with them. Children enjoy listening to staff telling stories and they watch closely as a member of staff acts out a familiar song and shows pictures of a variety of styles of bicycles. Children confidently make choices from the activities set out and can sustain interest for a considerable length of time. They are active learners and engage in the experiences available to them with enthusiasm. Children spend an extended time building with small construction blocks, supported by a member of staff, as they develop their model and a story line.

The vigilant staff support children in keeping themselves safe, reminding them as they climb that it is not safe and that they should be careful of others when using the tricycles. Through clear guidelines and excellent role modelling children come to know what is expected and their behaviour is exemplary. Prompt and appropriate care ensures that children's welfare needs are well met.

The daily access to outdoor play enables children to run and cycle with their friends. Children play together on the rocker knowing to stop moving to let their friend climb on. Routine procedures lead children to quickly understand that it is important to wash their hands before they eat. They are encouraged to blow their nose, and put the tissue in the 'germ bin'. They further develop ownership of their own health as they select a coat from the rack before they play outside on cold days. Children sit in a small group for snack with a member of staff and are supported in selecting pieces of fruit and pouring their own drink from a small jug. They receive praise when they attempt to put spread on their cracker and enjoy conversation and play with words.

Children play harmoniously together. Most children are confident showing good levels of self-esteem. Children arriving seek their friends and quickly settle to look at a book together, sharing their experiences of what they play with at home. They know, with some assistance, that jigsaws should be tidied away after they have been constructed so that there is space for another child. Children make good progress in developing the personal qualities that enable them to take personal responsibility for small tasks and develop skills for the future. Some steps are taken to raise children's awareness of sustainability as a paper recycling box is placed within the play room.

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

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| 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

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|--|---|
| 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

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| 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

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| 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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