

St Malo Under Fives Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 106223
Inspection date 19/06/2012
Inspector Ruth Thrasher

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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*.

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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 Malo Under Fives was registered in 1990 and is run by a voluntary committee. It operates from a purpose built Foundation Unit at Kingsbridge Community Primary school in the town of Kingsbridge in South Devon. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. It is open each weekday during term time from 9am to 3.30pm. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It may care for no more than 30 children from 2 to under 8 years; of these, not more than 30 may be in the early years age group at any one time. There are currently 74 children aged from two to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children who are learning English as an additional language. There are nine members of staff, eight of whom hold early years qualifications at Level 3 and one who has a Level 2 qualification. The pre-school provides funded early education for children aged two, three and four years.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children make excellent progress due to the dedication and hard work of an experienced staff team. Children's individual needs are extremely well met as they take part in a range of exciting and challenging learning opportunities indoors and out. Well-developed partnerships with parents and carers, the host school, Children's Centre and other agencies ensure high-quality support for children's learning and welfare. Strong leadership and management ensure that priorities for improvement, such as the ongoing improvement of the outdoor play area, are identified and acted on. Overall, the pre-school demonstrates an outstanding capacity to continue to improve.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- develop the potential of the outdoor area to enhance even further the opportunities for children's learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have an excellent understanding of how to keep children safe within the pre-school. There are robust procedures to ensure the suitability of adults working with children, including Criminal Record Bureau checks. All staff have completed

training in safeguarding, and the manager has completed training in safer recruitment. Thorough risk assessments, plus twice daily safety checks, ensure that children are safe on the premises and on outings. Highly effective procedures for nappy changing, collection of children, and visitors support children's excellent safety and well-being. The pre-school has an excellent range of very well-organised, good-quality resources, including many that promote positive images of diversity. The move into a purpose-built unit within the school has provided improved facilities for the children. The outside play area is easily accessible from the classroom, enabling children to move freely from indoors to outside. The pre-school has worked hard to enhance and develop the outdoor area, but the decking area is out of bounds at present because it is a safety hazard. Nevertheless, there is plenty of space for children to play outdoors. A strong management team drives improvement and ensures that action plans assess the impact of improvements on outcomes for children. For example, changes made to assessment following a recommendation at the last inspection were carefully considered and monitored. Staff regularly attend training and are keen to take part in new initiatives. Two staff have attended training on 'healthy early years settings' to enable the pre-school to undertake a quality award. There is a continuous programme of improvements and staff regularly review practice and update policies. The partnership with parents and carers is extremely effective. The pre-school provides a detailed welcome pack. Parents and carers are invited to become involved with the pre-school in different ways, such as sharing their interests and skills. One parent had visited to show the children her Olympic torch and others had helped develop the garden. An outdoor notice board provides lots of helpful information. It includes the focus areas for the week and ideas and activities to continue learning at home, such as rhymes to sing and books to share. Parents and carers are encouraged to share information about their child's achievements at home. They do this by talking to the child's key person and completing home-link sheets that include pictures drawn by their children. Parents and carers spoken to felt the pre-school was excellent and staff very approachable. Very good partnerships with the school, the local Children's Centre and other agencies provide excellent support for transition to school and any additional support needs. Staff are pro-active in establishing links with other early years settings the children attend. They share information about children's next steps and focus topics, which ensures continuity for the children. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive excellent support because the staff are experienced and committed to inclusion. Children with English as an additional language receive good support, for example books and labels are provided in different languages.

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

Children are extremely well engaged, active and happy at the pre-school. They thoroughly enjoy the opportunities to explore, experiment and initiate their own learning. They play indoors or outside as they choose, with an excellent range of activities to accommodate all interests. Outdoors, water play is particularly popular and children queue to fill their buckets from the tap. They build structures with guttering, tubes and funnels and discover how the water flows. Children develop

their mark-making skills effectively as they paint the shed with water and enthusiastically use the big brooms to sweep and make patterns on the ground. There are lots of opportunities to develop communication, literacy and numeracy skills in a range of activities. For example, children make lists of what they want to buy from the greengrocer's shop or post letters they have written and deliver them to friends. They talk confidently about shapes, colours and numbers as they play a matching game, learning to take turns to roll the dice. They use different technology resources, including computers, cameras and sound recorders, with confidence and develop excellent skills for the future. Children have great fun learning to make sounds and rhythms as they bang on a big steel bin and musical tubes. They learn about different textures as they play with a tray of gel and then make a bucket of 'slimy soup' adding flowers and grass. Children have many excellent opportunities to be creative, helping themselves to craft resources to make models to support their imaginative play as superheroes. They learn how paints change colour when they are mixed and make their own artists' palettes for a wall display. Children make excellent progress in learning about the world around them, for example by taking part in activities linked to the Jubilee and the Olympics, support guide dogs, and celebrate different cultural festivals. Staff use observation and assessment very effectively to ensure that the next steps in children's learning are clearly identified and that planning is based on children's interests. Staff are very well deployed to support children's learning, provide additional resources and challenge. For example, they have carefully considered the needs of both boys and girls and ensure there is provision for different learning styles. As a result, all children are included and make very rapid progress in their learning. Children learn to be independent and are very confident to make choices and decisions. For example, they come indoors when they are hungry, help themselves to food, pour their own drinks and clear away their plates and cups. Behaviour is exemplary as they are so actively engaged in their learning. Staff encourage them to share and be considerate of others. Children show an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles as each child automatically puts on a sunhat before going outdoors. They sing a 'washing hands' song and learn about germs and how to keep themselves safe. Children learn about 'people who help us' and enjoy a visit from the lollipop man to talk about road safety. They clearly feel safe and secure in the pre-school and are very enthusiastic learners.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
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	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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