

St Mary's Pre-School

Church Street, Ilchester, Yeovil, Somerset, BA22 8LW

Inspection date

21/11/2012

Previous inspection date

17/09/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

3

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend 2

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children 2

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision 2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Children are happy and confident because staff know them well, interact warmly with them and help them to feel secure and valued as an individual.
- A stimulating environment with a good range of resources offers children exciting learning experiences.
- Children's safety and welfare is successfully promoted by staff who are kind and caring.
- Partnerships with parents are strong, which further helps to support children's well-being and progress effectively.
- The newly appointed manager effectively develops the staff team through monitoring and evaluation.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Although children love listening to stories and looking at books, they have too few opportunities to share a wide range of books with each other in an inviting book area.
- Although staff plan a range of activities that encourage children to count, recognise numerals and talk about size and position, children lack opportunities to use mathematical language to extend their thinking.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities and interaction between staff and children.
- The inspector looked at selection of documentation, which included policies and procedures, planning and children's records.
- The inspector discussed the leadership and management of the pre-school with the manager.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.
- The inspector spoke to children and staff throughout the inspection.

Inspector

Michelle Tuck

Full Report

Information about the setting

St Mary's Pre-School has been registered since 1992. It is a committee-run group, which operates from a church hall in Ilchester, Somerset. The pre-school has sole use of the premises, which are accessed by a step. There is an enclosed, rear outdoor play area. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. There are currently 18 children on roll, aged from two to five years old.

The pre-school is open Monday to Friday, during term time only, from 9am to 11.30am, with a lunch club from 11.30am to 12.30pm. Afternoon sessions run from 12.30pm to 3pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. When there is the demand, this is extended to five afternoons each week.

The pre-school is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four. It cares for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The pre-school employs four members of staff, all hold or are working towards appropriate childcare qualifications.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- create an inviting book area by providing a cosy place for children to sit and share books with friends, and by providing a wider variety of books, such as fact and fiction books, child-made books and some simple poetry and song books
- extend children's understanding of number further by providing opportunities for them to combine and separate groups of objects, and by providing opportunities for them to use the vocabulary involved in adding and subtracting in practical activities and discussion.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children make good progress in their learning and development. This is because they enjoy an exciting range of activities, which successfully promote all areas of learning. Most activities and resources are attractively presented to children to encourage them to make independent choices, and which appeal to their interests. For example, children pretend to be builders as they use the tools in the toolbox to saw and mend the furniture. They use language well to negotiate their roles and sing songs as they go about their tasks. Children love to listen to stories. They join in with familiar phrases and initiate discussions about the story. They listen well and have a natural curiosity, asking meaningful questions such as, 'What does attitude mean?' However, there is only a small selection of books available to the children and these are not well presented. Also, there is nowhere inviting for children to share the books with their friends.

Children are excited by the new toys for the role-play area. They pretend to cook food with the new saucepans and have a picnic on the carpet with the pretend food. Children help themselves to pencils, scissors, staplers, and a hole punch to freely explore and make marks, practising their early writing skills. Children that struggle to hold scissors correctly are well supported by staff and are proud of the achievements they make when cutting out pictures.

Children have some good opportunities to develop their mathematics skills. They regularly count in routine activities such as the number of children present and confidently match the correct numeral. They use their fingers to show how many minutes left to play before tidy-up time, and they enthusiastically sing songs such as five little monkeys. However staff do not routinely extend their learning further. For example, children have too few opportunities to combine two groups or make simple calculations.

There are effective systems of observation and assessment so staff can monitor children's progress as they move onto the next stage in their learning and move onto school. The staff share children's starting points with parents when they start at the pre-school, and through daily discussions, parents can contribute information about their child's achievements from home. Staff make regular snap-shot and detailed observations of each child. They use this information, together with photographs and examples of children's work, to build an accurate picture of each child's abilities and to identify any areas for development. Children with any particular learning needs are also well supported during this process.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children show a strong sense of belonging in the setting. They are confident, settle well and develop very good relationships with adults and their peers. This demonstrates that they feel safe. Through good deployment of staff and high levels of interaction, children develop good self-esteem and the key person system helps children to form secure attachments.

Children learn about good hygiene routines and develop a strong sense of independence. They confidently talk to staff about the snacks they have brought to pre-school and which foods will help them to grow big and strong. They happily make choices and skilfully pour their own drinks.

Staff are very good role models because they are kind, caring and sensitive to the children's needs. Children's behaviour in the pre-school is good. They play cooperatively with one another, sharing resources and showing care towards the new or younger children within the group. Children rarely have to be reminded how to behave because they know the routines well and like to please the staff by following the rules.

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

Staff have a secure knowledge of the welfare and the learning and development requirements. Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding issues. They know the procedures to follow if they have any concerns regarding the welfare of the children in their care. They are familiar with the clear and comprehensive safeguarding policies and attend regular training to help keep their knowledge up to date and to support them in addressing any concerns. Written risk assessments and visual checks carried out daily, ensure all areas children use remain safe, and security is given a high priority. Children are settled and secure in the pre-school, they confidently interact with the staff and one another. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures, and ongoing appraisals ensure that all adults working with children are suitable to do so.

Partnerships with parents are very good. Parents speak very highly of the pre-school, commenting on vast improvements since the appointment of a new manager. Parents say that their children are very happy at the pre-school and the staff are very supportive. The manager is constantly trying new ideas to engage parents in their child's learning. This includes the provision of information sessions about the Early Years Foundation Stage for parents to gain a deeper understanding of how they can support their child more effectively at home. Staff appreciate the importance of working together with other settings and professionals. Systems to manage this are secure.

The newly appointed manager has implemented effective systems for self-evaluation, which highlight the pre-school's strengths and areas for development. The pre-school has made significant progress since the last inspection and has improved the learning outcomes for all children attending. By working closely alongside the staff team and committee, the manager has successfully implemented effective strategies to monitor the educational programmes. This ensures that all children's progress is monitored effectively.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready

		for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	143117
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	888185
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	18
Name of provider	St Mary's Pre-School
Date of previous inspection	17/09/2009
Telephone number	01935 849452

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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