

St Marks Christian Centre

St. Marks Church, St. Marks Road, CHESTER, Cheshire, CH4 8DE

Inspection date	07/11/2013
Previous inspection date	20/06/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	4
	Previous inspection:	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		4
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		4
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		4

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is inadequate

- Risk assessment procedures are ineffective and fail to successfully identify and minimise risks to children. As a result, children are not fully safeguarded.
- Children's progress is not well supported because staff have a poor awareness of the learning and development requirements. This results in activities which are not always well planned to provide sufficient challenge to children.
- Observations and assessments of individual children lack detail to enable staff to have an accurate understanding of what children need to do next. As a result, progress is restricted.
- Strengths and weaknesses of the playgroup are not effectively identified because the system for monitoring and reviewing the quality of teaching and learning is ineffective.
- Staff do not plan and prepare activities that are rich in text to help stimulate children's interest in words and identifying their name. Consequently, children's progress in communication and language development is limited.
- Daily care routines do not involve the children to develop independence or self-care skills in preparation for school readiness.

It has the following strengths

- Children are supported in their transition to school as staff have relevant links with schools children will move to.

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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children's activities throughout the session, both inside and outside.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation of children's activities with the manager of the playgroup.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation and other required documentation.
- The inspector spoke to children and staff during the inspection at appropriate times.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Lesley Bott

Full report

Information about the setting

St. Marks Playgroup was registered in 1974 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The playgroup is run by a committee of parents and the day to day running is the responsibility of the manager. It operates from St Marks Christian Centre in Chester. The playgroup serves the local area and is accessible to all children and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The playgroup employs eight members of childcare staff. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications; five at level 2 and three at level 3. The nursery opens Monday to Friday term time only. Sessions are from 9.15am until 12.15pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 27 children attending who are in the early years age group. The playgroup provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- review the risk assessment of indoor spaces to ensure that children's safety is not compromised. This is with particular reference to; gaining access to other parts of the building and the storage of staff and visitors handbags
- use information obtained from observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. Shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations to help children make the best possible progress in their learning and development
- develop appropriate supervision of staff to provide support, coaching and training in order to ensure that staff make accurate assessments of children's development to plan the next steps in their learning
- develop the educational programme to provide consistent, interesting and challenging experiences by; improving the effective teaching strategies to promote children's learning.

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

- enhance children's opportunities and experiences of self-care and independence by encouraging them to pour their own drinks and help to prepare the table for snack time
- develop the environment to provide opportunities for children to see and reflect on written words and text to promote their development in communication and language.

Inspection judgements

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

Generally, children have an enjoyable time at the playgroup. However, the quality of teaching is weak; observation and assessments are not effectively embedded into staff's practice and, as a result, this has an impact on children's learning experiences. This means that teaching techniques do not always engage and motivate children effectively to support and challenge their learning. Although some staff maintain a learning and development record for each of their key children, they do not link this to the planning.

Parents are beginning to be involved in their child's learning. They are asked about their

child's likes and dislikes when their child first arrives and helps staff in identifying baseline knowledge of where children are in their learning and development. A parents' workshop held in the summer allowed parents to come into the group for a stay and play activity. The session was based around play dough, which parents made with the children and later took home. Parents were given the recipe for the play dough to replicate at home with their child as a learning experience. Staff talk to all parents when they arrive to collect their children and share information about their child's activities. This helps to engage parents and develop consistency between home and the group.

Resources are set out on tables by staff, for the children when they arrive based around the areas of learning. However, activities are not sufficiently challenging or appropriately adapted for children's age and stage of development. As a result, children are not engaged and become bored and wander aimlessly around the room because teaching is ineffective. Older children begin to initiate their own play, with younger children following their lead, as they are not occupied adequately by the staff. This results in children playing hide and seek in pop-up tents and under the slide to amuse themselves.

Opportunities for children to develop effective communication skills are limited. Staff do not maximise conversation or offer running verbal commentaries to explain what is happening next in the routine of the day. This results in children not fully understanding what is happening and detaching themselves from the activity. For example, the parachute is brought out for a group activity, but only a small amount of children is interested or know what to do. As a result, more staff were involved in the parachute game than children, as others moved away. Tidy up time is not acknowledged as staff tend to move toys and equipment away to get ready for the next activity. Children's opportunities to gain an awareness of recognising and writing their own name are restricted. This is due to the fact that the environment is not rich in text. Although they have a display board where they put children's artwork on display, there are no resources available to the children for them to see and look at their name in print. As a result, this limits children's opportunity to gain skills for their next steps in their learning, such as starting school.

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

Children show by their actions and words that they feel safe. However, their well-being is compromised as the provider is not vigilant in keeping children protected. Risk assessment procedures are ineffective as staff fail to notice and understand the risk of leaving a door, which leads to the other part of the building, unlocked. This compromises children's safety as other users to the building are able to enter the playroom.

During snack times children enjoy a healthy option of fresh fruit and vegetables. However, staff do not make the most of the routine to develop children's independence and self-care skills. Children do not help to prepare the table for snack, staff pour their drinks for them and serve the food. When children go outside, staff without explaining to the children why, or allow them to have a go, put on their coats and hats. In addition, children are not supported by staff to understand the need to use tissues appropriately and have access to drinking water at all times as these are not available. This does not support the

children's understanding in why this is important for their health. These are some of the spontaneous learning opportunities that staff do not fully build on with children. Children show an understanding of the importance of regular exercise as they enjoy opportunities to engage in fresh air and physical activities daily. For example, they take turns for the bikes and enjoy taking the babies for a walk in the pushchairs.

A key person system is in place and parents are made aware of who their child's key person is. The group offers flexible settling-in sessions to parents to work on the individual needs of their children to promote their emotional well-being. As a result, transition from home to playgroup is managed smoothly. Staff's management of children's behaviour is adequate. A behaviour management policy is in place and children are able to follow simple rules to promote positive behaviour. For example, they take turns at sharing resources and treat each other with respect.

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

Children are not safeguarded as staff do not have an appropriate understanding of keeping children consistently safe from harm. Staff are clear about their duties and of the procedures to follow should they have any concerns about a child in their care. The safeguarding policy is displayed for parents and this ensures that they are informed about their child's welfare. However, due to a lack of supervision from staff, children end up under the table where staff and visitors to the playgroup store their handbags and coats. This compromises children's safety due to their access to hazards, such as personal possessions. In addition, the door from the playroom to access other parts of the building that is used by other users to the building is not locked. Consequently, children's safety is compromised. This means that a requirement is not met on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

Staff do not deliver the education programme effectively. As a result, support is not in place to maximise children's progress. Teaching is not particularly inspired and results in children who are not fully motivated or enthusiastic to acquire the skills to develop and progress as much as they could. There are systems in place to monitor and supervise staff practice and to plan for training; however, this is not effectively managed by the registered provider. As a result, weak aspects of learning and teaching are not being identified and challenged and some staff practice is poor. Adequate recruitment procedures are in place. Appropriate checks on adults are carried out to ensure that staff and students are suitable to work with children. An effective system for self-evaluation is not in place to help inform practice. As a result, strengths and weaknesses are not identified for the benefit of children and to ensure that they are able to make progress in their learning.

Partnership with parents is acceptable. Staff share information with them daily and are beginning to involve them in their child's learning. Parents spoken to on the day of the inspection state that they are happy with the provision and feel that they receive appropriate information from staff about their child's achievements. The manager is fully

aware of the importance of liaising with other professionals if necessary to ensure children's continuity of care if they attend more than one setting.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

To meet the requirements of the Childcare Register the provider must:

- ensure that the premises used for the purpose of childcare are safe and suitable for that childcare (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- ensure that the premises used for the purpose of childcare are safe and suitable for that childcare (voluntary part of the Childcare Register).

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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. 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 monitored and inspected again within six 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	305325
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	818741
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	27
Name of provider	St Marks Under 5's Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	20/06/2011
Telephone number	01244 675372

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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, which are usually the childminder's 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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