

St. Mark's Pre-School

St. Marks Church Hall, Guildford Road, Normandy, GUILDFORD, Surrey, GU3 2DA

Inspection date

19/09/2013

Previous inspection date

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

4

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

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

- Children are not fully protected as staff are not familiar with all required safeguarding, procedures, in particular the procedures to follow in the event of an allegation.
- Information about children's learning and development is not always shared with parents. This hinders parents from supporting children's learning at home and sharing relevant information with other professionals.
- The progress check for children age two is not shared with parents as required.
- Children's best interests are not fully promoted because systems for the induction and supervision of staff have not highlighted areas where staff need training and support.

It has the following strengths

- Children settle well in a warm and caring environment.
- Children participate in a wide variety of activities and particularly enjoy exploring and playing in the local forest.

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 had a meeting with the manager and spoke to staff.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day of inspection.
- The inspector observed activities and children playing indoors and outside.
- The inspector sampled records of children's learning and development records and other documentation.

Inspector

Heather Allen

Full Report

Information about the setting

St. Mark's Pre-School is a long established group which registered under its current private ownership in 2013. It operates from the hall of St Mark's Church in Normandy, Guildford. Children have access to grassed and concrete play areas, which include a wooden trim trail. The pre-school is influenced by Forest School principles.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register for children aged from two years. Sessions are from 9.15am to 12.15pm each weekday during term time. On Thursdays and Fridays there is an additional lunch club session from 12.15pm - 1.15pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early years education to children aged two, three and four years. It currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are learning English as an additional language. The pre-school receives support from the local authority and is a member of the Preschool Learning Alliance.

There are five members of staff working directly with children. The manager holds a degree in Early Childhood and Education. Two members of staff hold an early years qualification at level 3 and two are unqualified.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- establish effective systems to involve all parents in their child's learning and development by regularly sharing information with them
- ensure parents and/or carers are provided with a short written summary of their child's development in the prime area when a child is aged between two and three
- ensure staff have an understanding and knowledge of the safeguarding policy and procedures, in particular the action to be taken in the event of any allegation of harm or abuse
- establish effective systems for the induction and supervision of staff so they are clear about their roles and responsibilities, including with regard to child protection and sharing information with parents.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall, children are making acceptable progress in their learning and development. However, the system for giving feedback to parents about their child's progress is inconsistent and therefore not fully effective. There is no formal system in place, although many parents receive verbal feedback when they drop off and collect their children. Some parents are encouraged to support their child's learning at home, for instance by encouraging reading and counting. Other parents say they do not receive information about their child's progress and are not encouraged to do anything with their child at home. This lack of liaison hinders some children from benefiting from a consistent approach to their learning in both the pre-school and the home environment.

Staff have a sound understanding of the different areas of learning and stages of development. They carry out regular observations of children to assess their levels of achievement, interests and learning styles. They review and complete a summary of each child's progress at age two but do not always supply parents with details, which is a breach of a legal requirement. As a result, some parents miss the opportunity to learn about their child's development and lack knowledge of how they can continue to support their child at home. In addition, they are not able to share information from the progress check with other relevant professionals, such as health visitors. This limits the effectiveness of progress checks as it prevents parents and professionals from working together to support the needs of individual children.

Children quickly settle and gain confidence in a warm and caring environment where staff know them well. When children first start parents provide information about their child's interests, abilities and any special educational or medical needs. Staff use this information to plan activities and purchase resources that children will enjoy. For example, when children are interested in fire engines they purchase puzzles illustrating fire engines. Many of the resources have identifying labels. This helps children to locate what they want to play with and to learn to recognise familiar words. Children learning English as an additional language are supported because many of the labels are written in both English and their home language.

Parents are invited to attend settling in sessions with their child, giving them the opportunity to get to know their child's key person. A 'buddy' key person system is in place so that each child has additional support. Staff are attentive to new children and help them to make choices about what they want to play with. Parents comment that one of strengths of the pre-school is that 'they have a really wide variety of activities'. Children particularly enjoy nature walks and exploring the local forest.

Staff carry out regular observations of children and assess areas where children may need additional support. The pre-school participates in the 'Every child a talker' scheme to support children's language development. For example, staff identify that some children are not confident in talking in a group situation. Staff plan games designed to encourage children to interact with other children during group play. Children gain confidence as they

participate in sharing and asking games, such as asking each other to share and swap toys.

Learning activities are planned indoors and outside. Numbers are pinned on trees in the outdoor play area. Children become excited when they notice and call out the number they see pinned to a tree. Staff extend their learning by asking children what colour the number is. Children who are more competent in recognising numbers are given the role of leader of a small group of children so they can support other children in recognising numbers.

Parents are pleased with the support given to older children as they prepare to move to school. Children become familiar with their new school because they have opportunities to attend school assemblies and teachers from the local school come and visit. Staff prepare a detailed report about each individual child which gives a rounded picture of their abilities, stages of developments and areas they particularly enjoy. This report is given to their new teachers and parents so they are able to provide appropriate support for children during their move to school.

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

Staff are not familiar with the pre-school's safeguarding policy and procedures and do not know the required procedures to follow in the event of an allegation of serious harm or abuse. This places children at risk in the event of a concern.

Children are secure within the environment because robust security systems are in place. The outdoor play area is fenced and the front entrance is locked during sessions. A password system is in place to ensure the safe collection of children. Staff carry out a safety check of the environment before children arrive to ensure areas and resources are safe for play. Children learn to take responsibility for their own safety and know that it is not safe to run indoors.

Children benefit from regular opportunities to have fresh air and outdoor exercise. They can make choices about whether they want to play indoors or outdoors. Children learn about the local environment because they have regular outings to the local forest. Staff know the area well. They carry out a thorough risk assessment before the outing and discuss any potential risks with all staff. Children wear reflective vests and hold onto hoops when they cross the road. Children are kept safe because staff know which children they are responsible for and take appropriate resources with them, including a first aid kit, mobile phone and contact details of parents and carers. Children enjoy making bark rubbings and having outdoor picnics. They learn to work cooperatively together as they make dens out of sticks they have collected.

Staff are good role models and create a calm and friendly atmosphere. As a result, children behave well. Staff engage children's attention during registration time. Children learn to show consideration for others and quickly stop talking when prompted to do so. Children explain why it is important to share toys and not hold onto them for too long.

They concentrate as they participate in action songs. They understand and join in with the movements. For example, they clap their hands and stamp their feet when they sing 'If you're happy and you know it'. They become familiar with the different days of the week when they respond to questions about what day it was yesterday and what day it will be tomorrow. They learn about numbers as they count how many children are present, with some children counting up to 20.

Systems are in place to promote the good health of children. Staff are kept updated about any allergies and a record is kept of any medication given to children. Children are given appropriate support in the event of an accident because most staff have a current paediatric first aid certificate. Staff record accidents and injuries promptly and confidentially. They notify parents so they can monitor their child's health at home.

Staff teach children to make healthy choices about the food they eat. They can choose from wholesome items of food provided at snack time. Parents are encouraged to include nutritious food in their lunch boxes, such as small pots of cut-up fruit and vegetables.

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

Children have not been fully protected because the provider initially relied on checks and appraisals carried out at other settings to determine the suitability of some staff. The provider failed to instigate all suitability checks promptly when the pre-school was re-registered under sole ownership. At times children were left unsupervised with staff before the provider had instigated or received a Disclosure and Barring Service check. This is a breach of a legal requirement. The provider has now completed suitability checks on all staff. Ofsted is therefore not planning to take action at this time.

Staff are deployed well throughout the pre-school. They have a sound understanding of the different areas of learning and overall children make suitable progress. Staff are encouraged to improve their qualifications and qualification requirements are met. The provider has identified some areas where additional staff training would be beneficial, including training in how to support boys during play.

However, the provider does not have appropriate and effective arrangements in place for the induction and supervision of staff. Supervision is carried out informally whilst staff are working and no records are kept. This makes it more difficult to clearly evaluate the effectiveness of any staff training and highlight areas where staff need support. The provider has failed to identify that staff are not familiar with the pre-school's safeguarding policy and procedures, including the procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation of serious harm or abuse. This could place children at risk in the event of a concern. In addition, the provider has been unaware that staff have not kept all parents informed about their child's learning and development, including details of progress checks carried out at age two. This hinders staff, parents and other professionals from working together to provide children with consistent support.

The provider and staff are all involved on a day-to-day basis in evaluating practice within the setting. They involve children by identifying areas, which are well used by children and evaluating why children access some areas less frequently. Staff use these evaluations to change the layout of activities and reorganise resources so that children get the best use out of them. At the end of each term parents receive a questionnaire. This gives parents the opportunity to comment on any areas, which they would like improved or changed. As a result of parental requests for example, lunch-time sessions now last one hour to allow children longer to eat their lunch.

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 staff understand and are able to effectively implement the written statement of safeguarding procedures to be followed for the protection of children being cared for (compulsory part of the Childcare Register).
- ensure that staff understand and are able to effectively implement the written statement of safeguarding procedures to be followed for the protection of children being cared for (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	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 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 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	EY461229
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	909011
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	32
Name of provider	St. Mark's Pre-School Limited
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	07717 078435

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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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