

# St Marys Playgroup

Church Road, Stourbridge, West Midlands, DY8 2HQ

## Inspection date

22/09/2014

Previous inspection date

07/12/2009

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

**This inspection:**

3

Previous inspection:

2

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 3

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision 3

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision requires improvement

- Children benefit from an educational programme that is varied and stimulating. Teaching is good because staff provide many activities that encourage independent learning.
- Children are happy and confident within this welcoming environment. They form strong attachments with staff, which supports their emotional well-being.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. All staff know children and their families well. As a result, new children settle quickly because they receive warm and affectionate care.

### It is not yet good because

- The provider has not considered all associated risks when staff use hand-held electronic devices with access to the internet. Consequently, children's welfare and safety are not always ensured.
- Children are not effectively safeguarded because recruitment procedures are not robust enough to include information, such as references, to check all staff's suitability to work with children and their families.

## 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.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in all indoor areas used by children and the outdoor play areas, and carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to the manager, staff and children throughout the inspection and took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence and the suitability and qualifications of staff working with the children.
- The inspector looked at a sample of records and policies relating to children's welfare, health and safety.

## Inspector

Julia Galloway

## Full report

### Information about the setting

St Marys Playgroup was registered in 1989 and is on the Early Years Register. It is situated in a main room and associated facilities in the centre adjacent to St Mary's Church in Oldswinford, Stourbridge. The playgroup serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The playgroup employs eight members of childcare staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and two at level 2. The deputy manager holds Qualified Teacher Status. The playgroup opens Monday to Friday during term time. Sessions are from 9.15am until 12.15pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 43 children on roll who are within the early years age range. The playgroup provides funded early education for two- three- and four-year-olds and supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. It receives support from the local authority.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- improve safeguarding policy and practice, specifically relating to E-safety to make sure that procedures are developed to protect children, for example, when staff use hand-held electronic devices with access to the internet
- implement effective systems to ensure that all staff, and any other person who is likely to have regular contact with children are suitable to do so, for example, by ensuring key information, such as references, are obtained.

## Inspection judgements

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

Children are happy, settled and make good progress towards early learning goals during their time at the playgroup. This is because staff know children well and they prepare a good range of activities that interest and motivate them to learn. Activities are provided both indoors and outdoors that ensure children have opportunities to explore experiences across all areas of learning. Staff are deployed well, so that all children get the help that they need. For example, the playgroup have identified a member of staff to specifically support the younger children. This demonstrates the playgroup's commitment to helping all children to make progress given their starting points and capabilities. In addition to this, the playgroup has recently introduced a 'chatterbox group'. These sessions enhance children's confidence and abilities regarding language and communication through focusing on developing their speaking and listening skills. Children spend time in a small group twice a week taking part in planned activities. These specifically target speaking and listening skills. Consequently, all children get the help required to support their individual

learning.

Staff work closely with children at all times and skilful teaching guides and supports them during their play. For example, when a small group are playing with conkers in a den, a member of staff joins them and asks them about what they are doing. She then asks questions, such as, 'How many conkers have you collected?' She then extends learning for some children by asking additional questions, such as 'How many do you think are in the pot?' and 'if I add these do you have less or more?' This introduces and provides children with opportunities to use mathematical language during their play. Consequently, the children are fully engaged in what they are doing because they are interested in the activity. This means that they learn while they play and are acquiring key skills that will support them, in readiness for school. Children's next steps in development are routinely identified and staff use this information to plan appealing activities. Furthermore they adapt continuous provision that is set up for children each day by introducing new themes. As a result, children are engaged in purposeful play throughout the session because they are interested in the experiences that are provided for them.

The planning, assessment and observation system ensures that information about children's progress is clearly recorded. Each child's key person collates information about their progress into their learning journey file. This is shared with parents and carers on a regular basis to ensure that they are aware of the progress that children are making. Routine assessment summaries are produced each term. These provide parents and carers with a written summary of their child's development in each area of learning. This means that staff, parents and carers have information about children's progress to ensure that any gaps in learning are identified. The playgroup also works in partnership with outside agencies, who visit to provide advice and support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Consequently, all children are getting the help that they need.

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

Children approach staff and other children with confidence, which shows that they feel safe and secure. Good attachments between staff and children are evident and staff act as positive role models. As a result, children's behaviour is good and they play well together. The key-person system is embedded and all children have an adult who knows them well, which supports their emotional well-being. However, because managers have not focused closely enough on some elements of safeguarding practice, children's welfare and safety are not fully assured. Children benefit from spending time in this well-resourced environment where they have many opportunities to make choices about what they would like to do. This includes choosing when they would like to have a drink and a snack. Children independently access the snack area throughout the session. They select their mat and place it on the table before going to wash their hands. Once they have done this, they select from a variety of healthy foods, such as fruit and vegetables, that encourage them to eat a balanced diet. Although this area is monitored by an adult at all times, children are provided with opportunities to manage their own care needs. This means that children are learning routines that support them to lead a healthy lifestyle and keep themselves safe.

Partnerships with parents and carers are strong and they report that they feel involved in their children's time at the playgroup. Parents and carers have good relationships with staff and they are routinely invited to spend time with their children. They do this by attending special events or when taking part in stay and play sessions. This means that staff get to know children and their families well, which means that important information is shared. New children settle quickly because they get the individual attention that they need. Information about children's care needs is routinely shared between staff, parents and carers. Younger children are supported with toileting programmes to develop their independence. Older children show increasing levels of independence, which shows that they are gaining skills that will support their ongoing learning. Staff encourage children to think for themselves. For example, before children go outside staff say 'Do you think that you need your coat?' Children stop to consider this question before replying 'No, it's warm today'.

Children are provided with regular opportunities to play in the well-resourced outdoor area. In addition, staff plan other events outside, such as 'listening walks' when small groups of children explore the local area and are encouraged to take time to listen to the noises and guess what the sounds might be. This means that children have many opportunities to spend time in the fresh air and be physically active, which supports their all-round development. Established systems ensure that all medication is appropriately stored, accidents are recorded and parents or carers asked to sign to say that they have been informed. Staff have attended the required training, which means that they can safely administer first aid. This means that children's good health and safety are promoted. The daily routine provides children with a balanced programme of events and they readily follow instructions from staff. For example, they help to tidy away toys and prepare for the next activity.

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

Overall, management is effective in ensuring that all children make progress in their development in an inviting and stimulating environment. However, managers have not focused enough on the impact that the recent introduction of new technology, to support staff practice, has had on children's safety. All members of staff have been issued with a hand-held electronic device to record images and observations of children. These devices are connected to the internet and are also used by staff for personal use out of working hours. The managers have not considered all associated risks with regards to e-safety. They do implement an 'empty pocket' policy, which means that staff are not permitted to use their personal mobile phones within the playgroup. However, they have not considered that, when staff use similar equipment, children's welfare and safety are not ensured. In contrast, staff demonstrate that they have the required knowledge and understanding with regard to child protection. They can identify the signs and possible symptoms of abuse, which means that they would take appropriate action if they suspected that a child was at risk. All staff have had Disclosure and Barring Service checks carried out prior to working at the playgroup, and an induction process ensures that staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities. However, recruitment and vetting procedures are not sufficiently robust to ensure all information, such as references from

past employers, is obtained for all staff. This does not demonstrate thorough recruitment procedures to ensure children's welfare and safety.

Children are making good progress in their learning and development because the quality of teaching is strong. Staff demonstrate that they understand how to support children during play and they are motivated to learn as a result. Detailed planning and the observation and assessment system are effective because children are provided with an educational programme that supports their differing needs. The manager works directly with all children, which means that she has a good view of their progress and the playgroup as a whole. Monitoring systems identify individual children's strengths and weaknesses. This means that children who require additional support are identified. Staff encourage children to be independent by giving them encouragement and sensitive guidance. This helps children to be well prepared when they move on to school. There are good partnership links with local schools and detailed information is shared about individual children. This means that schools have all required information about children to support this important transition.

The playgroup works in partnership with a number of outside agencies to ensure that children and their families are well supported. For example, staff attend meetings and liaise with other professionals to share information about children and discuss ways to ensure that needs are met. Partnerships with parents and carers are good and they are asked to complete questionnaires to strengthen the self-evaluation process. The managers receive support and advice from the local authority, which helps them to identify areas for improvement. For example, they have begun to implement a new system for the performance management of staff. Managers carry out observations of staff working with children and discuss these observations as part of the line management process. This means that staff get support and coaching to continually improve their personal effectiveness.

## 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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	253938
<b>Local authority</b>	Dudley
<b>Inspection number</b>	864516
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	36
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	43
<b>Name of provider</b>	Elaine Pritchard
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	07/12/2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	07900 104490

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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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