

St. Mary's Pre-School

Lysander Road, Yeovil, Somerset, BA20 2BU

Inspection date	20/10/2014
Previous inspection date	02/12/2008

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
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

- Staff make good use of the well-resourced outdoor play area. This allows children to play in their preferred environment, and successfully promotes all aspects of children's learning.
- Staff maintain a safe and secure environment and supervise children closely at all times. As a result, children explore and play freely and safely.
- Children are cared for by consistent and caring staff, who work in close partnership with parents. As a result, staff meet children's individual needs well and form warm and trusting relationships with them.
- Management and staff strive to maintain continuous improvements in the successful development of the pre-school.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not consistently maintain all younger children's involvement when learning about numbers in some circle time activities, and as a result, these children lose interest.
- Staff do not consistently support children in learning how to use the tools they choose to further promote their exploration and creativity.

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 and the quality of teaching in the hall and outdoor play area.
- The inspector sampled children's assessment records and planning documentation.
The inspector held a meeting with the nominated person and manager; to assess
- the suitability and qualifications of staff, and management's knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager.

Inspector

Bridget Copson

Full report

Information about the setting

St Mary's Pre-school registered in 1992. It is a committee run group, located in the main hall of Holy Trinity Community Centre in the town of Yeovil, Somerset. Children are cared for in a spacious hall with access to toilets, a kitchen and store room. There is an enclosed outdoor play area to the side of the hall. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday, term time only, from 9.30am to 12.30pm. There is a lunch club until 2pm on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four-years. They support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are currently 28 children on roll in the early years age group. The committee employs six members of staff, who all hold early years qualifications.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop the organisation of circle time number activities to provide all younger children with appropriate levels of challenge to keep them more involved and learning
- support children more consistently in learning how to use the tools they choose to further promote their exploration and creativity.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have a good understanding of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They work closely with parents from the start by obtaining information about children's needs, home life, interests and developmental stage. Staff observe children's progress and emerging interests and use this information to assess their progress and to identify any gaps in children's learning. Staff plan activities each week, which stem from children's interests to help them progress in these areas. As a result, children make good progress in relation to their starting points. Staff successfully engage parents in contributing to their child's learning. Parents inform staff of children's on-going achievements at home, which staff record in a communication book to share with the team. Staff share children's assessments with parents at more formal meetings twice a year and provide them with the required progress check for two-year-old children. This helps to promote children's learning further.

Staff provide a good balance of free-exploration and organised activities, which capture

children's curiosity and encourage them to use their senses and creativity. For example, children used their hands, and chose tools and shape makers to squash and shape dough. Staff included scissors to encourage children to snip the dough and spatulas to scrape it up. Children copied staff, telling them 'look, snipped it' and created their own models, which they showed staff with pride. Most children join in the activities with excitement, choosing resources to create their own ideas. However, staff did not always help some children to use the equipment effectively, to help further promote their creativity. For example, some children did not know how to use the shape making tools or were unable to open the microwave door to 'cook cakes'. As a result, these children lost interest and moved away from the activity.

Children benefit from an exciting outdoor play area in which staff provide lots of learning experiences. Staff interact to extend challenges and support children in their exploration. For example, a group of boys worked together to build large-scale models, such as a transformer and shrinking machine. They took on roles using shovels to move leaves and mud away. They lifted and moved around tyres, wood and crates to build the models. Others used a trailer to move the leaf and mud mix to the model, while another used a water spray to add 'engine power'. Staff sensitively questioned and challenged children to help them consider how to solve construction problems and to talk about what they were doing. Children expressed how things felt, such as 'it's disgusting' as they picked up the leaf and water mix and engaged in a lengthy discussion about dinosaurs and what each one ate. This activity, created by the children, provided them with physical challenges, resources to create with and promoted their social development well. Staff stepped in to encourage children to express themselves and to re-call their knowledge. As a result, children engaged for a long period and benefitted from lots of learning experiences.

Staff help children to develop good early reading skills. Children choose books spontaneously for staff to read with them in the spacious book corner, which offers picture, story and reference books. Staff engage children successfully in stories using picture cards and props, which children use spontaneously and at whole group times. Staff use props to support children in learning about numbers. For example, staff used a caterpillar number line at circle time; they asked children to name the numerals, consider if it was the next number in the sequence and to count the number of dots to confirm the numeral. Older children engaged in this activity; they called out the numerals and exclaimed 'it's getting longer' as the number line developed. However, some younger children found this too challenging, and became distracted and lost interest. Otherwise, staff use mathematical language in children's play, counting in songs and stories, and commenting on the size of children's models so children learn about different mathematical concepts.

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

Staff provide a close and consistent team of key persons who know the children well. They work closely with parents and any additional agencies to meet children's needs and help them progress well. Staff welcome children warmly on arrival and settle them happily into activities. They provide close support and reassurance to less confident children. They

interact with interest and enthusiasm to engage children in play. As a result, children form close and trusting relationships with staff, exchanging affectionate cuddles throughout the day. This supports children well in the move between their home and the pre-school.

Staff help prepare children well for their future move into school. They promote children's self-confidence and independence with structured daily routines and encourage them to complete tasks for themselves. For example, children changed their shoes for outdoor play, put on their coats, managed their lunch boxes and found their own name labels. Staff support and include children equally to help them fulfil their potential. For example, staff personalise picture cards and use sign language to help children communicate well and to develop their social skills. Staff promote children's positive attitudes towards others well, by explaining the pre-school golden rules consistently. They use picture booklets to provide positive images linked to children's interests, sand timers and a 'who is next' board to encourage turn taking and sharing. As a result, children are happy and play well with one another.

Staff maintain a safe and secure environment in which children move freely between the indoor and outdoor play areas under close supervision. This allows the more active children to play energetically with the physical play equipment and run freely around the garden. Staff help children to dress appropriately for all outdoor play to keep warm and dry. They help children to learn about keeping safe through practical activities and guidance. For example, staff guided children not to use wheeled toys on the grass, not to run on the slippery stones and to carry scissors and tools safely.

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

Management and staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They have a secure knowledge of the correct procedures to follow if they have a concern about the welfare of a child. They are clear about their responsibility to safeguard children's welfare. Management implements secure vetting procedures to help ensure staff are suitable to work with children. The nominated person is clear about her responsibility to inform Ofsted of changes to the pre-school, such as to the committee. She has improved procedures further to ensure they successfully submit all relevant records to Ofsted. Staff keep children safe and secure by implementing daily checks and risk assessments. Management completes audits of all accidents and injuries to remove any potential hazards to keep children safe. These systems help staff to maintain good standards of health and safety.

Management and staff monitor and evaluate the quality of the pre-school provision successfully. The manager observes staff practice through working as a part of the team, and provides staff supervision sessions every half term and annual appraisals. This helps to monitor the quality of staff teaching and to ensure children are making good progress in their learning. Management support staff training needs to help them update their knowledge and skills and meet children's needs effectively. Management complete a self-

evaluation form, improvement plans and audits to drive improvements. As a result, they have implemented several changes successfully. For example, staff have improved the outdoor play area to extend children's learning potential. They have developed the planning and assessment systems to provide more challenges in child-led activities. Staff have also introduced a free-choice trolley. This holds a range of resources linked to children's interests, with photograph books for them to choose from the indoor and outdoor play resources. This all demonstrates management and staff commitment to drive improvements in the quality of children's care and learning.

Staff establish successful partnerships with parents who they provide with clear information about all aspects of the provision. Staff keep parents informed through daily communication, newsletters, e-mails, updates on their websites, and a summary board each day to show what children have been doing. Management value the views of parents and provide questionnaires to obtain their feedback. In response to parents' suggestions, staff have improved communication with them and invite all family members to attend play days and sessions. Parents provide lots of positive feedback; they state the pre-school is a fun and exciting place, where staff provide good communication and promote healthy eating well. Staff establish links with the other early years settings children also attend. They meet regularly with any other professionals involved in children's care and learning. This helps to promote children's needs consistently and well.

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

Unique reference number	143101
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	843120
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	28
Name of provider	St Marys Pre-School Committee
Date of previous inspection	02/12/2008
Telephone number	07906 674310

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance '*Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

