

St Mary's Playgroup

Friends Meeting House, Horse Fair, Banbury, Oxfordshire, OX16 0AE

Inspection date	11/12/2014
Previous inspection date	25/03/2009

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 complete a comprehensive system which records children's progress. This helps them to quickly identify and support any gaps in their learning. As a result, children make good progress.
- Staff have strong links with parents and families. This helps to build consistency in children's development.
- Staff strongly promote safety during children's play. This helps children to learn how to minimise risks.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not consistently use skilful questioning techniques to enhance opportunities for children to share their thoughts and ideas.

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 children's activities indoors and outdoors.
- The inspector undertook a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector had a discussion with the children, staff and manager.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day of the inspection and through written feedback.
- The inspector scrutinised a ranged of relevant documentation relating to safeguarding, suitability records, policies and procedures.

Inspector

Helen Porter

Full report

Information about the setting

St Mary's Playgroup opened in 1971. It operates from the Friends Meeting House in the town centre of Banbury, Oxfordshire. They have the use of a main playroom, kitchen and toilets. There are three outside play areas. The playgroup is open on Monday to Thursday from 9am to 3pm and 9am to 12pm on Fridays. They also offer an optional earlier start, on request, which starts from 8:30am. It operates during term time only. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register. There are currently 41 children on roll. They currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak several languages. There are six members of staff, five of whom hold qualifications in early years level two or above. They receive funded for early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. Ramps are in place to make the premises more accessible.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the opportunities for children to share their thoughts and ideas by asking even more skilful questions.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff complete a comprehensive system that records children's achievements and next steps in learning. They use observations and assessment sheets to monitor their progress. This helps them to quickly identify and support any gaps in their learning. Staff share detailed information with other settings and professionals such as speech therapists. This helps them to maintain support for children with individual development needs so that all children make good progress, given their starting points. Staff have strong links with all parents and families. They use initial and ongoing information from parents to update them on children's achievements at home. This helps staff to identify their next steps in learning. Staff skilfully include ideas to involve families. For example, staff send out 'home challenge' sheets. They share simple ideas, which help parents and children to share activities based around the playgroup's topics. For example, they did a survey to see how many different modes of transport they see on the journey to playgroup. Staff and children created a tally chart to display all of their findings to the parents. This all helps to build consistency in their learning and development. Parents state that they feel fully informed of their children's progress and know that they can share information at any time with the key person.

Generally, staff use many opportunities to build children's communication and language skills. They help to build children's vocabulary during play. For example, staff introduce

new words such as 'xylophone'. They teach children new songs to help them learn new words and build confidence in using their language skills. Staff ask children some skilful questions. For example, staff asked the children where apples grow and one child told the staff they grow on apple trees. However, staff do not always use these skilful questioning techniques consistently. This means that on some occasions staff miss chances to encourage them to express their own ideas and thoughts. Staff provide good opportunities for children to develop their physical skills. Regular outdoor play provides children with plenty of chances to get fresh air and exercise. Staff model how to rock on seesaws and play football with the children. They lead music and dance sessions inside, which encourage children to move and coordinate their bodies. For example, children learn to hop on one leg.

Staff deploy themselves well and they demonstrate a competent ability to follow child-led play. They provide a wide range of activities that are all easily accessible to the children. This encourages them to follow and develop their own interests. Children choose to play in well-equipped role-play areas or have quiet times in the cosy corner sharing books with staff and each other. Staff offer plenty of opportunities for children to use technology. For example, children sit in pairs and create pictures on the computer. Staff display ample resources to encourage children to use mathematics in their play. For example, children use measuring tapes to measure the length of their toy cars. They also spontaneously include adult-initiated activities at times. For example, leading group times to introduce shapes and numbers of the week. This helps them to teach children about numbers as they count and recognise numerals and learn shape names.

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

The key person system is well organised. Staff are welcoming and friendly, which helps children to form secure attachments. All children behave well because staff implement the clear rules and boundaries consistently. Children are extremely polite. They say thank you to others as they pass bowls of fruit around to each other at snack times. Staff actively recognise children's efforts and achievements, and take time to praise and encourage them. This builds the children's confidence effectively and helps them to develop a strong sense of right and wrong from an early age.

Staff strongly promote safety through children's play. This helps children learn how to minimise risks. For example, when talking about colours, children said, 'Green means go.' Staff used this as a chance to extend their knowledge of road safety. They asked what the red traffic light indicates. Other children showed further understanding of road safety. They told staff about zebra crossings and when it is safe to cross a road. Staff also remind children to take care when kicking balls outside to help to build their awareness of safety for others.

Staff promote healthy lifestyles well. They share information with parents to promote the inclusion of healthy options in the children's lunch boxes. They provide a wide range of healthy snacks such as slices of apple and raisins. The playgroups website also encourages parents to provide healthy lunches and snacks. Staff encourage children to

wash their own hands before they eat, which helps them to develop good hygiene practices. During snack times, staff divide children into their key groups so that they can continue to observe their development over mealtimes. They sit with children talk about the types of food that are good for them. They talk about where these healthy foods come from to extend children's knowledge. Staff use this opportunity to focus their next steps in learning so that they are consistently supported. Staff ask children to collect the cups; this helps to develop their independence. They provide water or milk and encourage the children to pour their own drinks. Staff encourage children to pass the bowls of fruit around the table to serve themselves. This all helps to develop their self-help skills.

Staff develop good links with other settings such as local primary schools. This helps to support children moving on to schools or other settings. For example, staff find out which schools children are moving on to. They make contact with the relevant teachers, offering to share information. They also invite them to the pre-school setting. This helps the teachers to meet the children in an environment where they are already safe and secure.

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

The leadership of the playgroup is good. The management team have a strong understanding of the learning and development requirements. They monitor the educational programmes closely and meet with staff regularly to evaluate the planning and track children's progress. This provides them with good opportunities to quickly identify and support any gaps in children's learning.

Staff and the management team have a secure understanding of their role and responsibilities about reporting safeguarding concerns and the local procedures. They clearly state signs that would cause them concern about a child's welfare. They know who to contact to seek further advice and support. Staff carry out daily checks on all areas of the premises and activities within the pre-school and when planning outings. This helps to keep children safe.

The manager and the playgroup committee implement a robust recruitment and vetting procedure for new staff and any volunteers. This process checks their suitability to work with children. Staff undertake an induction, where the manager shares the playgroup's policies and procedures, job description and their routines. This helps them to learn about their new roles and responsibilities. The manager carries out termly supervision meetings with staff, to identify future training needs and to monitor the quality of their work. The manager selects a mentor for each member of staff to support them in areas identified in peer observations and supervision meetings. This helps to give ongoing support to staff.

The manager uses strong self-evaluation systems to continue to improve the quality of the provision. She clearly identifies strengths and areas for development accurately. She makes good use of local authority early years audits to help to make sure that she is meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. She completes effective action plans to show how she will put improvements in place. The manager seeks the view

of parents through regular questionnaires and feedback books. Parents state that staff are friendly and help children settle in well. They say that their children are growing in confidence and are happy at the playgroup.

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	133606
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	840994
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	42
Name of provider	St Mary's Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	25/03/2009
Telephone number	07930 122736

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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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