

St Mary's Under Fives

St. Marys C of E Infant School, George Lane, MARLBOROUGH, Wiltshire, SN8 4BX

Inspection date	14/01/2015
Previous inspection date	19/01/2012

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	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		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

- Teaching is consistently of a high standard. Staff provide a broad range of interesting and worthwhile activities and experiences so that children are eager to join in. As a result, children make very good progress overall.
- Staff support children's speech development particularly well, including those whose home language is not English.
- Children behave exceptionally well. Staff work closely with parents to provide a positive and consistent approach so that children understand what is expected of them.
- Staff routinely assess children's development and promptly identify when children are achieving less well than expected. They work closely with parents and outside professionals to ensure children receive the support they need.
- Staff reflect deeply on their practice and use effective methods to evaluate all they do. They involve the committee, staff, parents and children to help identify priorities for continued improvement.

It is not yet outstanding because

- When planning activities, staff do not always focus sharply enough on individual children's interests and what they need to learn next.
- Staff do not routinely share information with other settings that children attend to ensure a consistent approach to teaching and children's learning.

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 staff and children involved in activities during indoor and outdoor play, and spoke with both at appropriate times.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager and a member of the committee.
The inspector looked at documents, including children's records, planning, and a sample of policies, the self-evaluation record, the quality accreditation scheme and evidence of staff suitability to work with children.
- The inspector took account of the views of several parents spoken to on the day and from pre-school questionnaires.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager of an adult-led activity.

Inspector

Rachel Edwards

Full report

Information about the setting

St Mary's Under Fives is a committee run community pre-school first established in 1964. It operates from a building within the grounds of St Mary's Infant School, which is located near the centre of Marlborough. There is a playroom, entrance lobby, toilets and kitchen, and an enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school is open every weekday during term time only. Sessions are from 9.15am until 2.45pm on Monday to Thursday, and from 9.15 until 11.45am on Friday. Children may attend a variety of sessions. The pre-school is registered with Ofsted on the Early Years Register. It cares for children from two to five years of age. There are currently 50 children on roll. The pre-school supports a small number of children who are learning English as an additional language and a small number who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. The pre-school employs seven members of staff. All staff hold early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including one member of staff who has Qualified Teacher Status. The pre-school has held a recognised accreditation since 2005.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop effective links with other settings that children attend to provide greater continuity in children's learning

- develop the system of planning further so that it stems more clearly from individual children's interests and what they need to learn next.

Inspection judgements

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

Children make very good progress overall because staff have a secure understanding of how to encourage and support children's active learning and creativity. Staff spend time observing what children can do which enables them to identify what children need to learn next. Staff plan interesting and varied activities and experiences, often based around a central theme, which support all areas of learning. However, plans do not always focus sufficiently on how staff will support individual children's next steps in learning. For example, staff have not included in their planning how they will help shy or quiet children develop the social skills they need to play and interact with others. This means that occasionally staff do not help children progress as well as they could.

Staff know the children very well. Before children start, staff gather a wealth of useful information from parents. This helps them gauge children's starting points so they can monitor their progress from the outset. Staff routinely observe and assess children's development and quickly identify when a child is making less progress than expected. Staff work closely with parents. They are pro-active in securing additional support children need to help them catch up. Staff contact other settings that children attend and invite them to share information. However, they are not always successful in establishing important links to ensure continuity in children's care and learning.

Teaching is consistently of a high standard, and staff successfully engage and support children in their self-chosen play or adult-directed activities. For example, staff encourage children to think critically as they try to complete a puzzle, looking at the picture and rotating pieces. Following a child's interest in drawing and decorating a favourite toy, staff developed the activity into clothing and adding features to cut-out people. Staff took every opportunity to interest and extend the children's learning. Staff helped them choose appropriate materials so that everyone had the satisfaction of successfully cutting what they needed. Children practised counting as they added the eyes and nose. Staff engaged them in interesting conversations as they compared each other's eyes and noticed that most had blue eyes. Children are developing their mathematical understanding well as they count, sort, measure and estimate.

Staff have received specialist training in supporting children's communication and language. They focus on this area having noticed that a high proportion of the children have delayed speech when they start. Staff effectively use their training to help children make particularly good progress in this area. Staff follow a recognised programme of activities to promote children's pre-linguistic and communication skills. In addition, staff have received training to use sign language. They have embedded this firmly into their practice, and children and staff use it throughout the day. Both these initiatives help children communicate better, including those whose home language is not English, and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Staff encourage children to be highly independent when they are at the pre-school. They readily find resources they need and have a go at things themselves before asking for help. They may choose to play outside throughout the session, which especially benefits children who learn better outdoors. On a cold day, children busily sweep up the snow. They use magnifiers to look closely at ice crystals and are delighted to discover they stick together to make tiny snowballs. Staff help children gain the skills they need to start writing, encouraging them to make marks in different ways. Children use sticks in mud, as well as pens and paper, and many other materials, such as shaving foam and corn flour 'gloop'. Older children are keen to have a go at writing their name on pictures or taking notes in the pretend hospital. Children are active learners, highly motivated and able to listen well to others. These skills prepare them well for school.

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

Staff place a high priority on ensuring all children feel happy and secure in this welcoming pre-school. Staff reflect children's differing backgrounds, communities and family lifestyles so that parents and carers feel valued as well. Displays reflect all the languages spoken by families attending, including guidance on correct pronunciation. Staff arrange effective settling-in periods when staff, children and parents get to know each other very well. Staff create a very happy atmosphere, laughing and smiling with the children as they enjoy their play. Daily routines help children develop their personal independence, for example, using the toilet independently and putting on coats to play outside. This helps prepare children so they are ready for the move to school. Staff have excellent links with their host school, where most children will attend. They share detailed information with this and other local schools and spend time preparing children and parents for the new environment and routines.

Children gain a good understanding of the importance of making healthy choices. Staff encourage them to be physically active every day and sensitively encourage those who are reluctant to play outside. Staff provide a choice of healthy snacks, and children help grow fruit and vegetables, which encourages their interest in healthy eating. Staff use snack time to develop children's independence and social skills. Children learn to use knives safely as they cut fruit and spread crackers. They learn about capacity as they pour their cups full or half-full. Staff use the social occasion to chat with children, for example, they talk animatedly about the recent snowfall and discuss the danger of slippery paths.

Staff have created an environment where children have ample opportunity to explore and develop their own play. Staff have labelled resource boxes with words and pictures so that children know where to find things and put them away. The well-ordered environment encourages children to take care of resources and play safely. Staff help children to recognise and manage risks as they play. For example, they decide together that some areas of the playground are too slippery to play on after the snow. They help make other parts safe by sweeping away the snow. Children's behaviour is excellent. They learn from the staff, who are kind and respectful to all. Children share and take turns amicably, mostly without intervention from staff and they understand the rules and routines of the pre-school very well. Children are friendly and sensitive to other's feelings. They are learning to cooperate and value one another's ideas and achievements. These are valuable life skills. Staff support children's growing confidence and self-esteem through frequent praise, encouragement and celebration of their achievements.

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

The management committee, pre-school manager and staff have a thorough understanding of their responsibility to meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements and do so in full. Staff undertake regular child protection training, senior staff at a more advanced level, to ensure they maintain their high level of understanding. They all know how to respond should they have concerns for a child's welfare, including working with external agencies. The management team follow rigorous recruitment and induction procedures. These ensure the suitability of new staff and make sure everyone is aware of

their role and responsibilities within the pre-school. Staff ensure that all aspects of the pre-school provide a safe and suitable environment for children. Their thorough risk assessments extend to outings beyond the pre-school. Staff work exceptionally well together to ensure they supervise children effectively and keep them safe at all times.

The manager and her staff have a very good understanding of what children need to learn and how they can support this. They work very well together, combining their skills, knowledge and experience, and as a result, children make very good progress. Staff constantly monitor and evaluate the educational provision to ensure children experience a broad and stimulating range of activities across all areas of learning. Staff are highly reflective and support one another by informally observing each other, and offering ideas to improve their practice. They have recently introduced a system for sharing observations on children to ensure all staff are fully informed about their key children. One member of staff is shortly to attend training on using observations and assessments in planning as they have identified this as an area for development. Staff regularly attend training that is chosen to support their on-going professional development and to be of greatest benefit to the children. Training to support children's language communication has been highly effective in improving children's speech development.

A voluntary committee of parents supports the strong, experienced staff team effectively. Both staff and committee strive to meet the aims of the group and maintain continuous improvement of the pre-school. They have achieved the high standards required of a recognised accreditation scheme. This helps them identify priorities for improvement and produce a well-focused plan to ensure they successfully achieve these. The manager motivates her staff to do the best they can. They regularly discuss, share ideas and effectively review their practice. Consequently, the pre-school continues to evolve and improve.

The manager and staff work very well in partnership with a wide variety of external professionals, enabling them to provide well-planned, targeted support to children and families. However, arrangements for sharing information with other providers caring for the children are not fully developed to enable continuity in children's learning. Partnerships with parents are strong and staff keep them well informed of their child's progress, well-being and the activities they enjoy. For example, parents receive regular newsletters from staff, meet regularly with their child's key person and attend meetings. In addition, staff encourage parents to help during sessions, when they can see first-hand, how their children learn. They may also help with the management by serving on the committee. Parents generally speak very positively about the pre-school. They especially appreciate the support given to children with identified additional needs and the expertise of the friendly staff.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
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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	EY432371
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	823780
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	50
Name of provider	St Mary's Under Fives Committee
Date of previous inspection	19/01/2012
Telephone number	07593928949

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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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