

St Marys Playgroup

St. Marys RC Primary School, Cheltenham Road East, GLOUCESTER, GL3 1HU



Inspection date

5 May 2015

Previous inspection date

2 December 2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Good	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Good	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Good	2
The setting meets legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Staff provide a safe, welcoming learning environment and a wide range of enjoyable activities and interesting experiences to support children's learning through play.
- Staff have good teaching skills and use them effectively to enable children to make good progress in their learning and development.
- Key persons know children for whom they take special responsibility well, and accurately assess their development. They use the information effectively to plan what children need to learn next, and this process supports the good progress they make.
- Children develop a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle through the strong emphasis the staff place upon this aspect of their development.
- The manager and staff work together well as a team, and effectively identify how they can improve the provision made for the children by devising appropriate plans.
- The manager has developed a very strong partnership with the primary school that helps prepare children well for the time when they will transfer there. There are good links established with other professionals who ensure children get the particular support they need.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff have not yet developed a complete programme for literacy that enables children to learn letter sounds of the alphabet when ready to do so.
- Staff do not engage all parents in children's home learning such as by keeping them regularly informed about specific activities the children undertake so these might be followed up at home.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the programme for children's early literacy development through supporting their early reading skills by providing opportunities for children to learn letter sounds
- extend ways of working with parents to involve all in their children's home learning, such as providing more regular information about the activities planned for children.

Inspection activities

- The inspector spoke to the staff and children, and talked about the activities undertaken.
- The inspector held discussions with parents and took account of their views, and in particular the communication between them and the staff.
- The inspector viewed a sample of the playgroup's documentation.
- The inspector made a number of observations of activities, including undertaking a joint observation with the manager. The inspector viewed the spaces, toys and equipment for children to use, including those outside.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager, which covered methods for checking children's learning and progress, and for evaluating the quality of the provision.

Inspector

Edgar Hastings

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is good

Staff plan together and provide a variety of activities and topics that cover all areas of learning well. They plan experiences that meet children's individual needs. These help children to reach the stages of development typical for their ages. Learning through play underpins the good progress children make. Skilled staff enable children to use their imaginations such as when they concoct, 'magic potions' in the sand area. Staff focus well on the development of children's communication skills through stories, rhymes, conversations and discussions. Children develop confident handling skills as they manipulate modelling materials. They produce attractive designs through cutting and sticking a variety of media, and begin to develop early writing skills. Children show confidence in counting through the regular opportunities provided to count for a variety of purposes. They recognise and can name some of the two-dimensional shapes they see around them in the playgroup environment. Such activities help children gain key skills for school. Staff keep parents well informed about their children's progress and the topics they undertake.

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

Staff provide a good level of care for children. They make sure children settle well, are happy and enjoy what they are doing. Children form strong relationships with all staff as well their designated person. Children develop independence because staff have high expectations and teach children to do things for themselves. Staff provide a very positive ethos in which children learn to respect each other, and share and work cooperatively with others. Children learn to use 'walking feet and careful hands'. They behave well as adults are good role models for the children. Children learn useful self-care skills through the daily routines. All this helps to prepare children well for the future.

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

Staff work together well as a team. They have a good understanding of the learning and development requirements. They fully understand their responsibilities in meeting children's individual needs. Staff meet their responsibilities regarding safeguarding and welfare effectively. The manager regularly monitors the quality of teaching, and provides training opportunities for staff to further develop their knowledge and understanding. These include courses on identifying autism, and on speech and language support. The issues from the last inspection have been addressed, which has much improved the effectiveness of assessment and children now have many opportunities to learn about people and their communities. These improvements have helped maintain the good quality of the provision, including teaching.

Setting details

Unique reference number	101569
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	835613
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	41
Name of provider	St Mary's Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	2 December 2011
Telephone number	07749713742

St Mary's Playgroup opened in 1986 and registered with Ofsted in 2001. It is located in the grounds of St. Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School in Churchdown, Gloucester. The playgroup provides funded early education for children aged two-, three- and four-years-old. St Mary's Playgroup opens during school terms on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9am to 11.30am for children aged under three years, and on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 9am to 3pm for pre-school sessions for three- to five-year-old children. There are four staff employed to work with the children. Of these, the manager has an early years qualification at Level 4, and the other three staff have relevant qualifications at Level 3.

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