

St Mary's Playgroup

C/O St Mary's Primary School, Orchard Place, FAVERSHAM, Kent, ME13 8AP



Inspection date 18 March 2016
Previous inspection date 14 May 2015

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Requires Improvement	3
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Staff provide a good range of toys and activities for children to play with, both inside and outside. They encourage children to make their own choices and this helps motivate them to learn and make good progress.
- Staff work well together and are good role models for children. For example, they say please and thank you to the children and give them positive praise.
- The effective key-person approach helps children to settle effectively. Children are happy and settled, and build good relationships with staff and each other.
- Children learn about healthy lifestyles. For example, they taste different nutritious foods for snacks and regularly take part in walks and physical exercise outdoors.
- Partnerships with parents are very good. Staff share children's progress with parents regularly and keep them informed about the playgroup activities.
- The manager is committed to the development of the playgroup and uses self-evaluation well to help identify and address weaknesses. This helps her and the staff promote good learning outcomes for children.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- The existing performance management of staff does not fully support them to identify further ways to challenge children more and provide exceptional teaching.
- Staff have not fully considered how to extend children's early reading development and their interest in stories further.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- strengthen further the performance management of staff to help them achieve high levels of teaching and to continuously challenge children
- extend children's interest in stories and print to promote their early reading development even further.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed staff and children interacting together both indoors and outdoors.
- The inspector spoke to staff and children, and held a meeting with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to parents to gain their feedback.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector looked at a sample of documents, including evidence of staff suitability, children's records and policies.

Inspector

Caroline Gibbons

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The new manager is motivated and works closely with the committee and staff to evaluate the playgroup and make positive changes. For example, she improved the environment for younger children and extended the creative area for all children to explore resources independently. Staff monitor children's development effectively to plan their next steps in learning. The manager uses this information well to track children's ongoing progress to help those children who need to catch up with their peers. Safeguarding is effective. Staff update their knowledge regularly and understand the process to follow if they have concerns about children's welfare. Overall, the manager provides good support and training to staff to help improve their teaching practice. There are links with other settings that children attend to share relevant details.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff have a good understanding of how children learn and know when to join in and extend their play. For example, they enthusiastically encouraged children's interest in spiders to make a web with a range of materials. Staff support children's developing language well. For example, they introduced new words, such as 'concrete' and 'cement' as they built with bricks. They help children remember and talk about past activities, such as pancake making. Children enjoy a range of activities that develop their physical skills, such as climbing, sliding and playing hopscotch. Staff promote number recognition well; for example, children match numbers in the sand to the number line. Good use is made of extra funding to provide resources that encourage children's learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Staff give a high priority to children's well-being and are sensitive to their individual needs. For example, each child's key person attends to their personal care and positively bonds with their key children. Staff teach children the rules of the playgroup and encourage them to be responsible for their own safety. For example, they remind children about turn taking and explain how to take care on the climbing structure to minimise the risk of accidents. Staff promote good hygiene routines effectively. For example, they remind children to wash their hands before snack time and after using the toilet or blowing their nose.

Outcomes for children are good

Children are confident and prepared well for school. For example, they learn to recognise their name and to put on their own coats and shoes. Children confidently gain skills in using technology, for instance, as they competently use the computer and mouse. The older children enjoy practising their mathematical and early writing skills. For example, they found out the interests of other children and used the information to create a chart.

Setting details

Unique reference number	127606
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	1015634
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	40
Name of provider	St Marys Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	14 May 2015
Telephone number	01795 536803

St Mary's Playgroup registered in 1985 and is in Faversham, Kent. It is open Monday to Friday from 8.45am to 11.45am and from 12.30pm to 3.30pm, during term time only. There are eight staff members, five of whom hold appropriate early years level 3 qualifications and the manager has a Foundation Degree in Early Years. The playgroup receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

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