

Ilchester St Mary's Pre-School

Church Street, Ilchester, Yeovil, Somerset, BA22 8LW



Inspection date

21 October 2016

Previous inspection date

10 November 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

- The chair and committee members have worked well with the manager to make necessary improvements. Together they have introduced a number of changes that have improved the care and education children receive.
- Children make good progress because staff provide interesting activities and play opportunities.
- The pre-school has a cheerful atmosphere. Children come into the room eager to play and happy to see others.
- Children demonstrate warm relationships with staff and often seek them out for a reassuring cuddle.
- Children of all ages demonstrate excellent listening skills. They pay attention to what staff and other children have to say during circle time, for example. This helps children to be ready for school when the time comes.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Leaders do not check the quality of teaching often enough for all staff. Some monitoring processes are quite new and have yet to have the desired impact. Activities such as staff observations are not used effectively enough to influence rapid improvement in all teaching practice.
- Systems to check and improve children's progress are not working as well as they could. Staff do not have an accurate overview of whether boys do better or worse than girls in their learning, for example.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- improve the quality of teaching by increasing the effectiveness of support given to all staff, including observation and feedback
- monitor the progress made by groups of children and take effective steps to reduce any gaps in their learning so that all fulfil their potential in their learning and development.

Inspection activities

- The inspector spoke with children, parents and staff.
- The inspector observed children playing and learning indoors and outdoors.
- Inspection activities included a joint observation with the manager and a review of key documentation.
- The inspector checked the pre-school's record of DBS checks.
- The inspector met with the chair of the management committee and the pre-school manager to discuss the leadership and management of the setting.

Inspector

Susan Mann HMI

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

Safeguarding is effective. Staff know what action to take if they have concerns about a child's safety or welfare. The manager and committee chair provide strong support and challenge to make sure child protection procedures are properly considered and implemented. The pre-school keeps up-to-date with child protection matters. Leaders work effectively with local authority advisors to discuss any change to policy and its impact on practice. Recruitment procedures are thorough to make sure only suitable persons work at the pre-school. Leaders review the setting's practice and take action to improve what is not working well enough. Staff attend training which makes a positive difference to children's experiences at the setting. For example, staff attended training on creating purposeful environments and then implemented a number of changes: these have improved the layout of the pre-school room.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff know the learning needs and interests of individual children well. Assessments accurately reflect what children can do. Staff use this information to structure planned activities. For example, children developed their mathematical understanding through a painting activity where they used cars to trace over written numerals. Staff encouraged children to recognise numbers and count up to 10. The activity was planned because staff know these children enjoy playing with vehicles and paint. Changes to some key person arrangements have led to significant improvements in the overall quality of teaching and assessment. The environment helps children to learn and explore. For example, younger children develop their confidence and physical skills by climbing and sliding when outdoors.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children behave well. They are kind to one another. Older children show high levels of respect and consideration to younger children present. For example, an older child makes space for a much younger child when playing with building blocks on the floor. Plenty of opportunity to run around in the fresh air and nutritious snacks help children to stay fit and healthy. There are effective partnerships between the pre-school and home. Parents and staff share lots of information about what children do in the setting and at home via daily diaries, assessment information and discussions, for example. Parents report they feel very well-informed about their child's learning and welfare.

Outcomes for children are good

As a result of improved teaching, older children who have been at the setting for some time are catching up well to reach levels of development that are typical for their age. Some children who joined the setting more recently make rapid progress in key areas of learning. A strength of the pre-school is how well children develop their communication and language skills. Throughout the day, children and staff talk about all sorts of subjects as they play and this extends and develops children's vocabulary and confidence in speaking.

Setting details

Unique reference number	143117
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	1034820
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register
Age range of children	1 - 5
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	12
Name of provider	St Mary's Pre-School Committee
Date of previous inspection	10 November 2015
Telephone number	01935 849452

St Mary's Pre-School has been registered since 1992. It is located in a church hall in Ilchester, Somerset. The pre-school is open term-time only. It is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 11.30am, with a lunch club from 11.30am to 12.30pm. Afternoon sessions run from 12.30pm to 3pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. When there is the demand, afternoon sessions run every day of the week. The pre-school provides funded places for three- and four-year-olds. The pre-school employs four members of staff, all of whom hold an appropriate childcare qualification.

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