

St Mary's Playschool

Church Centre, The Chase, Great Baddow, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 7JU



Inspection date	16 January 2019
Previous inspection date	16 October 2018

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
Effectiveness of 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

- Since the last inspection, the provider has developed his understanding of suitability checks and changes to committee members. This ensures that Ofsted can check the suitability of all committee members.
- Children build good relationships with staff who know them well. This helps to support children's well-being and ensures that their care needs are met. Children confidently approach staff for support and comfort when needed.
- Children develop good independence skills. Older children can use the toilet and wash their hands without support. Younger children confidently make decisions about what they would like to play with.
- Children can easily reach the wide range of interesting and exciting toys and activities provided indoors and outside. They are supported to engage in learning and show high levels of participation and focus. Children make good progress.
- Parents are very supportive of the playschool manager and her staff team. They describe them as 'amazing', 'friendly' and 'approachable'. Parents talk about how well resourced the playschool is and that they 'love the outdoor classroom'.
- Children, parents and staff are encouraged to share their views and opinions about the playschool. This information helps the manager to review practice and introduce positive changes. For example, she is currently in the process of introducing more-frequent individual staff supervision meetings.
- Staff do not make the best possible use of the initial information they gather from parents to fully support children's precise learning needs from a very early stage.
- Staff do not make the most of their good relationships with parents in order to support them to complement and extend their children's learning at home.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop the use of initial information obtained from parents in order to plan even more precisely for children's continued progress from a very early stage
- enhance the strategies that are in place to support parents to complement and extend their children's learning at home.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during indoor and outdoor activities and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector completed a joint evaluation of an activity with the manager.
- The inspector held a number of discussions with the manager, staff and children.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents through discussion and feedback forms provided at inspection.

Inspector

Ann Cozzi

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

Safeguarding is effective. Staff have all undertaken safeguarding training and there is a designated safeguarding lead who provides them with advice and support. The playschool is risk assessed and identified hazards are minimised or removed. High ratios help to ensure that children are always closely supervised. The manager spends time working alongside staff and holds frequent meetings with them, which help her to monitor their ongoing practice. She ensures that staff are provided with annual appraisal meetings to promote their professional development. The manager and her staff are happy to work with other agencies to support children's individual needs. Teachers are invited into the playschool to support those children moving on to school. The progress of groups of children is monitored by the manager to identify if any extra support is needed.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Children's literacy skills are supported well. Most-able children can recognise their own name without referring to picture clues. Children learn that print carries meaning when staff hold up a book to read them familiar stories. They are keen to interact as they hold up props representing each character in the book or enthusiastically call out answers to staff's questions. This encourages children to think and make predictions. Children learn about mathematics as part of the daily routine. Older children are encouraged to count how many children are present and use their fingers to show the number. Staff introduce mathematical language as younger children run after bubbles. They ask them if they can catch 'more'. Staff reinforce children's understanding of English, repeating sentences or words that are mispronounced. Older children are confident to engage in conversations with staff and enjoy talking about what they are doing.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children are well behaved. Staff give them gentle reminders about good behaviour and encourage them to be kind to each other. For example, they ask if others can join in with their game. Children show good levels of confidence as they explain that they are playing 'mums and dads' with their friends. Children learn about how to keep safe. They talk about shutting the door of a sit-and-ride car 'so that baby does not fall out'. Children's good health is promoted. They are provided with a range of nutritious snacks, such as fresh fruit, bread sticks and crackers. Fresh water is always available, which helps to keep children hydrated. Children know that washing their hands takes 'the germs off' and explain that if they do not do this they 'would not feel too good'.

Outcomes for children are good

Children have good imaginations. Older children use dressing-up clothes to become favourite characters. Younger children talk about taking their doll 'to the beach'. Children show good levels of concentration and physical skills as they work out how to use their legs to propel their bicycle. Children are able to solve problems. For example, they work out how to get the doll they are playing with into a toy car and shut the door. Children develop the essential skills needed for their eventual move on to school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	650135
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10082440
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	78
Number of children on roll	68
Name of registered person	St Mary's Playschool Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP904734
Date of previous inspection	16 October 2018
Telephone number	01245 471683

St Mary's Playschool opened in 1968 and is located in Chelmsford, Essex. The playschool employs 11 members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, with one who holds qualified teacher status. The playschool opens during term time only. Sessions are from 9am until 3.20pm on Monday to Thursday and from 9am until midday on Friday. The playschool provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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