

St Mary's Pre-school

St Mary's School, Cookham Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 7EG



Inspection date	22 May 2019
Previous inspection date	15 March 2016

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Outstanding	1
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- The provider, relatively new to his role, has acquired a good knowledge and understanding of his responsibilities. Staff implement his policies, procedures and risk assessments to effectively promote children's health, safety and well-being.
- Staff know children very well. They demonstrate a good understanding of children's starting points and plan well for their learning. However, procedures to more robustly monitor and evaluate the progress of groups of children are not yet fully embedded in their practice. Children make good progress and are eager to take part in the activities. Their progress is shared with parents in a timely way.
- Overall, staff are confident in their teaching skills. This is demonstrated as staff help children explore with curiosity about what happens to ice as it melts. They use hammers to break up the ice and find petals and flowers hidden within. At times, however, not all staff make the best of all opportunities to challenge children and extend their thinking even further.
- Staff offer a highly stimulating environment and a wide range of activities. This remarkable environment, particularly outdoors, makes a significant impact on how all children gain independence and confidence. For example, children make their own risk assessments when climbing and taking part in physical play. They work together as a team during their imaginary experiences. For example, when building bridges with wooden planks they find the best way to cross over pathways from one side to the other.
- Children behave exceptionally well throughout the day. They fully understand staff expectations and are extremely aware of their routines. Children have high levels of respect for their friends.
- Parents are very positive about the care their children receive. They state that their children love forest school activities and add that staff are 'fantastic'. Parents acknowledge that children are developing strong social skills and are making good progress in their speech and communication. Parents of children who speak English as an additional language state that children are highly supported.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance monitoring systems to more effectively evaluate the progress of different groups of children
- support staff to consistently use more opportunities to extend children's learning, in order to challenge them and maximise their interest and participation.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed staff interacting with children indoors and outdoors.
- The inspector completed two joint observations with the manager. They discussed how staff plan for children's learning and how staff are supported in their roles.
- The inspector spoke with children, parents and staff.
- The inspector met with the provider and the manager. They discussed how staff evaluate practice and arrangements for the recruitment and supervision of staff.
- The inspector sampled the provider's documentation and children's records.

Inspector
Aileen Finan

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

The provider has secure systems for the recruitment of staff. The dedicated manager offers effective supervision to staff to enable them to be competent in their roles. Staff speak highly of training opportunities that have guided them in their work. Newly qualified staff, for example, state they have learned so much about the influences adults can make on children's thinking skills. Safeguarding is effective. Staff demonstrate a secure knowledge of all aspects of safeguarding matters. They know how to protect children in their care. Partnerships with other professionals working with children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well established. Parents with children who have more complex needs are very positive about shared strategies that result in continuity for children's care. Staff evaluate well. They have a clear vision for future improvement, including adapting reading areas to better support children's needs.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff observe children and make regular assessments about the progress made. These assessments are used effectively to plan for children's next steps. Staff support children's problem-solving skills as they help children sort objects into categories. Children show confidence, for instance, to group the purple ones or the bigger ones. Staff promote children's listening and communication skills well. They demonstrate this during planned adult-led group activities where staff help them follow instructions and develop high levels of self-control. Additional resources, in cases where children need further intervention and individual support, are utilised well.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

Caring staff proactively strengthen how children learn respect for each other. Consequently, children are extremely accepting of differences, including those in their individual development or through the languages they speak. Children freely choose to spend time outdoors and benefit from an exceptional range of experiences that support their wider learning. Staff are highly encouraging of children's independence. Children learn to cut and peel fruits and vegetables with staff, using safety knives. They talk confidently about the fact that carrots are harder to cut than bananas. Children carefully use china plates and glasses during snack time. They use very polite language and understand the need to clear up after they have eaten. Children are incredibly confident to try new things. For example, they mould dough for a base, into which they place silk flowers to creatively make a display for the table.

Outcomes for children are good

Children develop a good range of skills to support their future learning. They show curiosity during play at the mud kitchen as they 'cook' with real produce and pick herbs from the garden. They water plants and wash their produce. Children are sociable and develop effective communication skills. This is particularly evident for those learning English as an additional language. These children translate for each other and learn new words and phrases daily. All children enjoy listening to stories. They focus attentively, anticipate endings and know what is happening.

Setting details

Unique reference number	108463
Local authority	Windsor and Maidenhead
Inspection number	10066895
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	25
Number of children on roll	52
Name of registered person	St Mary's Pre-school Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP524724
Date of previous inspection	15 March 2016
Telephone number	01628 627013

St Mary's Pre-school registered in 1992 and is situated in Maidenhead, Berkshire. The pre-school is open from 9am to midday and from 12.30pm to 3.30pm, Monday to Friday, during term time only. The provider receives funding to provide free early years education to children aged two, three and four years. There are eight members of staff, six of whom hold relevant qualifications at level 3 or above.

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