

Inspection of St Matthews Playgroup

St Matthews Church, Clare Road, Kingsdown, Bristol BS6 5TB

Inspection date: 7 July 2021

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children are extremely happy and secure. They eagerly arrive and are excited to see what activities are on offer. Staff provide an inspirational environment. The arrangement of resources and the activities available help to spark children's interests and motivate them to learn. The superb delivery of the curriculum helps children to develop excellent social skills. Children who speak English as an additional language are keen to speak, join in with stories and involve others in their play. Children engage extremely well in their learning and confidently remember what they have previously learned. For instance, they excitedly talk about their favourite stories and giggle as they remember what happens at the end. All children behave exceptionally well. They are highly respectful of each other, listen to each other's ideas and work remarkably well together to solve problems. Staff have high expectations for all of the children. They implement a curriculum that is inclusive and successfully meets all children's needs and interests. Staff use their knowledge of children's family backgrounds and previous experiences extremely well to tailor activities that help children to make rapid progress in their learning. For example, children enjoy stories and learn new vocabulary as the highly skilled staff use books in children's home languages to engage parents in sharing stories with them at home.

Due to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, parents are not currently entering the playgroup. Staff recognise how this has an impact on children and parents. They ensure they take time to speak to parents about their children's day as they drop off and collect their children. Parents are also welcomed in when the playgroup is closed to talk individually with staff about their children's progress.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The manager and staff are highly ambitious and are dedicated to providing the best service possible for children and their families. They evaluate their practice constantly. They access support and training to ensure that staff have the skills they need to meet all children's needs. Staff use their knowledge of children's emotional and developmental needs to ensure that additional funding is used effectively to help children to progress with their learning. For example, recent training on understanding autism spectrum disorder has helped staff to provide good support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Staff have an excellent understanding of how to support children's emotional well-being. They recognise the impact that the pandemic has had on children's emotions and have developed ways to support children to express themselves. For example, staff have introduced well-being sessions. They help children to understand how they are feeling and to develop the vocabulary to share their emotions appropriately.

- Parents are extremely positive about the service provided. They are well informed about their children's progress, their next steps in learning, and the activities that their children take part in. Parents say that staff are extremely dedicated to promoting their children's development.
- Children develop excellent communication skills in the language-rich environment. Staff are extremely skilled at communicating with children and engaging them in conversations to encourage the development of their vocabulary. Staff recognise how to question children and to support them in developing their thinking skills.
- Teaching is inspirational. Staff use their knowledge of child development and how children learn to provide interesting and exciting learning opportunities. For instance, children learn how to use scissors as they cut their 'grass heads' that they have been growing in the garden. They gain a deeper understanding of numbers and mathematical concepts as they work together to count and compare the legs on the plastic animals and insects. Staff challenge children to estimate and compare quantities and explore simple addition.
- Children develop a love of stories and books, and staff support this exceptionally well. Children listen intently to stories, and staff skilfully ask the children questions and deepen their understanding of the story. Staff then extend learning further by helping children to create their own books, supporting their literacy skills very well. Children are proud of their achievements and are proud to show off their finished books.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and all staff place a high priority on children's safety and welfare. They have an extensive knowledge of safeguarding and child protection procedures to keep children safe. The manager and staff recognise the importance of their responsibility to monitor and report any concerns they have about children's welfare. They carry out regular training and regularly review procedures to ensure they reflect the most up-to-date good practice. This helps them to ensure that they are alert to current safeguarding trends and practices. The manager and staff carry out risk assessments. They talk to children about risks and how to keep themselves safe. The manager involves parents in supporting children to be safe online. Children are taught internet safety and parents are provided with information on how to help keep their children safe when accessing the internet.

Setting details

Unique reference number	107060
Local authority	Bristol City of
Inspection number	10117877
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 at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	36
Number of children on roll	26
Name of registered person	St Matthews Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP522121
Telephone number	0117 9441598 or 0117 9735664
Date of previous inspection	8 July 2019

Information about this early years setting

St Matthews Playgroup registered in 1990 and operates from the church hall of St Matthews Church, Kingsdown. The playgroup is open on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9am to 3pm and on Thursday from 9am to 1.30pm during the school term. Five members of staff work with the children. Of these, three hold early years qualifications at level 3 or above. These include the manager, who holds early years professional status, and a member of staff who is a qualified teacher. The playgroup provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Victoria Nicolson

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager took the inspector on a learning walk and discussed how she and her staff deliver their curriculum.
- The inspector spoke to parents and took their views into consideration.
- A meeting was held with the manager, and the inspector sampled documentation.
- The inspector spoke to staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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