

Inspection of St Mary's Preschool

Holy Trinity Church, Lysander Road, YEOVIL, Somerset BA20 2BU

Inspection date: 16 July 2021

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Requires improvement
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Children enter the pre-school and settle to play happily. They respond positively to staff and form secure relationships. Children are polite and learn to respect the needs of others. Older children like to help their younger friends, such as with the daily routines, and they guide them to wash their hands before snack time. Leaders and staff are keen for children to be happy and enjoy learning through their play. They provide a wide range of activities to promote children's interests. Children learn about their wider community. For example, they like going with staff to a nearby supermarket, such as to buy some food for a pre-school barbecue. Children find the food they want and give the money to the cashier to pay for it. Children enjoy listening to favourite stories, such as a rhyming story about a cat. They join in eagerly with the repeated refrains. They start to follow the rhythm of another story as staff read the sequence of events leading to the discovery of a 'bear'. Children use language well, overall, to express their ideas. At times though, staff do not give children time to respond to their questions and build on their existing vocabulary. Leaders have recognised a need to focus on children's emotional well-being following the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. They talk with children about their feelings and those of others. In addition, they have been supporting children's listening and attention skills to help develop their concentration.

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

- Staff support children well to learn about healthy lifestyles. Children find sun hats to wear outdoors to protect themselves from getting burned. They know they need water to drink and to clean their teeth to keep them healthy. When on walks with staff, children learn where and when it is safe to cross the road. They like to call out, 'Wake up green man', when waiting at a pedestrian crossing.
- Parents spoken with at the inspection stated their children are happy and enjoy the activities at the pre-school. They commented that their children gain confidence with their friends and develop skills that will help them when they go to school.
- Leaders have a good understanding of children's development. However, leaders have not ensured that staff are aware of, or have completed all required assessments, such as the statutory progress check for children aged between two and three years, or provided parents with a written summary of this check.
- Staff encourage children's understanding of the world well. Children help to water the flowers in the garden. They talk about water coming from reservoirs, and know that fire engines carry water to put out fires. Children show curiosity as they explore the outdoor nature area and find wood lice and a big spider hiding under some logs.

- Children interact positively with their friends. They learn to take turns and share well together. They know the daily routines of lining up before moving between the indoor and outdoor play areas. Staff use praise and encouragement effectively to help children feel valued and important in their care.
- Leaders support staff to do training, such as about child psychology, and this has helped them in understanding children's behaviour. Staff complete risk assessments, but did not identify the garden pond as a potential risk to children's safety until this was pointed out to them at this inspection. Leaders did then take prompt action and cover the pond at this visit, so minimised any risk. However, this identifies a weakness with the arrangements leaders have for monitoring staff understanding of all aspects of their roles and responsibilities.
- Children have good opportunities to exercise and develop their physical strength. Younger children gain confidence in their abilities and show delight as they jump off a tall tree stump. Older children learn to control their movements well. They pedal the balance bikes carefully around a designated path.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff have an appropriate awareness of safeguarding issues, overall. They recognise their roles and responsibilities to protect children's welfare and understand procedures to follow should any concerns arise about children in their care. Leaders state they follow a relevant process, which includes completing Disclosure and Barring Service checks, when recruiting staff, to help assess their suitability. Staff complete regular headcounts of children as they move between the indoor and outdoor play areas to help them be aware of how many children are attending at any one time.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due date
improve arrangements for the supervision of staff to help them understand all aspects of their roles and responsibilities	03/09/2021
ensure that a progress check for children aged between two and three years, is completed and a written summary is provided for parents, to help identify where a child may need further support.	03/09/2021

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

- provide more support for staff to understand how to give children time to respond to questions, and develop their vocabulary further.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2498878
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10191510
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	35
Name of registered person	Warren, Robert
Registered person unique reference number	2498877
Telephone number	07496804203
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

St Mary's Preschool re-registered in 2018 under private ownership. It was previously registered as a parent committee run pre-school since 1992. It operates from the main hall of the Holy Trinity Community Centre in Yeovil, Somerset. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday from 8am until 3pm, during term time only. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are seven members of staff who work with the children. Of these, two hold early years qualifications at level 5 and three hold level 3 qualifications.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Mary Daniel

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the setting and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The inspector observed children's interactions in play, indoors and outdoors, and had discussions with staff about learning and development.
- A sample of documentation was reviewed by the inspector, including staff qualifications and first-aid certificates.
- The inspector and deputy manager completed two joint observations of activities and had discussions about the quality of teaching.
- The inspector took into account the spoken views of parents.
- The inspector had a tour of the premises with the manager and discussed the organisation of the play areas and how these support children's learning.

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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