

Inspection of St Mary's Playgroup

St Mary's RC Primary School, Cheltenham Road East, GLOUCESTER GL3 1HU

Inspection date:

19 April 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Children are welcomed into the setting by the nurturing staff team. They separate from their parents with ease and promptly settle into their chosen play. Children behave well. They sit alongside each other and learn to share and take turns.

Although the manager has a secure understanding of the curriculum and identifies intentions for children's learning, not all staff have the knowledge and skills to deliver the curriculum effectively. As a result, the quality of teaching varies across the setting and children do not consistently benefit from meaningful and challenging learning experiences to fully promote their attitudes towards learning. That said, staff consider children's interests when planning play activities. They make sure resources meet the children's stages of development. For example, they provide young children with threading reels to support their hand-to-eye coordination and older children with threading cards to help them develop strength in their hands in readiness for early writing.

Older children are independent and practise the skills they will need for school. For example, children develop competence in self-care. They wipe their own nose and learn the importance of washing their hands before mealtimes. Children listen attentively and greet their friends and staff with a wave at morning registration. They understand and use mathematical language. Children count how many children are present and match this to the relevant numeral as they identify that there are 'more children' and 'less adults'.

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

- The provider has failed to notify Ofsted of changes to the committee and the nominated individual in a timely manner. This means that Ofsted has not been able to complete the necessary checks to ensure their suitability. However, children's safety is not compromised as these individuals do not work directly with the children.
- Parents speak highly of the staff and comment on their kind, caring and patient nature. They feel informed about children's daily experiences as staff talk to them at drop-off and collection time. Staff upload information and photographs of children's learning and development to an online learning journal. However, managers have not yet considered how to involve parents in the evaluation of their practice. They are unaware that some parents are unsure of who their child's key person is and do not access their children's online learning records to seek information about their progress and learning goals.
- Staff have some systems in place to monitor children's progress. They make observations of children's learning and encourage parents to share information with them about what children can do at home. However, the required progress

check for children aged between two and three years, is not always completed and shared with parents. This means that opportunities are lost to fully assess children's progress and identify any areas of concern.

- Children learn the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy eating a range of fresh fruits with cheese and breadsticks for snack. Staff support children to understand the effects of food on their body. They explain that 'cheese makes you strong'.
- The support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) works closely with external professionals, such as speech and language therapists, to support children to make progress. Staff support children with speech delay to have a voice. They introduce them to picture exchange systems to communicate their wants and needs. The SENCo works effectively with parents and shares information and resources, to enable parents to continue to use these methods at home.
- Effective links with the host school are in place. Staff invite teachers into the setting to meet with children who will be moving up to Reception class. This means that when the time comes, children know what to expect and are familiar with their new school teacher. However, staff have yet to consider how to forge effective links with the other schools that children will attend, to help support all children to be fully prepared for the next step in their educational journey.
- Staff promote children's communication and language skills. They lead group singing sessions, which children thoroughly enjoy. Children are familiar with a wide range of songs and join in with repeated phrases, sharing their ideas of what comes next. Children who speak English as an additional language display a good vocabulary. They confidently name a number of dinosaurs, such as 'pterodactyl' and 'triceratops'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff make sure the learning environment is safe and secure for all children. They regularly review risk assessments to ensure that any unnecessary hazards are minimised or removed. Staff undertake regular safeguarding training and are aware of their responsibility to keep children safe. They have a suitable knowledge of the signs and symptoms that may indicate a child is at risk of harm. Staff know how to report these concerns, both in the setting or to external agencies. They know the procedure to follow should they have a concern about a colleague's practice.

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
ensure that Ofsted is informed of changes to the nominated individual and committee members, and is supplied with the necessary information to enable suitability checks to be carried out	21/04/2023
ensure that the progress check for children aged between two and three years is completed and shared with parents	03/05/2023
implement effective staff monitoring procedures to identify training needs and raise the quality of teaching across the setting to ensure that all children benefit from meaningful and challenging learning experiences.	19/07/2023

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

- consider the views of parents when evaluating practice to make sure that procedures for sharing information are effective and all parents are well informed about children's learning and development
- develop partnerships with all schools that children will attend to make sure that all children are fully prepared for the move on to school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	101569
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10279734
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	2 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	31
Name of registered person	St Mary's Playgroup (Churchdown) Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP910811
Telephone number	07840 055 552
Date of previous inspection	12 September 2017

Information about this early years setting

St Mary's Playgroup registered in 1992. It is located on the grounds of St Mary's RC Primary School in Churchdown, Gloucester. The setting is open Monday to Friday, from 9am to 3pm, during school term time. A team of six staff work with children. Of these, five hold relevant early years qualifications. The manager is qualified to level 4. Three members of staff hold qualifications at level 3 and one member of staff holds a qualification at level 2. The playgroup is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Holly Smith

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 inspector completed a learning walk with the setting manager to discuss activities and intentions for children's learning.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector held discussions with managers and staff to evaluate the leadership and management of the setting.
- The inspector considered the views of parents spoken to during the inspection.
- The inspector reviewed a sample of documentation, including staffs record of suitability and paediatric first-aid qualification certificates.

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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