

Inspection of St Mary's Under Fives

Marlborough St. Mary's primary school, George Lane, Marlborough, Wiltshire SN8 4BX

Inspection date: 10 January 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Kind and nurturing staff happily welcome children as they arrive for their day at pre-school. Staff make time for parents to share any information to ensure their children are happy and staff can meet their needs successfully. Children hang up their belongings and confidently enter the playroom, ready to start their day. Children are happy and settled.

Since the previous inspection, leaders have sought support from external agencies to help them make positive changes to their practice. Staff use what they have learned from training and their knowledge of the children to create an ambitious curriculum which they tailor around the children's needs. For example, staff use children's interest of dinosaurs and building to incorporate mathematical language into play. Children create structures for dinosaurs with various wooden resources. Staff alongside ask children 'how many' and if there are 'more' or 'less'. Children have access to a variety of learning experiences.

Children learn to have respect for others and their environment. Children recognise when their friend becomes sad because they cannot find any play dough; they look to them and hand them some of their dough to enable them to join the activity. Children beam with happiness and join in with their friends. After a messy activity, children begin to tidy up, using tissues to clean the table. Staff remind the children that using lots of tissues to wipe a small area can be wasteful. They help children find some cloths to wipe the table instead. Children learn to use resources respectfully.

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

- Leaders create a happy and inclusive pre-school environment for all that attend. Staff report they enjoy their role and receive invaluable support from leaders and committee members. Staff have access to online training to develop and improve their practice. They have also recently taken part in whole-team training on curriculum delivery and the use of Makaton. The whole team use Makaton to enhance children's communication and they incorporate this into their curriculum for all to learn.
- The key-person system is well established. Staff meet regularly to discuss their key children, share ideas and create next steps for learning. Staff invite parents to have discussions with the key person about their child's development and learning ideas for home. They share video footage with parents of how their children play and interact while at pre-school. Staff know the children very well. They create positive relationships with families. Children are safe and secure and make good progress in their learning.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported.

The knowledgeable special educational needs coordinator works closely with parents and external agencies to make timely referrals where needed. Staff use their knowledge of children to create individual learning opportunities to help children make progress. For example, staff support children who can recognise numbers to link the amount of items to the correct number.

- Staff foster children's love of books when they read them a story at group time. Many children eagerly answer questions about the story and most listen with intent. However, staff do not always make their expectations known to children prior to group time. At times, children get up and play with other items, which causes distraction for those that are attempting to listen. Staff do not consistently remind children how to behave and why this is important.
- Staff recognise that some children struggle to regulate their emotions. They have created an 'emotions station' for children to access. Staff use 'The Colour Monster' book as the theme and have various sound buttons in different languages that say feeling words. Children also benefit from a calming sensory area which they use when they need downtime. Staff support children to recognise their feelings and talk to them about these. Children begin to manage and understand their emotions.
- Children confidently make choices of what to play with and most engage with purpose. Children create a narrative with their friends as they enjoy acting out their home experiences in the role-play area, such as when they take their babies to the 'baby park'. However, staff do not always successfully use strategies to support those children who are quieter or demonstrate repetitive play. At times, these children wander disengaged or play for extended periods with limited support from staff to explore a wide range of meaningful learning opportunities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- consistently support and remind children of the importance of behaviour expectations during group activities and the impact their actions may have on others
- use strategies to support children that are quieter or need extra support to engage in a wide range of meaningful learning experiences.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY432371
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10283153
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	28
Number of children on roll	31
Name of registered person	St Mary's Under Fives Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP530907
Telephone number	07593928949
Date of previous inspection	27 February 2023

Information about this early years setting

St Mary's Under Fives registered in July 2011. It is located in Marlborough, Wiltshire. The pre-school is open every weekday during term time from 9am to 3pm. It is a committee-run pre-school that receives funding for the provision of early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The pre-school employs six members of staff. Of these, one is unqualified, one holds a level 2 qualification and four hold early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including one member of staff who has achieved qualified teacher status.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Sarah-Louise Clements

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The deputy manager, manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children spoke to the inspector about what they enjoy doing while at pre-school.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of a group activity with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

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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