

Inspection of St Mary's Playgroup (Tetbury)

Christchurch Hall, The Chipping, Tetbury, Gloucestershire GL8 8EU

Inspection date: 19 March 2024

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children thrive in this exceptional playgroup. They arrive with high levels of confidence and excitement ready for their day. Inspiring staff facilitate children's independence in all that they do. Children hang up their belongings, retrieve their water bottles and wash their hands before they engage in play. Staff are close by to prompt children if needed, asking them 'What happens next?' and refer children to the visual prompts that are around the room. They empower children to think for themselves and take ownership of their day at playgroup.

The highly dedicated leaders and the excellent staff team deliver a diverse, broad curriculum for each child that attends. They focus on developing children's focus and concentration in preparation for their next stage of learning. Staff adapt their teaching style to meet the individual needs of each child. They use high-quality interactions to engage children and keep them highly motivated to learn. For example, children work together using various resources to make gloop. Children are curious and ask staff about the numbers on the jugs. Staff discuss with children how they can also measure ingredients using ounces. They challenge children even further and ask them to fill up the jugs, and when they are full, children proudly share the amount of ounces they have collected in their jug. Children have exceptional levels of engagement and positive attitudes to learning.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. Caring staff support children to manage their emotions and are mindful of their well-being. If staff notice children are quieter than usual, they sensitively talk to them and give them the opportunity to share how they are feeling. Children respect others' wishes. If their friend says 'no' or asks them to 'stop', children listen and are considerate of their feelings.

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

- Inspirational leaders have a strong focus on providing a calm and nurturing environment for all that attend. They are always looking to improve their already excellent practice. For example, some staff have recently attended Autism training to enhance their knowledge and help them successfully support children that access the playgroup. Staff report on the exceptional support they receive from leaders. There are regular team meetings and one-to-one discussions that focus on their well-being, key children, curriculum intent and delivery. Children and staff are happy and highly motivated.
- Staff provide excellent support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Extremely knowledgeable staff know all children very well and provide them with an inclusive curriculum. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) works closely with parents and other professionals. She puts strategies in place to ensure children have the support they need, so that

they make the best possible progress while at the playgroup and have smooth transitions for their move on to school.

- There are excellent partnerships with parents. Leaders value the importance of creating positive relationships with families. Leaders and key persons visit family homes before children start at the playgroup, to enable children to get to know staff in the safety of their own environment. This helps children settle with ease and feel safe and secure when they start. Parents report on the invaluable support they receive from the 'wonderful' staff. They say staff are kind, approachable and nurturing which helps their children flourish. Parents are aware what their children are learning and their children love to attend.
- Staff embrace children's cultures and traditions and celebrate these within their curriculum. They invite children to share special items from home as part of an 'all about me' group time. Children develop independence, confidence and communication skills when they stand in front of their friends and talk about their items. Children are highly engaged and interested to learn about their friends. They kindly ask if they can look at their items, children agree and happily pass the items around. Passionate staff use their excellent teaching style to encourage those children that, at times, can be shy, to share with the group why these items are special to them. Children beam with pride and happiness when staff praise their achievements.
- Highly trained staff provide children with excellent opportunities to develop their physical, exploration and critical-thinking skills when they deliver forest-school learning. Children learn to assess and identify risks and they transfer these skills to the playgroup environment. For example, children cooperatively work together, and use what they have already learned to create an obstacle course with wooden planks and crates. Children think about the placement of the wooden planks to ensure they do not fall. Staff close by facilitate children's learning by skilfully questioning children 'How can you make that balance?' and get them thinking even further.
- Skilful staff make excellent use of the limited outside space they have, which children access daily. Staff create opportunities for children to develop a wide range of skills in this space. For example, children develop their senses and imaginative skills when they explore the sand together and use a wide range of resources to create a narrative in their play. Children are confident to explore the very well-organised outdoor environment and access the wide range of learning on offer.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

Setting details

Unique reference number	101530
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10317388
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years 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	34
Name of registered person	St Mary's Toddler and Playgroup, Tetbury Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP519915
Telephone number	01666 503777
Date of previous inspection	15 May 2018

Information about this early years setting

St Mary's Playgroup (Tetbury) registered in 2001. The playgroup is located in Tetbury, Gloucestershire. It operates on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, from 8.30am to 3.30pm, and Wednesday and Friday from 8.30am to 1pm, during school term times only. A team of six permanent staff work directly with the children. All staff have relevant childcare qualifications at a minimum of level 3. The playgroup receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Sarah-Louise Clements

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 deputy manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the playgroup and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children communicated with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The SENCo spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the deputy manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- Leaders 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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