

St Mary`s Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	224193
Inspection date	26 June 2007
Inspector	Lesley Jane Bott
Setting Address	St Mary's C of E School, The Grove, Lodge Lane, Bridgnorth, Shropshire, WV15 5EQ
Telephone number	01746 763455
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Registered person	St Mary's Playgroup
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St Mary's Playgroup has been registered since 1993. It operates within St Mary's School in the Low Town area of the market town of Bridgnorth. The children are accommodated in two rooms, with the younger children in the 'playgroup' room and the older children in the 'nursery' room situated in school. Children attend the group from the local rural area and most go on to join the school nursery class.

There are currently 100 children on roll, this includes 35 children in receipt of funded nursery education. The group operates for 50 weeks a year from 08:00 to 18:00. This includes a breakfast and after school club, together with a holiday playscheme in the school holidays. The group is registered to care for no more than 52 children under eight years old.

There are nine members of staff working with the children, of which seven staff hold recognised childcare qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the good health and hygiene routines implemented. They know that they need to wash their hands before eating and after going to the toilet. They understand that they need to wash their hands 'cause you get germs on them'. Clear written procedures for sick and infectious children help prevent the spread of infection. Children receive good care if they have an accident, with an ice pack applied and comfort given by staff. There are clear systems in place for recording accidents and medication. Consequently, children's health is well promoted.

A healthy and nutritional diet is promoted for children and all needs are discussed with parents and included on registration forms. For snacks, children have a choice of fruit and toast. They enjoy making fresh vegetable sandwiches as an activity after lunch time, which they later ate for their afternoon snack. Lunch is either provided by parents, or children can purchase a cooked school lunch. The children go through to the school hall to eat their lunch.

Children enjoy good opportunities for physical exercise on a daily basis. They have lots of fun as they take part in the action songs and gym session once a week. All children enjoy playing on the bikes outside in the fresh air and climbing and balancing. Older children have the opportunity to use the forest school on a regular basis. This enables children to develop their physical skills and a positive attitude to healthy exercise.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and well-organised environment where most risks to children are limited through satisfactory safety procedures. Staff monitor access to the group at all times, and parents need to ring the bell to gain entry. However, children can gain access to the kitchen where there is the potential risk of hazards. This compromises children's safety.

Fire evacuation procedures are fully understood by staff and practised regularly with all the children. Children know that they need to stand by the flag pole outside. There is a wide range of safe good-quality resources which are organised appropriately to allow children to make decisions about indoor or outdoor play. Equipment is easily accessible and children's art work is displayed well, promoting self-esteem and a sense of belonging. There is sufficient space for children to move around freely, particularly when they use the large hall for gym sessions.

Children are well protected by staff that have a clear understanding of child protection issues and understand the correct procedures to follow for reporting concerns. Child protection training attended by staff ensures that they fully understand their responsibilities in protecting children from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The wide range of activities children experience ensures their interest and enjoyment are maintained throughout each session. Children have lots of fun as they play outside with the bikes and sand play. Staff extend children's understanding of texture as they encourage them

to talk about how the 'gloop' feels, some saying it felt 'hot'. They play together well with the cars and diggers and are happy as they dress up in the princess pink outfits.

A consistent timetable is followed that helps children to be settled and confident. They know, for example that they go into the school hall for lunch, taking their bags with them containing their lunch from home. Children are encouraged to select, carry out activities and put them away independently. In this way children are encouraged to make choices about what they do.

Staff are developing their knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and use this to plan and provide activities to ensure children learn through play. There are clear systems in place to monitor progress and staff use information gained from parents to assess children's starting points. This helps to ensure all children are developing and achieving.

Relationships between staff and children are positive and caring. Staff show a good interest in what children say and do and respond well to their requests for resources. Children enjoy their time at the setting.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

There are a good range of resources to raise children's awareness of diversity. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of equal opportunities issues. They help children to learn about the world around them and the diversity of it. Children are learning about other cultures through acknowledging and celebrating their own and others customs and festivals.

Children play very well together and staff are proactive in promoting good behaviour. The good use of praise and encouragement given by staff helps to build children's confidence and self-esteem well. Children who had been given special stickers that day were able to inform the inspector about what they had done. One child had done very good drawing while another had been very kind to a friend. There are no children currently attending with learning difficulties or disabilities but there are satisfactory procedures in place to ensure that all children are fully included in the setting.

Staff find out about individual needs through discussion with parents and carers. Staff have friendly and trusting relationships with them and share information with them. However, further improvement is needed in the passing of information when the children attend the playgroup for more than one session. Children could attend the breakfast club, playgroup in the morning and go to nursery at the school in the afternoon. Therefore staff might not always be aware of what has happened to the child during the day.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

All staff currently working with children have the required clearances in place to ensure their suitability. Children are cared for by a consistent staff team who know them well. There is an appropriate level of qualified staff who work with the children and additional training courses have been attended. For example, 'Birth to three matters' and first aid. This helps to broaden children's experiences and contributes to the quality of care provided.

Policies and procedures for the safe and efficient running of the setting are in place. These are readily accessible to parents and carers within a file outside the office. In this way, parents and

carers are able to make informed choices about their children's care. Documentation relating to children and staff is stored securely to ensure that confidentiality is maintained. Registration procedures for children are effective, however staff do not always sign out and therefore an accurate records of who is present is not in place. Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was required to amend policies already in place. This included the times of the children attending the playgroup to be included in the register; an additional information form to be completed by parents with children who have special needs and parents to sign consent and record of medication given. In addition the setting was required to ensure that children could access water themselves during the sessions.

A new system for recording medication has been revised and all necessary information is now recorded, including all necessary signatures from parents. Policies have been added and include the additional information form for special needs and the register includes children's times of arrival and departure. A jug with water and cups are now available within the classroom for children to access themselves independently and a new policy has been implemented where children are asked to bring a drink in from home, water or juice which they are encouraged to drink during the course of the day to ensure that children are not thirsty.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that staff sign in and out
- further improve the lines of communication between staff and parents and carers
- ensure that children cannot access hazards in the kitchen.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk