

St Mary's Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Jane Plested

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Description of the setting

St Mary's Pre-school opened over 45 years ago and its management was taken over by a voluntary committee in 2008. It operates from three rooms in St Mary's Church Hall in Princes Risborough; they also have use of a small but fully enclosed outdoor area. The pre-school serves families from the local surrounding area. The setting is registered to care for children on the Early Years Register and may care for 30 children at any one time. The setting opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15 until 12:15 with an extended session until 12:30 on Thursdays. There are currently 44 children from three to five years on roll. This includes 36 children in receipt of funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. A number of children attend the setting with physical and or learning disabilities and the pre-school is able to support English as an additional language. A total of seven staff are employed to work directly with the children. Of these, six hold relevant childcare qualifications. Two staff members are working towards a further qualification in early years.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

All children receive an extremely high standard of care and participate in very stimulating and often exciting learning experiences, which ensure that they make strong progress and are fully engaged in purposeful play. The setting has a very strong ethos of inclusion and support for children with individual needs. The vast systems for sharing information and children's on-going learning are continually developing. Children's health, safety and well-being is a high priority, which ensures their welfare and provides a learning environment almost entirely free of risks. Staff suitability and training is central to the setting's success, as is the on-going drive for improvement, which is facilitated through strong team work within the setting.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- develop further the systems for sharing information with parents and carers on the next step for learning to support learning outside the setting
- improve further safety checking procedures.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

All children make excellent progress, as a result of the high priority staff place on their welfare in conjunction with skilful support from the well qualified and trained staff. Practitioners are developing a first-rate understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). This results in an extremely well planned curriculum which takes account of children's views and ensures staff provide an inclusive learning environment both indoors and outside. Children enjoy making choices in

their play because practitioners plan for this continually. The outstanding support for children with learning and physical disabilities arises through targeted training for staff and effective partnerships with parents and other professionals.

All children benefit from the manager's excellent understanding of safeguarding issues, and her systems for staff support in this important aspect of their work. The risk assessment procedures are extremely well detailed and practitioners have an excellent awareness of security issues. Overall, the procedures to ensure children's safety are very effective but the management lack systems for monitoring occasional unpredicted changes to the environment. The setting maintains comprehensive records and sometimes exemplary agreements, such as those to support the administration of medication. All parents have access to an extensive range of information about the setting and the EYFS. The effective policies and procedures are continually available so that they fully understand how the setting works. These documents are regularly reviewed and extended. For instance, the setting has a new policy on 'equality of opportunity' to promote inclusion for all users. The setting provides opportunities to share children's progress and positively utilises parental knowledge of important aspects of their child's development. Systems are developing to share the next step for children's learning. The setting is reflective and evaluates its practice in depth. Staff support systems are very good and they have a highly successful partnership with the committee, which leads to improvements to further enhance children's experiences, for instance, the introduction of 'free flow play' between the indoor and outdoor environment.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

All children are eager learners because the setting provides a very well targeted and purposeful curriculum, within a secure, hygienic and extremely well planned environment. This ensures they make strong progress. All children are developing confident speaking skills and self-assurance. They are secure because staff explain the session plan clearly and support this further via an explicit visual timetable and activity board. This supports the development of a sense of time and assists understanding for children with learning and language difficulties. All children play co-operatively within a very calm atmosphere. Parental comments from letters record that they particularly value the development of strong social skills. Children are beginning to show an ability to empathise with those that are 'less able' and to share their opinions. For instance, one child holding a small world doll of a disabled lady using a walking frame says 'that is because she hurts', and another expresses their desire for the doll's house to be available again. Children are learning strong self-care skills, for example, they remember to keep themselves warm by using the fleeces when outside. More able children understand why they wash their hands prior to eating. Overall, children's safety is a high priority and this is ensured through vigorous staff vetting and the very secure collection procedures and complimented by detailed risk assessments and daily checks. However, these checks do not completely take account of occasional variables, such as the inconsistent temperature of a radiator, posing a risk of accidental injury. All children are developing healthy eating habits and have continual access to water so they remain refreshed.

All children have excellent access to the high quality play resources. They positively benefit from opportunities for 'free flow' between the indoor and outside environment. The development in children's outdoor learning opportunities is the result of careful planning and an improvement in resources. Consequently, they enthusiastically participate in their chosen outdoor play within the extremely well planned and stimulating courtyard. Here children enjoy sharing their exciting experiences of searching for and identifying insects in the peat tray with adults. Others are engrossed experimenting with flow and capacity as they pour dry couscous through funnels. Consequently, children use their imaginations, develop an understanding of the world, increase their language skills and explore a range of materials whilst having fun. The development of communication, language and literacy skills is a key strength. All children use and enjoy books, learn and sing rhymes and join in with conversations. For example, practitioners encourage talk during heuristic play and during role play activities children participate in conversations with staff in the 'shoe shop'. Here a practitioner also uses questions to help children think about concepts such as size and fit.

Effective observations and assessments ensure that practitioners have an excellent knowledge of what each child knows and can do and help them plan for future learning successfully. Parents have opportunities to participate in their children's learning by helping, or serving on the committee. They receive an extensive range of information on the setting, the curriculum and their child's progress within the EYFS. However, information on supporting the next step in learning is mostly universal rather than child targeted. Strong partnerships support children's well-being, transitions and individual needs. Those children with physical/learning disabilities positively benefit from the focused training for staff, which results in a clear understanding of how to support their learning, development and welfare. For example, thought is given to ensuring less mobile children can play and integrate safely and those children with speech and language difficulties receive focused support and make excellent progress.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	Outstanding
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	Outstanding
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	Outstanding

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	Outstanding
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	Outstanding
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	Good
How well are children safeguarded?	Outstanding

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	Outstanding
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	Outstanding
How well are children helped to stay safe?	Good
How well are children helped to be healthy?	Outstanding
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	Outstanding
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	Outstanding
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	Outstanding

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted.

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.