

St Mark's Preschool

c/o St. Mark's Church Office, The Old Vicarage, Vicarage Road, Gillingham, Kent,
ME7 5JA



Inspection date	12 May 2017
Previous inspection date	18 May 2015

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Staff establish positive relationships with children. For example, they visit them in their home environment when they start. This helps provide a good link between the setting and home and supports children to settle confidently and happily into play.
- Children develop good communication and speaking skills. For example, staff ask them challenging questions and reinforce positive pronunciation of words.
- There are good opportunities for children to develop their early reading skills. For instance, they look at a wide range of reading materials and recognise simple words.
- The manager closely monitors the quality of teaching and care. For example, she observes individual staff teach and discusses their performance with them.
- Children develop positive attributes and learn the importance of being polite and they behave well. For example, they say 'please' and 'thank you' with no reminders.
- The manager and staff effectively evaluate their practice. For example, they have daily discussions to evaluate the day's events and weekly meetings ensure that staff have time to discuss new ideas and make beneficial plans together.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff miss some opportunities to engage children and build on their interest in technology further.
- Staff do not make the most out of partnerships with other early years professionals at settings children also attend, to enhance the consistency of their shared learning.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- extend children's opportunities to engage and develop their interests in technology further
- strengthen the range of ways that staff communicate with other early years settings children also attend, to improve the consistency in care and learning.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed staff's interactions with children.
- The inspector viewed the indoor and outdoor environments.
- The inspector looked at written documentation, including a sample of policies and procedures, risk assessments and staff training records.
- The inspector spoke to children, parents and staff, and took their views into consideration.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.

Inspector
Kelly Hawkins

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The manager and staff are proactive at ensuring that they keep up to date with new ideas and attend regular training to help extend their skills and knowledge further. For instance, staff learn how to develop children's communication skills in more ways, such as using visual prompts. The manager and staff closely monitor children's progress. This helps them to promptly highlight any gaps in their development and provide children with individual support to help them catch up in their learning. Staff establish positive relationships with parents. For instance, they encourage them to share achievements from home and staff use the information to enhance their planning. Staff effectively use additional funding to meet children's individual learning needs. Safeguarding is effective. Staff have a good knowledge of the safeguarding procedures to follow to help protect children's welfare and know who to contact to follow up any concerns or seek advice.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff effectively support children to manage the changes that they may encounter when they move on to school. For example, they teach children how to use dinner trays to help them understand their new lunchtime routine. Staff skilfully build on children's play. For instance, when children enjoy exploring light boxes, staff encourage them to build dens and explore the concept of light and dark using torches. Staff provide children with good opportunities to learn about the natural world. For example, they participate in bug hunts, use magnifying glasses and look at nature books to identify the insects they find.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children have good opportunities to challenge their physical skills. For example, they make obstacle courses to complete in 'hobby horse' activities, as they 'ride' their horses and jump over and balance on balancing beams. Children develop good hand-to-eye coordination. For instance, children use water pistols to knock off balls balanced on cones. Children develop a good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles. For example, they are keen to actively help prepare healthy snacks. Children develop a good understanding of other peoples' similarities and differences in the wider world, such as dressing up in costumes associated with other countries, such as saris.

Outcomes for children are good

All children, including those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress in relation to their starting points. Children gain good skills to support their future learning. For example, they learn good early mathematical skills as they confidently count. Children build meaningful friendships and develop good social skills, and they play games that require teamwork and help each other to complete tasks.

Setting details

Unique reference number	103847
Local authority	Medway Towns
Inspection number	1088942
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	34
Number of children on roll	41
Name of registered person	Committee of St. Mark's Preschool
Registered person unique reference number	RP518192
Date of previous inspection	18 May 2015
Telephone number	07807577836

St Mark's Preschool registered in 1983. It is located in a church hall in Gillingham, Kent. The pre-school is open on Monday to Friday from 9.15am until 12.15pm, during term time only. The provider receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The pre-school employs six members of staff, two of whom hold a relevant early years qualification at level 3 and one member of staff holds early years professional status.

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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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