

Inspection of St. Marys Preschool Playgroup

322 Woodbridge Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP4 4BD

Inspection date: 18 October 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy to attend this friendly pre-school. They demonstrate that they feel settled and are safe and secure. Children increase their confidence as they explore the environment and make choices for themselves. They enjoy role-play activities, dressing up in a range of outfits and using props, such as tea pots and china cups to make 'tea'. Staff model good behaviour and support children to share popular items as they play alongside others. Children develop friendships and show that they have positive relationships with staff. They are happy to ask for help when needed. Children who are more confident are keen to approach the inspectors to share their experiences and what they know. All children enjoy joining in with the actions and words to familiar songs.

Children are familiar with the daily routines and follow instructions well. They all know what to do when staff say it is time for the 'daily mile'. Children find their coats and line up, ready to be counted, before going outdoors with staff to walk around the priest garden. Children benefit from the high priority staff give to supporting children's developing speech and language skills. Staff quickly identify where there are delays or concerns and manage these well. They seek support from other professionals when necessary.

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

- Since the last inspection, with support from the management committee, who has a good oversight of the pre-school, the manager and staff have worked hard to make effective changes. Staff have supervision meetings and continually monitor the environment. They receive regular feedback about their performance and reflect on their own practice. Staff complete training to further develop their understanding and enhance their knowledge.
- Staff morale is good. They report they are well supported and that their well-being is given high priority. Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, staff state that they enjoy coming to work.
- Staff notice what children are interested in and what they like to do. They use these interests to help children to learn through play. Staff have a good understanding of what children can do and what they need to learn next.
- The environment is calm. However, staff sometimes allow some children to dominate their attention. This means that, on occasions, quieter or less-confident children have fewer opportunities to engage with staff and make choices.
- Partnerships with parents and carers are strong. Parents express their thoughts and comment positively on the pre-school and the activities available to their children. They value the information that staff share about their children and highlight the effective communication and support offered.

- Staff support children to become independent individuals. Children learn basic self-care skills, including the importance of good hygiene and how to put on their coats. Staff recognise when children are ready to start using the potty or toilet and work closely with parents to agree on a constant approach.
- Children are not always given notice of when activities need to change. This means that their play and learning is sometimes interrupted and they are not able to finish their chosen activities to their satisfaction.
- Staff, generally, have a strong understanding of children's home lives and individual needs. They take children on trips out into the local community, such as visiting a café and the library and going on a bus journey. However, some children have fewer opportunities to share aspects of their different languages, traditions and cultural practices from home.
- Children have many opportunities for physical play. They are eager to climb on the climbing frame and slide down the slope and enjoy using jumping sacks. Staff keep children safe and ensure that they are well supervised.
- Children develop skills in readiness for their future learning, such as their move on to school. Staff support children to recognise and write their own name, identify colours, and develop an awareness of numbers and counting. They help children to count out objects from a group and some children understand the meaning of numbers.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The management committee follows safe recruitment procedures when employing new staff and complete ongoing checks to ensure staff's ongoing suitability to work with children. Staff have a good awareness of their safeguarding responsibilities and understand their duty to keep children safe and protected from harm. They complete safeguarding training to ensure that they recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and know what to do if they have concerns. Posters are displayed in the building to remind staff and parents who they should contact if they have a concern about children's welfare. Staff support parents to understand the risks of their children using digital technology at home.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support staff to ensure that all children have equally high-quality learning opportunities
- ensure staff minimise disruption to children's engagement in activities and give children the time to complete activities to their own satisfaction
- enable children to share more about the languages, traditions and cultural practices they experience at home.

Setting details

Unique reference number	251658
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10148343
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	16
Name of registered person	St Mary's Pre School Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP523351
Telephone number	01473807252
Date of previous inspection	6 February 2020

Information about this early years setting

St. Marys Preschool Playgroup registered in 1999. The pre-school employs five members of childcare staff and a business manager. Of these, five staff hold appropriate early years qualifications from level 2 to 5. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 9am until 3.30pm on Monday, Thursday and Friday, and from 9am until midday on Tuesday and Wednesday. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Karen Harris

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 manager led the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about what they want children to learn.
- 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 manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation together.
- Parents shared their views of the pre-school with the inspector in discussion and the inspector took these into account.
- Staff and children spoke to the inspector at appropriate times during the inspection.

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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