

St Mark's Pre-School Playgroup

St Marks Church Hall, North Road, Darlington, Co. Durham, DL1 3BH



Inspection date	12 June 2018
Previous inspection date	5 March 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

- Overall, teaching is good. Well-qualified staff use a wide range of effective strategies to support children's ongoing development. Children make good progress in their learning.
- Children's assessment information is reviewed thoroughly. This helps to identify areas where children may require further support, to narrow any possible gaps in their learning.
- Arrangements for reviewing and evaluating the quality of the playgroup are good. Areas for future development are identified, taking full account of the views of staff, parents and children.
- Staff provide a highly stimulating environment, especially for those children who prefer to learn outdoors. Children show high levels of concentration and engagement in the range of experiences provided for them.
- Children behave well. Staff help them to develop an understanding of age-appropriate rules and boundaries in the playgroup.
- The manager demonstrates a proactive attitude to working in partnership with local schools and external professionals, who may also be involved with children, to support their individual needs.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff do not provide consistently high levels of challenge as children play and engage in activities to support them to make the highest levels of progress in their learning.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- provide consistently high levels of challenge during activities to help children make the best possible progress in their learning.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children during the inspection.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the playgroup manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the playgroup manager. She looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the playgroup.
- The inspector spoke to parents and carers during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Nicola Jones

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The manager works alongside staff in the playgroup. She gains first-hand knowledge of activities planned for children to ensure they take account of their interests and stage of development. The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The attentive staff team places children's safety and well-being at the heart of their practice. The environment, indoors and outdoors, is secure. Children are supervised well at all times. Staff have a good knowledge of safeguarding procedures. They know how to act and who to contact should they have any concerns about a child's welfare. Staff are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their role. They know to inform the manager if there are any changes in their personal circumstances that may affect their suitability. Staff are supported well by the manager and her deputy. Ongoing training and supervision meetings help staff to reflect upon their role and improve their overall practice.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff join in sensitively with children's play. They fit in with their ideas and take an active part in their learning. For example, staff respond appropriately when children ask them to draw around their body on the ground using chalk. They count children's fingers as they complete the task, promoting their mathematical skills successfully. Children's communication skills are developing well. Staff help them to build up the breadth of their vocabulary by using strategies, such as naming the objects they are playing with. Parents are encouraged to take an active part in their child's learning. For example, they attend stay-and-play sessions where they play and learn alongside their children.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children enjoy the time they spend at the welcoming and friendly playgroup. They are developing as confident, motivated learners. Children make strong relationships with the staff team and their peers. Staff are consistently available and respond extremely well to children's emotional needs. For example, staff respond appropriately and sensitively when children put their arms out and request cuddles from them. Parents are delighted with the quality of the playgroup. They say their children benefit from flexible settling-in procedures that are based on the individual needs of each child. High-quality information gained from parents, when children first start attending, ensures a consistent approach to meeting children's emotional and physical needs.

Outcomes for children are good

Children make good progress in their learning. They develop key skills and knowledge that form a strong foundation for their future learning in school. Children demonstrate very good literacy skills for their age. They confidently hold pencils, using a correct grip and form all letters in their name. Children listen attentively to stories read aloud to them. They listen and respond appropriately to ideas and comments expressed by others.

Setting details

Unique reference number	301174
Local authority	Darlington
Inspection number	1090522
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	35
Name of registered person	St Mark's Pre-School Playgroup
Registered person unique reference number	RP529893
Date of previous inspection	5 March 2015
Telephone number	07768 400316

St Mark's Pre-School Playgroup registered in 1985. The playgroup employs six members of childcare staff. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or higher. The playgroup opens from Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions are from 8.30am until 3.15pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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