

St Catharine's Under Fives

St Catherines Church Hall, London Road, Gloucester, Gloucestershire, GL1 3HW



Inspection date

13 July 2015

Previous inspection date

5 July 2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Good	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Good	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Good	2
The setting meets legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Staff are particularly skilled at building children's learning around their changing interests. Staff adapt the environment and activities during the session in response to ongoing observations of children's play. Consequently, children enjoy their purposeful play as they seek out new ideas and learn with enthusiasm.
- Staff support children's understanding of the local area well. They walk to the park, post letters, visit the theatre, take bus trips and also sing for the elderly neighbours in the nursing home. As a result, children develop confidence in new situations.
- Partnerships with other early years providers effectively ensure continuity of learning for children who attend the pre-school and other settings.
- Children's emotional security is a priority. Staff's relationships with children are good, and children are happy and settled.
- The manager ensures staff participate in inductions, supervision meetings and appraisals. They benefit from regular team meetings, monitoring and training to continuously improve their practice. This has a positive impact on outcomes for children.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- The organisation of some daily routines occasionally interrupts children's ideas and ongoing involvement in their play.
- Staff do not make the most of opportunities to fully develop children's early writing abilities in their different play activities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- review the routine to minimise interruptions to children's play so that children may fully explore their ideas and maintain the highest levels of concentration
- enhance opportunities for children to practise their early writing skills as part of their literacy development.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children's play, activities and staff interaction with children in all areas of the pre-school including outside, and viewed the toys, resources and equipment available for children's use.
- The inspector held discussions with the pre-school manager, nominated person, staff and children. A joint observation was carried out with the manager.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.
- The inspector checked evidence of safeguarding practices, staff recruitment, staff training and professional development, and evaluation processes.
- The inspector looked at some records for children's learning and development, and discussed how staff assess children's progress.

Inspector

Victoria Weir

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is good

Staff have a clear understanding of how children learn. Staff carry out precise assessments of children's progress and this means staff quickly pick up if there are any delays or gaps in children's development. In response, they take appropriate steps such as seeking help from other professionals to help close these gaps. Staff ensure that children's learning builds on what they already know and can do. For example, children develop their communication and language skills as together they create a book using stickers based on a favourite film. Staff interactions are effective in encouraging children to learn through exploration and investigation. For example, children made comparative observations of castles in books and a model castle. Staff encouraged them to represent their findings and new learning on paper as they created drawings and models of castles. Consequently, children learnt new words, explored relative size, developed their artistic choices and built on each other's ideas. Overall, this means children develop the skills they need in readiness for school.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children is good

Relationships between children and staff are strong. Parents provide clear information on their children's needs and staff address these needs well. Consequently, children are confident and motivated to explore their learning environment. Many activities promote children's understanding of healthy lifestyles and safety. For example, children and staff display a poster they created together to demonstrate how to use the climbing frame safely. Children have a positive attitude towards physical activity. Staff are vigilant and deploy themselves well to ensure children's safety. Children behave well and staff boost their self-esteem through praise for their efforts and achievements. Staff prepare children well for school as they develop independence. For example, they make decisions about whether to play indoors or outdoors, and they manage their own self-care needs.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision is good

The manager meets the legal requirements for the Early Years Foundation Stage. This effectively safeguards children. Recruitment and selection procedures are clear and vetting procedures for staff are robust. The manager uses the knowledge gained through her Masters in early years education to help staff improve during their supervision. The manager tracks children's progress and skills, and monitors the provision available to ensure all children make good progress. She involves staff, the local authority and parents in reflecting on practice. As a result, the new manager has a good knowledge of the weaknesses and strengths of her provision. This has enabled her to make many recent improvements which benefit children. For example, the playroom has been reorganised to better accommodate the different patterns in children's play.

Setting details

Unique reference number	101639
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	835618
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	36
Name of provider	St Catharine's Under Fives Committee
Date of previous inspection	5 July 2011
Telephone number	07432 073325

St Catharine's Under Fives opened in 1969 as a committee-run group. It operates from the church hall in the grounds of St Catherine's Church in a residential area in Gloucester. There are currently 36 children aged from two years and nine months old to under five years old on roll. The group employs five staff; of these, three are qualified at level 3 and one is qualified at level 2. The manger holds a Masters degree in early years education and Qualified Teacher Status.

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