

# ST. ALBANS PLAYGROUP

Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	509009
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 October 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Julie Biddle
<b>Setting Address</b>	St. Albans Church Hall, Norwood Drive, North Harrow, Harrow, Middlesex, HA2 7PF
<b>Telephone number</b>	020-8429-3796
<b>E-mail</b>	stalbansplaygroup@msn.com
<b>Registered person</b>	St Albans Mother's Union Pre-School Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### 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*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St Albans Playgroup opened in approximately 1964. It operates from the church hall in the London borough of Harrow.

This group is registered to care for a maximum of 25 children from two years to under five years. There are currently 28 children on roll. This includes 12 funded three and four year olds.

The group opens four days a week (closed Wednesdays) during school term times. Sessions are from 09:30 to 12:00.

Six staff work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority. The group are part of the Pre School Learning Alliance.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted well as staff implement effective hygiene procedures to minimise the risk of cross infection within the provision. Staff are trained in first aid to enable them to treat children in the event of an accident. However, the checking system to ensure the contents of the first aid box are in date and safe has not been used, meaning items are out of date. There are effective procedures in place to record accidents and the administration of medication. Children recognise the need to follow good hygiene procedures, for example, they wash their hands independently after using the toilet and prior to snack time.

The children learn about healthy eating as they make choices from a varied selection of fruit. Drinking water and milk are available for the children to choose from when they wish to drink.

Children enjoy a good range of energetic physical exercise and fresh air that helps to contribute to a healthy lifestyle and are developing good physical skills. The equipment provided allows them to climb, cycle and slide within a secure environment. In addition, children thoroughly enjoy musical movement sessions, where they have an exciting time listening and dancing to music. They thoroughly enjoy action songs such as, "Peter Hammers with One Hammer." There are many opportunities for children to develop their hand-eye coordination as children learn to cut with scissors and use pencils, glue sticks and paint brushes with good control.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed enthusiastically by staff as they arrive at the setting. They are cared for in a safe, happy and secure environment. A suitable range of play equipment is presented for them that is interesting and fun. Children are also able to self-select what they wish to use from storage shelves and drawers. Good use of the available space is made, enabling children to move around safely and with confidence.

Children's safety is promoted as staff carry out routine safety checks both indoors and out to make sure they are not exposed to danger. For example staff ensure areas are swept clean to prevent slipping. Security of the premises is good. Unwelcome visitors cannot gain entry to the nursery, or children leave unnoticed. The escape plan from the premises is practised regularly to ensure children are taken to safety quickly in the event of an emergency. Staff talk to children about safety both in and out of the setting. Children's wellbeing is well protected because staff have a clear understanding of their role in relation to child protection issues. They know the indicators of abuse and the procedure to be followed for reporting concerns

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children enjoy the time they spend at the nursery. Upon arrival they display their name tag to mark their arrival, this immediately gives them a sense of belonging. They then set about independently choosing an activity from the varied range offered to them. Their security is strengthened as they have established positive relationships with the staff who are always pleased to see them. Children all benefit from individual attention. They are listened to and

staff value what they say. They enjoy their time at the group and appear comfortable in their surroundings.

Children show delight in receiving lots of praise and encouragement from staff as they achieve new tasks. Staff and children have mutual respect for each other. Children are very well behaved and they are learning to share and take turns. They enjoy quiet times as they listen to a stories and discuss the weather.

#### Nursery education

The quality of the teaching and learning is good. Children are progressing well because of the staff's knowledge of how children learn through play. Children are confident learners, they are curious and happy to try new experiences and share their knowledge. They have a good sense of friendship and take care of each other, showing empathy and understanding. Children can take care of their own personal needs. Children are confident communicators. They initiate conversations and pass on information skilfully, as well as share their ideas for co-operative play. Children listen attentively during circle time and enjoy contributing at this time.

Children enjoy opportunities to enjoy books in a cosy quiet area, where staff make themselves available to read and share books with them. There are many opportunities for mark making, for example in the home corner children use pens to write lists and take phone messages.

Children progress in maths as there are opportunities for children to recognise numbers, count, weigh and measure. Children are encouraged to count during routine activities, for example they talk about numbers of mats on the table for snack time. Children delight in counting how many 'lollies' in a song, they subtract with ease as the 'lollies are licked and disappear.' Children have great opportunities to observe, investigate and explore living things as they plant bulbs and watch them grow.

Local outings and focused activities ensure that children are aware of the community they live in and respect each other's backgrounds and beliefs.

#### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

All children are treated with respect and equal concern at the nursery. Staff know the children well and ensure their individual needs are met. Children are developing a positive view of diversity within society as they have access to a range of play materials and posters that reflect how other people live. They learn about festivals and traditions celebrated in the local and wider community as they acknowledge different festivals, such as Eid, Diwali, Mother's day and Christmas. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are welcomed into the setting as the manager and staff have a positive attitude towards this area of childcare. Staff work closely with parents and outside agencies, to meet the needs of their children.

Children generally behave very well; they know what is expected of them and are clear about what is right and wrong. Staff are skilful at managing any unwanted behaviour; they are calm and consistent with their approach. Staff are good role models, they work together as a team and they treat each other and the children with respect. Children are delighted when they receive the 'happy child cup' awarded each day to a child who has played hard and achieved change. Children benefit from a friendly relationship between staff and parents, which is enhanced by an effective key worker system. Staff value parents' input and welcome comments

and suggestions. The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is good. Parents are able to discuss their children's progress with staff at any time however, information regarding the Foundation Stage curriculum is not on display, meaning parents are unaware of how activities link with the Foundation Stage. The staff welcome parents' involvement in the life of the nursery as they understand that it has a positive impact upon the children. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Parents spoken to on the day of the inspection are very happy with the care, education and the progress their children are making. They are overjoyed about the care that is offered to their children. The staff are very good, helpful and keen to learn about each child and help children settle well into the nursery.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management of the setting are good. The nursery is run by an experienced and highly motivated manager who is committed to providing good quality care and education for children. She maintains a good overview of the work of her staff. The manager encourages staff to attend relevant courses to increase their knowledge and skills. Consequently, they have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities and focus on the needs of the children. Staff are also motivated and enthusiastic, to ensure the children's experience in the nursery is positive and in line with current good practice. The deployment of staff around the nursery is good and ensures that all children are happily engaged in purposeful activities, and are safe. Robust recruitment procedures are used to make sure all staff are suitable to work with children.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because all required records and documentation are in place ensuring the smooth day-to-day running of the nursery. Parents are kept well informed about the service provided and how their child is progressing. In addition, the written policies and procedures practised by staff also help ensure children's wellbeing and protection.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the provider was required to make toys and equipment more accessible for children to independently select resources. The provider has completed this by providing equipment such as trolleys with drawers to enable the children to independently access resources and toys.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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.

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure contents of first aid box are safe and in date.

#### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- further enhance parents knowledge regarding the Foundation Stage curriculum and daily plans.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)