

# St Helen's Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY312453
<b>Inspection date</b>	19/01/2009
<b>Inspector</b>	Marilyn Peacock
<b>Setting address</b>	Cathedral Hall, Ingrave Road, Brentwood, Essex, CM15 8AT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01277 265293 07855 585860
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Type of setting</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

## Description of the setting

St Helen's Pre-School is owned and run by an informal partnership. It was originally established in 1986 and transferred to the present location in 2005. The pre-school operates from a hall within a newly converted building in the grounds of the Cathedral in the centre of Brentwood.

A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. Session times are from 08.55 to 11.30 and 12.25 to 15.00 from Monday to Thursday and 08.55 to 11.30 on Fridays. A lunch club operates on Monday to Thursday. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and there are currently 49 children on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The pre-school employs eight staff, seven of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. There is one member of staff currently working towards a recognised early years qualification.

The pre-school serves the local community and surrounding areas.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The pre-school has well organised systems and effective policies and procedures in place to ensure children are safeguarded, healthy and their welfare promoted. The learning environment provides all children with a broad range of play and learning opportunities to help them develop in all areas of their learning. All children are included, and their individual needs are met by strong relationship with parents and others involved in their care. The pre-school reflects on their practice and demonstrates a strong commitment to the continuous improvement of the provision. It has made considerable improvements since the last inspection and effective systems are in place to continue this development.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- further develop planning and assessment by including information on children's learning and achievements at home
- continue to develop the opportunities for outdoor play

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- carry out a full risk assessment of all outings and trips taken with the children. Ensure all aspects of the environment are checked on a regular basis and effective steps taken to minimise identified risks (Suitable premises, environment and equipment)

06/02/2009

## **The leadership and management of the early years provision**

The management team has drawn up effective policies to ensure children's welfare which are reviewed regularly. They have evaluated the way the pre-school works carefully and are aware of how to improve provision. They continually strive for improvement and recommendations made following their last inspection have been fully met and have had a positive impact on outcomes for children. Staff regularly update their knowledge by going on training courses and gaining relevant qualifications.

The indoor play space is well organised providing children with plenty of space to explore and investigate, but the outside play area is compact and uninteresting. This area has been highlighted for improvement giving children opportunities extend their learning environment outside.

Comprehensive policies relating to safeguarding children ensure that their welfare is promoted and they are well protected. The children are safeguarded well because all staff fully understand their responsibilities to follow local safeguarding procedures. However, the risks to children imposed by the fire door not opening have not been assessed and outings are not included in the assessments. Staff have good partnerships with parents and carers. Parents confidently leave their children in the safe and secure surroundings. Excellent systems are in place to ensure that only parents or known carers collect children. Parents receive regular information highlighting aspects of their children's progress and giving information about any difficulties or achievements. However, systems to exchange information on children's learning at home are not fully developed.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

Children are happy and settled in the group's care; they have a comfortable, trusting relationship with the staff team who support children's learning well. Detailed observations and assessments are carried out by staff to track children's progress. Planning is flexible, allowing staff to respond to children's interests sufficiently well. They know children's individual developmental needs well. They support children's learning by skilled questioning, praise and encouragement to try new experiences.

Children excitedly seek out friends and play cooperatively together. They are self-motivated and have a good level of independence. For example, they serve themselves at snack time, choose resources freely and instigate play with their peers. They share resources and take turns readily. Children eagerly share their thoughts and ideas. For example, when children role play teddy bear picnics, they share their ideas about the foods the bears might like to eat and where they would live. They confidently use reference books, carefully turning the pages and entering in long discussions about aliens and familiar film characters. Children enjoy making biscuits, excitedly weighing out the flour; they suggest alternatives

to the rolling pin when the staff member realises she has forgotten to bring it to the table. Clip boards and writing materials are readily available encouraging children to record their observations and practise their mark making. For example, one child records the appointments at the role play hospital, first writing them on the board and then pretending to enter them on the computer using an old keyboard. Children have regular opportunities to use the group's computer under the supervision of the staff. They are becoming skilled at using the mouse and at matching objects using the age appropriate games which are available. They readily attempt to write their names on their paintings with the support of the staff. Children behave well; any minor disagreements are dealt with effectively by the staff.

Children are kept safe due to the effective implementation of policies. The children handle equipment safely because staff guide them diligently, offering them support and guidance to acquire new skills such as using scissors and pouring their own drinks. Children's independence is encouraged; they can choose when to have their snack as the group operates an open access snack bar. Staff help the children to make informed choices from the good range of snacks available by talking about healthy eating and foods which are good for you. Any accidents are dealt with professionally because staff hold appropriate first aid qualifications. Detailed records are maintained and parents informed at the end of the session signing the entry to acknowledge they have seen it.

## Annex A: record of inspection judgements

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	2
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

## **Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted**

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

### **Detail of the complaint/s**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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.