

# St Albans Little Learners C I C

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

EY385005

**Inspection date**

18/06/2009

**Inspector**

Valerie Thomas

**Setting address**

St Albans Church Hall, Finstock Avenue, Blurton,  
Staffordshire, ST3 3JS

**Telephone number**

07875177486

**Email**

m\_gilbertstalbens@yahoo.co.uk

**Type of setting**

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 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 Alban's Little Learners CIC has been with its current owners since 2008 and was originally registered in 2005. It meets in the Church Hall of St Alban's Church in Blurton, Stoke-on-Trent and access is via a ramp into the building. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.30 until 18.00 all year round.

The setting is registered to care for 30 children under eight years. It is registered on the Early Years Register and there are currently 42 children on roll within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The setting is in receipt of funding for free early education for children aged three and four. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who have English as an additional language. There are nine staff who work with the children. Of these, eight have appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a further qualification. There are arrangements in place with the local nurseries and schools that children in the EYFS attend.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory. All children are welcomed into the setting and the positive partnerships built with parents and others enable staff to meet each child's needs appropriately. On the whole, staff promote children's welfare and learning adequately, although, there is a lack of outdoor play opportunities. There are satisfactory methods for evaluating what the setting offers and the targets identified demonstrate that there is a positive attitude to continuous improvement. The majority of welfare requirements are met, however, the recruitment procedures are not sufficiently robust to fully promote the safety of children.

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

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

- make arrangements for daily opportunities for outdoor play for all children
- extend the opportunities to challenge children's thinking through increased open-ended questioning
- update the record of risk assessment to include any assessments of risk for outings and trips
- develop further opportunities for parents involvement in their child's learning through ensuring they are able to contribute to the assessment process and offer support for extending learning in the home.

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

- make sure that there are effective systems in place to ensure that practitioners and people aged 16 or over likely to have contact with children are suitable to do

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so (Suitable people).

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

There is a good level of qualified staff that work with the children and many have a current first aid certificate. Recruitment procedures for staff are generally adequate with references obtained and Criminal Records Bureau checks completed, although, there is no clear system for ensuring ongoing suitability. However, for volunteers the processes are not fully robust as checks are not initiated before they come to work at the setting. For example, identification documents are not always checked until after they have started and references are sometimes requested through the volunteers. Consequently, children are not fully safeguarded, although, the leadership and management do ensure that no staff or volunteers are left unsupervised with children until all checks are in place. Staff demonstrate a sound understanding of their role and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding. They know who to report any concerns to and have a clear knowledge of signs and symptoms that may indicate child abuse.

The setting is in the process of evaluating the care and education provided though using the Ofsted self-evaluation form and they have support from the Early Years and Childcare Service to help improve practices. Risk assessments are implemented for the premises and there are clear procedures for outings. Staff undertake visual risk assessments for outings but these are not recorded to enable staff to take account of any changes in risks. The nursery uses one large room which is separated into two areas for younger and older children to ensure they can play safely. There is no outdoor area available, although, there are imminent plans for the building to be refurbished and an outdoor area added. Documentation for recording attendance, accidents and any medication administered meet requirements and promote the welfare of children.

Partnerships with parents and other settings that deliver the EYFS are positive. Staff gather information on child's individual routines and the key person is used well to support new children to help them settle. For children who have English as an additional language key words are obtained to help support and encourage them to indicate their individual needs. A daily diary system for young children has recently been implemented and discussion for parents of older children is used to keep them informed of their child's well-being. However, this is not always extended to involving parents in contributing to and reviewing their child's progress and they are not actively supported to extend learning in the home. Links with local nurseries and schools in the area are built effectively to help with the transition for children who are moving on to other settings to ensure continuity in their care and education. Good links are built with other agencies to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and staff are clear in their role in implementing the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice.

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

Generally, children's health and well-being is appropriately promoted. There are clear hygiene routines implemented with good explanation by staff to ensure children fully understand the reasons why they need to wash hands. Effective nappy changing procedures help to reduce the risk of cross-infection. Staff work in partnership with parents to ensure dietary needs are met and an advice sheet on healthy lunchboxes is provided. There is a varied range of physical activities planned for indoors and children thoroughly enjoy bending and stretching to the music. However, older children do not have many opportunities to be outside in the fresh air as outings are infrequent and the lack of an outdoor play area limits the opportunities further. This does not encourage a healthy lifestyle. Young children are taken out more regular at least two or three times a week and enjoy going to the mill pond to look at the ducks. Staff effectively help children to learn how to keep themselves safe. They talk to them about not walking around with a toy in their mouth or they may fall and hurt themselves and regular fire drills ensure children are practised in the procedures.

Activities are planned and link to children's individual interests from the previous week. Staff make observations and assess these in relation to the early learning goals and use the information to plan the next steps in children's learning. The indoor environment is organised appropriately to enable children to make some choices. A varied range of resources is set out by staff each day and some are stored in low-level storage units which children can easily access. Staff engage in activities and offer support to children which helps to maintain children's interest. However, staff sometimes use closed questions which does not effectively challenge children and encourage them to develop their language for thinking. Other areas within communication, language and literacy are promoted well. For instance, children recognise their name at circle time and they enjoy looking at books, concentrating well as they sit in the comfy chairs in the welcoming book corner. Children are happy to explore the environment, making choices about their play and have positive attitudes to learning. They develop their independence during play and routines and are confident to sweep up the sand by themselves. This promotes their learning skills for the future.

Babies develop their creativity skills as they shake the glitter on their pictures and make marks with crayons and paint. All children enjoy playing in the water, filling and emptying containers and engage in role play well. Good opportunities for children to develop their understanding of number and problem solving take place. At circle time they choose how many to count to before they sing a song, matching their fingers to the number and are encouraged to count the tractors in the book at story time. Behaviour is managed well. Children learn to share and take turns as they play with the bikes and engage in role play and the positive praise given by staff helps to build their self-esteem well. Varied activities and resources help children to develop their understanding of the wider world and diversity well. Topics help children to learn about different cultures with food tasted from different countries and resources include dual language books, small world equipment and posters. Respect for others is encouraged and photographs are used from different countries to make children feel welcome and valued.

## 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>	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	3
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	3
How well are children safeguarded?	3

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	3
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	3
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	3
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
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?	3

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