

Old London Road Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	ISP Inspection
Setting address	4th St Albans Scout Hut, Riverside Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL1 1ST
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Old London Road Pre-School is a charitable, committee run organisation which opened in 1999, the pre school became incorporated in 2010. It operates within the premises of the 4th St Albans Scout Hut close to the town centre. The setting has use of one large play room and a smaller room on a lower level, accessed by a small number of steps. The kitchen and cloakroom facilities are easily accessible. An additional room is used for administration and nappy changing. The Scout Hut has disabled access via a mobile ramp but has no toilet facilities for wheel chair users. The setting has use of a secure outside play area.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. It open five days a week. Monday - Thursday 9am - 3pm incorporating morning, afternoon and all day sessions. Friday 9am - 12pm. Lunch club runs four days per week from 12-12.30pm. A maximum of 26 children may attend at any time, increasing to 30 to cover the lunchtime period. Currently 58 children attend the pre-school aged from two years to under five years. Children can attend for a variety of sessions. They offer flexible hours for three year olds. The setting supports children with special educational needs, and or disabilities and children who have English as a second language.

The pre-school currently employs 14 members of staff. The Pre-school Leader holds an NNEB qualification and has completed the Early Years Foundation degree. She is well supported by a staff team of six who hold NVQ Level 3 or equivalent qualifications. Other staff hold level 2 qualifications or have attended relevant early years courses. The setting is working towards the Herts Quality Standards accreditation.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The preschool staff have a very good understanding of each of the children's individual needs, as a result they are effective in promoting the children's welfare, learning and development. Toys and equipment are of good quality and age appropriate. Some areas of learning have limited resources and are not included in the planning. Children are safe, secure and cared for in a welcoming and stimulating environment. Very effective partnerships with parents, other providers and support agencies ensure all children receive a good level of support. The management team, preschool leader and staff have established effective documents and evaluation process to review their practice and identify areas for future improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop resources to promote children's knowledge and understanding of the wider world such as science and technology.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety and welfare is strongly promoted through good practice and effective policies and procedures. Children are safeguarded as all staff have appropriate background checks. Staff have attended recent training provided by the Local Safeguarding Children Board to ensure any concerns are dealt with appropriately. Comprehensive risk assessments for all areas of the setting ensure any potential risks to children are minimised. Robust procedures for arrivals and departures ensure the children and site are secure. Children's well-being is of high importance. Staff are vigilant with regards to health and hygiene procedures. Cloakroom and nappy changes are well managed. A healthy lifestyle is promoted through the themes and topics. When children have taken part in physical activities they are all called to stop and to check how hard they are breathing and how fast their hearts are beating. Children are keen to join in as staff talk about exercise and how a strong heart is good for you. Children are able to make individual choices at snack time. They are provided with a range of fruits and healthy crackers.

The preschool is well laid out enabling children to make independent choices about their own play. The use of an additional small room for focus activities works well. Resources are of good quality and varied, they promote children's interests and encourage them to be active learners. Parents are well informed about their children's learning. Each key group has their learning journeys made available to parents on a regular basis. Parents like this format, they are able to view their children's progress and talk to staff about becoming more involved in their children's learning at home. Children greatly benefit from strong partnerships with parents who are valued and welcomed in to the setting. Families share different aspects of their home cultures, bringing in music and books to share experiences from home. A comprehensive prospectus, web page and regular newsletters keep parents well informed about the service provided.

The preschool has established excellent working relationships with learning support teams to ensure children's individual needs are identified and their needs met. Professional development workers are welcomed to support children and their families in the setting. There is a very effective partnership with parents and external agencies which supports all aspects of the children's care and learning. The setting provides an inclusive environment where all children and their families are valued. The staff team and management committee are very active in reviewing and evaluating their documents, policies and procedures. Recommendations made at the last inspection have been met to improve the provision for the children attending.

The management committee is made up of past, present and future parents, it is involved in all aspects of the running of the setting. They have been very effective in securing funding to improve the outside play area and update the kitchen

facilities. There are ongoing fund raising events planned. There is a common sense of purpose between adults who work well together to ensure that all groups of children have the opportunity to achieve as well as they can. Two strands of evaluation have been established with parents. As a result of these consultations a review of staff roles and responsibilities has been introduced and new resources purchased.

All children's needs are exceptionally well met through highly effective partnerships between staff, parents and their children, external agencies and other service providers. The leader and staff team make good use of resources, including training opportunities to ensure children's needs are identified and met in full. This enables the provision to promote continuous improvements and improve outcomes for all children to a high standard.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

The young children currently attending settle quickly as they come into the setting and sit with their parents at circle time. Staff are attentive, they work closely with the children in order to promote their personal and social skills appropriate to their ages and stages of development. Children are beginning to understand the boundaries in relation to their own behaviour and the needs of others. They frequently refer to the treasure box where good behaviour is praised and poor behaviour goes 'in the bin'. Some of the older children refer to this as they play robustly in the garden, they are confident in letting their peers know what is acceptable. Books and stories are used to reinforce positive behaviour. Circle time is used to bring children together to talk about any issues that have had an impact on their play. Children taking part in 'It's my day' are encouraged to talk about their special events and items they have bought from home. Staff use music and songs throughout the session to call children to tidy up, line up and come together when leaving the garden. They enjoy taking part in the singing which promotes a strong sense of belonging and self esteem.

The management committee recently secured funding to refurbish the garden. The area now provides all children with a wealth of learning opportunities. The preschool provides individual fleeces and all weather waterproof suits for the children. They can play outside in damp and wet weather. Children are very active they are free to run and play, without worrying about muddy clothes and getting dirty. Designated space for a play house, sand and water means that children can explore and play in well organised areas. They use ride on toys and play skittles on the long pathway. Children enjoy balancing on the low level wall with good support from staff who give them confidence and promote their physical skills. The sensory flower bed running down the side of the garden provides all children with opportunities to look at plants close up. There is space for children to dig and for growing projects through the year. The area works extremely well for children with limited mobility or those who use a wheelchair.

The well qualified staff team have a wealth of experience in promoting the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is a good balance of child-led and adult initiated

play that is shown in the planning. The routines and resources give children the opportunity to explore, investigate and solve problems for themselves. Planning is effective in introducing children to new experiences. They introduced a farm activity which was well resourced. Children's interest was extended with the use of large pictures that could be matched to the animals from the farm set. Staff sat on the floor with the children, extending their language and understanding of the relationships between the farmer, the animals and their babies. Children's learning is promoted as staff are aware of their starting points as they come into the setting. The home information sheet that is updated on a termly basis gives valuable information about the children's individual needs, likes and dislikes. Children have free access to a wide range of toys and equipment. Resources to promote science, technology and an interest in the natural world are less readily available and are not outlined in the planning. Children have the use of torches but dark areas for them to be utilises has not been made available. The interest that the children showed was not extended to promote their understanding of this simple but fun item.

Children play well together, they are curious and inquisitive learners who ensure they develop skills that will enable them to be secure in their future learning. They are making good progress towards the early learning goals.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met