

St Augustine's Under 5's

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 124113
Inspection date 21/03/2011
Inspector Susan Parker

Setting address Charlton Close, Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire, EN11 8DR

Telephone number 01992 460614
Email staugustinesunder5s@hotmail.co.uk
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

St Augustine's Under Fives opened in 1973. It operates from purpose built accommodation attached to St Augustine's Catholic Church in Hoddesdon. The group is open from 9.00am until 12.00 noon every weekday, during term time, and also on Monday and Thursday afternoons when there is sufficient demand. Children have access to a secure outdoor play area.

A maximum of 32 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. Currently, there are 68 children on roll in the early years age group. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare register.

The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. The playgroup employs 11 qualified members of staff and a volunteer.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children and staff thrive at this welcoming pre-school. Detailed observations and records of children's achievements and individually tailored challenges enable children to make outstanding progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have excellent partnerships with parents and other settings that the children attend and are effective in sharing information about their needs and routines.

The staff team are highly motivated and have a positive approach to self-evaluation. They have established detailed systems to support the continuous review of their work, enabling them to prioritise areas for improvement and offer a service, which is fully inclusive of the needs of all of its users.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- developing further the outstanding organisation of the setting.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are actively safeguarded from the risk of abuse or neglect because the staff are vigilant and supervision is very well organised. All members of staff have attended safeguarding training and follow a clear and detailed policy which fully explains their responsibilities to record and refer any concerns they may have about children's welfare. Staff have all the necessary information to be able to take

the appropriate action promptly if necessary. Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. A detailed risk assessment has been carried out on all parts of the property and the staff routinely conduct daily checks to ensure that the environment remains safe for children. Robust checks are carried out to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children, and any students or volunteers know their limitations. A comprehensive set of policies and procedures underpin the outstanding organisation of this setting, which fully reflects the excellent practice.

A wide range of high quality, challenging and age appropriate equipment and furniture is easily accessible to the children, enabling them to become independent and make choices. Resources are used creatively to stimulate children's interests and actively promote learning and development. Good use is made of the rooms and resources to provide a wide selection of activities based around the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. They are displayed in an inviting way to encourage children to make choices and access the toys easily. Staff are very creative in extending spontaneous child led opportunities. For example, children found a feather and a discussion began as to where the feather came from. Staff are well deployed to ensure children are well supervised when using other rooms and the outside area. For example, a group of children were participating in melting chocolate in a microwave while others are outside talking about the budding spring flowers in their garden. Staff have a very sound knowledge and understanding of all aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage which enables them to deliver an excellent range of stimulating, challenging activities and learning opportunities. These activities are assessed and evaluated to ensure the learning objectives are achieved. Plans show how activities are adapted and extended for individual children.

The staff team have established a detailed self-evaluation process which highlights the outstanding organisation of the setting and identifies positive improvements. All members of staff regularly exchange views and ideas through regular discussions and staff meetings. They actively seek feedback on their strengths and weaknesses from children, parents and carers. Staff are encouraged to attend further training and gaining qualifications. This helps create a positive learning environment, where both children and staff thrive.

Staff ensure that they understand each child's background, cultures, and beliefs and encourage children to recognise and respect differences. Children's self-esteem is promoted as they are encouraged to talk about their beliefs, families, and recent experiences. This enables all children to feel welcome and valued.

Regular open days are held to enable the key workers and parent or carers to discuss the children's progress. Parents are kept informed on a daily basis through the use of verbal discussions, notices and regular newsletters. Parents and carers are also encouraged to access appropriate training, such as, first aid through this truly inclusive setting.

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

Staff have an exemplary understanding of the Early Years Foundation, and as a result, children are fully supported in achieving. They display very good skills and attitudes towards learning. Children are making very good progress as a direct result of the excellent input from the adults in the setting.

The environment is exciting and accessible, encouraging children to make independent choices and select their own resources. Children self register on arrival, and put their coats and bags on their named pegs. This promotes children's sense of belonging, their confidence and self-esteem. Children can free flow between the indoor and outdoor learning environment each day using the part covered area in all weathers.

Children display high levels of confidence as they choose to move from one area of play to another, accessing their own resources to develop their own play. They display a good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy and safe, for example, following direction when evacuating the premises in an emergency and using tools safely. Children are rewarded with lots of praise from staff, which further promotes their self-esteem. Happy helpers are chosen each day which gives children a sense of importance as they carry out tasks for their friends such as preparing the tables for snack time. This actively encourages children to develop habits and behaviour appropriate to good learners, whilst respecting and understanding their own and others needs.

Each child has their own individual learning journeys which is a clear record of their outstanding progress. These assessments are meaningful and relevant to the individual child. They consist of detailed observations and monitoring of the children's development and achievements in all areas of learning.

Children develop close bonds with the staff, whose positive approach to behaviour management enables children to feel secure and develop their understanding of appropriate behaviour. They show care and concern for each other, sharing resources, listening and taking turns in discussions. Staff act as good role models and encourage children to work together to sort out any issues. Children respond positively and demonstrate a good sense of responsibility for their behaviour. They are confident and therefore are actively involved in their learning, developing positive attitudes to this.

Children participate in daily discussions, access relevant resources and celebrate festivals that reflect their beliefs and those of their friends. Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported and make excellent progress. They are supported in developing their knowledge of English and the staff value the children's own language.

Children are respected as individuals and the curriculum is tailored to suit individual capabilities and needs. Continual assessment by each child's key worker allows any strengths or weakness to be identified and adaptations to curriculum

planning are made.

Children share ideas and work together, developing their skills for the future. For example, children construct models and they talk about the size, shape and colour. They are developing a love for books and are progressing in their early reading and writing skills. Children regularly make marks in everyday play. They use paper and pens in the home corner, write in sand and paint as well as forming shapes in sand.

All children, based on their starting points and abilities, make outstanding progress towards the early learning goals in this outstanding pre-school.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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

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

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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