

Alban Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Setting address

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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

Alban Pre-School Playgroup registered in 2000. It operates from a church hall in Barnet. Children have the use of two playrooms on the first floor and a secure outdoor play area. Access to the playrooms is via an indoor staircase leading from the ground floor. The playgroup is open from 9am until 4pm every weekday during term time. The playgroup is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early years education. The playgroup also includes a breakfast club and a holiday play scheme.

The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 30 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. Currently there are 46 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group. Seven staff work with the children and all staff hold relevant early years qualifications. The playgroup supports children who speak English as an additional language. The playgroup has received a quality award for its effective early learning programme.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The playgroup offers a stimulating play environment for children where they develop a sense of belonging and an open attitude towards learning. Overall staff promote children's welfare through the implementation of mostly effective health and safety procedures. They are inclusive in their approach and work very closely with parents, encouraging them to be fully involved in their children's learning. The proprietor/manager leads her staff in the evaluation of their practice, thereby working towards continual improvement in the outcomes for all children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- request written permission from parents for the seeking of emergency medical advice or treatment (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 17/06/2011
- ensure children have access to fresh drinking water at all times (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare). 17/06/2011

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

- review the risk assessment procedures to ensure that all potential risks on the premises are assessed effectively
- develop the outdoor play area as an alternative learning environment for children
- seek ways to promote children's awareness of diversity in a wider world and staff's awareness of children's backgrounds.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The playgroup's documentation is well organised and provides a sound framework for staff's practice. Staff are regularly updated on health and safety procedures so that children are always safeguarded while in their care. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and know what to do if they have any concerns relating to child protection. Parents are asked to provide information about children's medical needs and backgrounds and, if necessary, an appropriate care plan is drawn up in liaison with health professionals. However, staff have not yet requested written permission from parents for the seeking of emergency medical advice or treatment, should this be necessary. This is a requirement and by not having it in place, the children could be at risk if they had a major accident. The manager ensures that all outings are carefully risk assessed, and makes use of a risk assessment template to assess potential risks on the premises. However, this is not specific to the playgroup and does not cover everything that a child may come into contact with. This results in a potential risk of accidental injury.

Staff organise an extremely welcoming and attractive play environment for children where they have opportunities to access resources independently and take part in a variety of interesting activities. Children benefit from the wide choice available and are happily occupied throughout the day. The resources and equipment are of good quality and regularly added to, offering new experiences for children, for instance an interactive whiteboard indoors or a wooden fort outdoors. Staff are deployed effectively in each playroom, with an extra member of staff acting as a floater between, so that children are well supported in their learning and their care needs attended to as they arise. Children are encouraged to learn about diversity in a wider world through using resources that reflect different cultures, religions and abilities. For example, they find out about foods from different countries or about people who use hearing aids and they celebrate some festivals. However, there are limited opportunities to further promote children's awareness of diversity through, for example, learning about people from different cultural backgrounds, and staff are not always aware of every child's background.

There is an excellent working partnership with parents which contributes to all children's needs being met effectively. Parents receive useful information about the provision in a welcome pack and are asked to write a little about their children to help staff cater appropriately for their developmental needs. Link books are used exceptionally well to inform parents about their children's involvement in the educational programme, according to each week's planned learning intentions. When leaving, parents are given written summary reports about their children

which offer a detailed visual picture of their children's progress whilst at the setting. Parents are extremely happy with the care and learning offered to their children and enjoy opportunities to share their own skills and knowledge, for example, in cookery and dentistry. Although there are no children attending who have special educational needs, staff understand the importance of working in partnership with other professionals to support their development. Staff have close links with local schools which support children in their transition to primary school.

The manager makes good use of a quality award scheme to continually evaluate and develop the learning provision for children in the playgroup. She regularly appraises staff, encouraging them to reflect on their practice and seek further training towards their own professional development. Since the previous inspection staff have attended training events to update their mandatory training, such as first aid. They have also attended courses to help them promote children's skill acquisition, for example, in communication. The manager has put much effort into reviewing and developing the systems of observational assessment. She is introducing new tracking systems in order to close any achievement gaps between groups of children. The views of children and staff are taken into account when evaluating the overall provision and, in this way the manager sets relevant targets for the future.

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

Children enjoy many opportunities to explore and investigate, for example, as they choose materials to create pictures and models. They benefit from the role play situations on offer, and provision of small world resources, such as animals and vehicles, which encourage them to talk as they play. Children develop close relationships with others in the playgroup and gain self-confidence as they take part in adult-led activities. Staff support children in their play, engaging them in conversation and suggesting ideas in order to promote their learning through play. They are adept at allowing children to take the lead, following up their interests so that they become active and interested learners. For example, young children explore mark-making enthusiastically, encouraged by the provision of colourful pictures, large pens and small pieces of paper. Staff interact to talk with them as they draw, helping them to use language to label and describe. Older children like to choose games and puzzles from the cupboard, either devising their own games or being assisted by staff in playing to the rules. As a result, children develop very good skills in early literacy and numeracy.

Staff observe children closely in different learning situations, making a series of recorded observations which enable them to chart children's progress towards the early learning goals. The observations are used effectively to guide the weekly planning, responding to children's interests and learning needs. In this way the resourcing of the educational programme is particularly effective in offering a wide range of interesting activities for children of all ages and abilities. As a result, children are moved on effectively in their learning and development. They gain skills for the future, such as an awareness of sounds and letters, numbers and

comparisons. They learn to use computers and playing games that support their learning in other areas. They enjoy listening to stories and are eager to join in discussions. There are good opportunities for children to find out how things work or change, for example, when making models out of recycled materials or mixing ingredients to create play dough. Children especially enjoy going outdoors and are offered various choices in the garden so that they can be physically active or relax, for example, kicking balls, riding trikes or painting pictures. However, this area has not yet been fully integrated into the educational programme enabling children to experience activities covering all areas of learning both inside and in the outside area.

Children are encouraged to be independent and learn to make decisions for themselves. They are developing an increasing awareness of healthy lifestyles, for example, an attention to hygiene and enjoyment of healthy foods. Staff work closely with parents to offer a healthy eating programme, with fresh fruit for snacks and nutritious, healthy packed lunches. However, fresh drinking water is not made available to children at all times. Younger children learn social skills as they help to prepare snacks, select their own and pass others around their friends. Older children talk about healthy eating when making snack mats. Staff are aware of children's emotional and physical needs. For example, they ensure individual diets are adhered to and provide a rest facility after lunch, so that children do not become overtired when staying for the whole day. Children feel safe and secure in the playgroup as there are adequate safety measures in place and staff always supervise children closely when moving around the premises. Children are extremely well behaved as staff continually remind them to share fairly and take turns. Staff act as good role models, promoting a calm atmosphere and encouraging children to feel valued as individuals. Children are very happy in the playgroup and particularly enjoy the easy access to numerous play activities.

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	2
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