

# St Albans Little Learners C I C

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

## Inspection date

16/08/2013

Previous inspection date

18/06/2009

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

**This inspection:**

3

Previous inspection:

3

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend 3

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children 3

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision 3

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision is satisfactory

- Children are making steady progress in all areas of learning and development from their starting points. This prepares them for the next stages in their learning, such as school.
- Children with additional needs are appropriately supported. This is because the setting works in partnership with other professionals and agencies to meet the child's individual needs.
- Children are safe and secure because staff have good understanding of safeguarding children and keeping them safe by effectively minimising risks.

### It is not yet good because

- The educational programme lacks sufficient challenge and opportunities for children to safely manage their own risks.
- Children are inconsistently supported in developing independence skills, such as washing hands and pouring their own drinks at meal times.
- There is scope to develop children's understanding of healthy diets and how this affects their bodies.
- Self-evaluation is not yet developed, in order to clearly prioritise weaker aspects of practice. For example, ensuring that all parents receive appropriate information about their child's learning and development and opportunities to share their child's learning from home.

## Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector observed a range of activities with babies, toddlers and pre-school children.
- The inspector observed snack and lunch times.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a painting activity with the manager.
- The inspector spoke with staff, children and the management team throughout the inspection.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, evidence of the suitability of staff working within the setting and a range of other documentation, including policies and procedures and risk assessments.

## Inspector

Sharon Lea

## **Full Report**

### **Information about the setting**

St Albans Little Learners C I C was registered in 2008 on the Early Years Register. 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. There are arrangements in place with the local nurseries and schools that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage attend.

The setting employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, eight have appropriate early years qualifications and one has completed a further qualification at level 5. The setting is open each weekday from 8.30am until 6pm all year round. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is in receipt of funding for free early education for children aged two-, three- and four-year-olds. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who have English as an additional language.

### **What the setting needs to do to improve further**

**To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:**

- improve the educational programme to ensure that the activities and opportunities planned for children provide them with age appropriate challenge and enable them to manage risks safely
- involve parents and carers in supporting their children's learning at home and sharing their children's experiences and achievements at home with the setting.

**To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:**

- support children's understanding of the need for healthy diets and how this affects their bodies, through discussions during snack and meal times
- promote children's independence skills through consistently enabling them to wash their hands before snacks and meals and pouring their own drinks at lunch times
- develop a system of self-evaluation, in order to raise expectations for children and target areas for improvement more clearly.

## Inspection judgements

### How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Staff have a sufficient knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is used to plan an appropriate programme of activities and opportunities to support children's learning and development and prepare them for the next stage of learning, such as school. For example, they provide school uniforms in the dressing up box for children to try on and familiarise themselves with. Skills, such as recognising and writing their names and daily group times support their developing literacy, physical skills and personal, social and emotional development. Staff plan weekly to support each individual child's identified next steps in learning and as a result, children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. However, both planning and the environments, indoors and outdoors, do not provide sufficient challenge to enable children to problem solve and develop their thinking skills more deeply. This is because staff tend to do things for children, rather than enabling them to develop these skills for themselves. For example, through making their own dough, pouring their own paint and using open-ended resources to extend their play indoors and outdoors.

Staff gain information from parents about children on entry to the setting. This contributes to initial assessments of the child's level of development and is used to inform their planning. Staff observe children during play and use these observations to continuously assess children's progress and identify their next steps in learning. They track the individual observations of each child to ensure that they are progressing in all areas of their learning and development. This means that any areas of concern regarding a child's progress or shortfalls in provision for an area of learning can be identified and addressed swiftly. Supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is a strength of this setting. This is because they openly seek further support where needed and work in partnership with other professionals and agencies, such as speech and language and play therapists. This results in children receiving targeted intervention, which supports their individual needs and enables them to make progress.

Communication and language skills are promoted well across all ages because staff provide daily story and song sessions in all rooms. Children of all ages can select books of their choice from the wide range freely available to them. This supports their developing literacy skills. Staff focus on a 'song of the week', which means that babies, toddlers and young children become used to repetition, supporting their developing listening skills. Toddlers are able to select a song card or character from their chosen song. This enables children who cannot yet communicate verbally to express their choices and develop their confidence. Staff are competent in supporting children for whom English is an additional language. They encourage parents to share key words in the child's home language and use these to support communication when the child first starts in the setting. Staff talk to babies and children during play about what they are doing and extend their thinking through open-ended questioning. For example, while playing with dough, staff ask children about the different shapes and sizes they have made. This supports their developing mathematical understanding through staff discussing whether what they have made is 'big' or 'little'.

Staff complete the progress check at age two in a satisfactory manner and involve parents in sharing information on what their child can do and their potential next steps. Daily diaries are used in the baby room to keep parents informed about their baby's routine and activities they have enjoyed. The setting invites parents to termly meetings to update them on their child's progress in learning and development. Parents who are unable to attend are given this information to read through at home. However, there is scope to further develop this to encourage all parents to participate. This will enable parents to share their child's learning at home with the setting and to work in partnership to support the child's next steps in learning.

### **The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children**

A gradual settling-in period supports children to feel comfortable in the setting and this enables them to form good relationships with key persons. Parents complete 'all about me' documentation to share information with the setting about their child. This enables staff to provide for the child's routine needs and interests from the outset, resulting in children's physical and emotional needs being met. Relationships between children and staff are evident as they seek them out for reassurance if they are unsettled. This provides a sense of comfort that contributes positively to their emotional well-being. Staff regularly praise children for their achievements and efforts, such as completing tasks and using good manners. Children are generally well behaved as staff give clear guidance during activities and routines. Staff remind children about the nursery rules, such as using kind hands and good listening and consistently manage inappropriate behaviour.

Parents provide a packed lunch for their child or alternatively they can purchase a freshly cooked meal for their child from the community cafe on site. Staff actively promote these healthy cooked meals as the local schools do not permit children to take packed lunches. This therefore, helps to prepare children for their transition into school. Staff eat meals with children, developing the social aspects of eating together. However, the opportunity to discuss healthy foods and their effects upon children's bodies are not utilised by staff. Therefore, children's understanding of healthy food habits is not established. The setting provides children with healthy snacks and drinks. Children develop their independence through pouring their own drinks at snack times. However, this is not followed through at lunch times. Furthermore, the opportunity for children to independently wash their hands before meals is not in place as wet wipes are used instead. This results in children having inconsistent opportunities to develop their independence and self-care skills.

Staff provide a welcoming environment where children's work is displayed, celebrating their achievements. These displays clearly reflect children's creativity and their skills in gluing and design. A sufficient selection of good quality resources is available indoors and outdoors to support children's play experiences. For instance, babies explore stimulating resources that promote their sensory development and toddlers develop their imaginations through role play opportunities in the home corner, where they can take on other roles through a wide range of dressing-up clothes and hats. Resources are clearly labelled in all rooms, which support children to independently select these to support their play. Planned

activities include daily outdoor play that helps children to develop their large muscle skills. For instance, toddlers ride around on wheeled toys, resulting in their growing spatial awareness as they learn to avoid others. Children develop an understanding of how living things grow as they plant and care for vegetables in the garden. However, the outdoor environment does not provide sufficient challenge for older children. This affects their ability to take safe risks and develop their understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

Security is good due to keypad controlled access to the premises and an enclosed outdoor area. This ensures that only parents and authorised visitors are able to access the building. Before children move into new rooms, parents are informed and have opportunities to meet their children's key person. A settling-in period and information sharing between key persons makes the transition within the setting a smooth experience for children. Staff work closely with local schools to share children's achievements and actively promote teachers visiting children in the setting before they move onto school. This supports continuity of care and learning as children move onto school and their next stage of learning.

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

Management has a sufficient understanding of their responsibility to comply with the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage to keep children safe. Policies and procedures and other documentation successfully promote children's welfare. Staff have a clear understanding of the safeguarding procedures, which enables them to suitably protect children if they have a concern. Risk assessments are in place to ensure children's health and safety indoors, outdoors and on outings away from the setting.

The management team implement clear recruitment processes to check that staff are suitably qualified and properly vetted. Appropriate systems are in place for the induction of new practitioners and supervision meetings and appraisals help identify any future professional development needs. Staff are supported to attend appropriate training courses, keeping their knowledge updated and supporting their continuing professional development. The manager has some awareness of the setting's strengths and areas in need of further development and regular support from Local Authority officers has supported the setting in making improvements. However, the management team do not have a clear system for self-evaluation in place. Therefore, weaker aspects of practice, such as parental involvement in children's learning are not being identified and prioritised for improvement.

Staff have a sufficient knowledge and understanding of the learning and development requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The management team monitor the educational programmes, quality of teaching and assessments of children's progress completed by staff. This ensures that all areas of learning are being provided for and that children's progress is consistent. Areas requiring improvement can, therefore, be identified and addressed swiftly by management.

Parents receive newsletters at regular intervals to update them on issues arising, such as holiday closures. The setting provides parents with 'song of the week' sheets to use at home and invites them to meetings to share their child's progress in the setting. Questionnaires have been introduced to gain parent's views on the provision. However, these identify that information sharing about their child's day and how parents can support their children more at home require improvement. Partnerships with local schools, other professionals and agencies are well developed. The setting receives input and guidance from specialist agencies to ensure all children's needs are met, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Updated information is obtained from all schools children are due to move on to and the setting passes on useful information for class teachers. This supports continuity for children's learning and development.

## What inspection judgements mean

### Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.



## Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY385005
<b>Local authority</b>	Stoke on Trent
<b>Inspection number</b>	821659
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	40
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	18
<b>Name of provider</b>	St Albans Little Learners CIC
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18/06/2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01782 367470

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance '*Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

## Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2012

