

# St Helen's Pre-School

Cathedral Hall, Ingrave Road, Brentwood, Essex, CM15 8AT

<b>Inspection date</b>	22/10/2013
Previous inspection date	19/01/2009

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		4
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		4
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		4

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

### **This provision is inadequate**

- The organisation of children's play and learning does not provide children with a combination of child-initiated play and adult-led activities. This means that children's learning is incidental rather than purposeful and their developmental progress is poor.
- Systems for monitoring staff performance and effectiveness are inadequate as supervision does not address roles and responsibilities and training needs. Therefore, staff lack the skills and understanding of meeting the needs of children.
- Children's assessment records are inconsistent and initial assessments are not completed for new children attending the pre-school. This means children's development is not being effectively tracked or monitored.
- The organisation and presentation of activities do not effectively capture children's attention or sustain their interest. This means that their learning lacks focus and challenge.

### **It has the following strengths**

- Children settle well and form secure attachments with their key person and other staff, which supports some aspects of their well-being.
- Suitable relationships with the parents ensure that they are informed about their child's care and general well-being.

## 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 activities both inside and outside of the premises.
- The inspector spoke to the children, staff, manager and registered providers at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector looked a range of documentation including planning and assessment information, safeguarding policies and staff's suitability details.
- The inspector spoke to parents and took account of their views.

## Inspector

Lisa Paisley

## **Full Report**

### **Information about the setting**

St Helen's Pre-School was registered in 1986 and relocated to its current premises in 2005. It is on the Early Years Register. The pre-school operates from within the church hall in the centre of Brentwood, Essex, and is privately owned. It serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The pre-school employs five members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at levels 2 and 3.

The pre-school opens four days a week during school term time. Sessions are from 8.45am to 2.45pm on Monday and Tuesday and 8.45am to 11.45am on Wednesday and Thursday. A lunch club operates on Monday and Tuesday. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 31 children on roll who are in the early years age group. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children who speak 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:**

- implement each area of learning through planned and purposeful play that includes a balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities, ensuring that practitioners consistently respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, and guide their development through warm, positive interaction
- put in place appropriate arrangements for the supervision and appraisal of staff to identify any training needs, assess their performance and promote their skills and personal effectiveness
- identify clear starting points from initial assessments and use information obtained from observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. Shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations to help children make the best possible progress in their learning and development.

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

- review the organisation and presentation of activities so that they successfully capture and sustain children's interest and learning.

**Inspection judgements****How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend**

Children are interested and ready to play when they arrive at the pre-school. However, children's choices are limited, for example, because activities, such as, painting are not ready when children arrive. The pre-school is unable to have sand and water inside so staff endeavour to compensate for this with other sensory experiences. However, on occasions there is insufficient material for all children to have a go, such as, when using the play dough. Staff working with the children do not effectively engage in their play and learning; therefore, children's learning lacks purpose and meaning, and their emerging interests are not fully supported. Furthermore, initial and ongoing assessment is inconsistent and loosely informs activity plans. Staff do not complete initial assessments for new children to find out what they already know and can do. As a result, the monitoring and tracking of children's overall progress is poor and activities are not effectively matched to children's individual learning needs so that they make sufficient progress. The progress check at age two is in place. and staff work with parents regarding this.

Children are confident and sociable. They enjoy playing with their friends as they actively

play alongside and engage with each other well, for example, when using the computer and electronic keyboard. Children have opportunities to develop early writing skills through tools, such as threading, paintbrushes, chalks and pencils. They have access to a selection of books and stories. However, the poor presentation of the book corner and the limited number of books do not support children's learning about the enjoyment of books and stories or capture their interests.

Children enjoy taking part in the circle time activities as they sing action and number songs, using both quiet and loud voices. They happily ask questions, for example, 'Why are you wearing a dress?' and talk about their home life experiences, such as siblings and family celebrations. During conversations with the inspector, children demonstrate that they can confidently count up to ten, name colours and understand 'big' and 'small'. However, early mathematical ideas are not effectively promoted within the pre-school, as planning does not promote these experiences. This means that children are not gaining all the skills necessary to provide a good support for their future learning. Children have access to a suitable range of information and communication technology equipment as they skilfully use the computer and the electronic keyboard. There are opportunities for children to participate in physical, active play, such as walking on low balancing beams. However, children have to wait for a long time to take their turn on the scooters or tricycles. Outdoor play is available during the latter part of the session. However, when all children go out to play together, activities lack focus and some children become bored. These issues mean that children's interest and learning are not sustained.

Children have opportunities to learn about the natural world as there are regular nature walks all year round so that they learn about the changing seasons. There are also regular visitors into the pre-school, for example, the local fire service, the pizza man and also parents, to talk about their cultural heritage in relation to festivals, foods and dress. This supports children's learning of the wider world.

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

Children are generally settled and are confident to explore the surroundings in the pre-school. Staff, and particularly key persons, develop suitable relationships with children as they understand the importance of supporting children's emotional well-being. Staff work with parents when settling new children into the pre-school, therefore they are suitably informed about the child's care, likes and dislikes. This generally helps staff in planning some activities for new children, based on their interests. For example, some children like cars where others like construction.

Children's health and well-being are promoted through daily routines and activities. They have a healthy snack and there is drinking water available. Staff talk to children about being safe during the day, including no running inside the hall and not to climb over the large chairs. Children have access to a range of activities. However, the resources and equipment used to support these are either insufficient or poorly arranged. This, together with, limited engagement from the staff mean that children are not fully engaging in their play and their learning lacks purpose and meaning.

Children generally behave well as staff are suitable role models. However, transitions in the day, such as putting on coats to go outside, are not well organised. This means that children become bored and their behaviour deteriorates. Links are established with other early years settings, and arrangements for children moving onto school are suitable. Therefore, continuity of care and transitions are generally supported.

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

The pre-school owners and manager have a generally clear understanding of their role in the welfare needs of children. However, there are limited systems in place to monitor and assess staff's individual effectiveness. This means that staff lack the skills and knowledge about how to foster an environment that promotes effective learning and meaningful play opportunities for children.

Staff have a sound understanding of safeguarding and know what to do if they have a concern about a child in their care. The pre-school works with other professional agencies regarding any concerns, and they have a clear understanding of their legal obligations with regard to parental responsibility. Therefore, children are appropriately protected. Risk assessments are in place and staff are vigilant with regard the storage of mobile phones and informing visitors of the pre-school requirements. This means that children play in a safe environment. There are sound recruitment, vetting and induction procedures in place to ensure staff are suitable to work with children.

The pre-school shares information with parents, including newsletters, notices, policies and procedures, to keep them informed. Parents are very complimentary about the pre-school. Comments include that children's confidence is being supported well, they are informed about their children, and staff are friendly and approachable. Staff have a sound understanding of liaising with other providers where children also attend, in order to promote continuity of care and learning.

## 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>	EY312453
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	873136
<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>	26
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	31
<b>Name of provider</b>	St Helen's Pre-School Partnership
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	19/01/2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01277 585860 / 07963103469

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## 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.

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