

# Friends Together

St. Dominic RC School, Southdown Road, HARPENDEN, Hertfordshire, AL5 1PF

## Inspection date

19/05/2014

Previous inspection date

Not Applicable

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

**This inspection:**

2

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

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

2

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

2

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

2

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision is good

- Children's personal, social and emotional development is well promoted through regular praise and encouragement. They build effective bonds and attachments with staff and peers. As a result, children are happy, settled and are learning about appropriate ways in which to behave.
- Teaching is good and this contributes to children's strong communication and language development. Staff plan a range of activities for them to express themselves and they make clear choices about their play.
- Partnerships with parents and carers are good and parents speak highly of the staff team. Information sharing is regularly encouraged and communication is well-promoted to ensure that children are fully supported and settle easily into the club.
- Staff demonstrate a good awareness of the safeguarding and welfare requirements. They have attended additional training to support their knowledge in protecting children.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to challenge children further by, for example, using more open-ended questioning during activities.
- There is room to enhance children's already good understanding of healthy lifestyles by, for example, teaching them how the weather and exercise impacts on our bodies.

## 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.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities at the out of school club and spoke with staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector looked at planning documentation, evidence of staff suitability and a range of other documentation, including the safeguarding procedures.
- The inspector reviewed the providers self-evaluation form. She carried out joint discussions with the nominated person in relation to observations of the children's play, learning and progress.
- The inspector took account of the views of some parents through discussions during the inspection.

## Inspector

Jo Rowley

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Friends Together was originally established in 2006 and re-registered in 2013 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. This was due to an alteration in ownership. It is situated in the grounds of St Dominic's Roman Catholic School, in the area of Harpenden, Hertfordshire and is privately owned and managed. The breakfast and after school club serves the local and surrounding areas. It is accessible to all children. The club operates from the main hall, dining room and link room within the school and children have access to an enclosed area for outdoor play. The club employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and two staff are unqualified. The manager has a degree in early years studies. The club opens Monday to Friday, term time only, from 7.50am until 8.50am for breakfast and from 3.15pm until 6pm for after school care. Children may attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 52 children on roll, of whom 20 are in the early years age group. The club supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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

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

- enhance opportunities for children to extend their thinking by asking more open-ended questions during activities
  
- enhance opportunities to maximise children's understanding of healthy lifestyles, such as, promoting their understanding of how hot weather and regular exercise impacts on their bodies

## Inspection judgements

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

Staff demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. They plan a range of interesting activities that capture children's attention and interests, across the wide age range of children attending the club. Staff regularly plan to ensure that they are providing opportunities for children to develop across the prime and specific areas of learning. They work closely with teachers in the adjoining school to complement children's learning and development by extending themes and topics, which they are learning about in their classes. For example, children enjoy activities that promote their extended knowledge and understanding of mini beasts. Their physical development is fully encouraged as they use the outside environment to explore the wooded areas around the setting. Teaching is good and staff carry out regular observations of children in the early years age group, during their play. Children's creative

skills are promoted as they have regular access to a range of materials, such as, when they design and create their own bugs to display. However, the reasoning behind some activities is not fully explained and this results in children creating beautiful art work without fully understanding the meaning behind it. For example, children create a piece of art work to promote a religious festival. However, some children are not aware of the festival, as they were not at the club during the session where the activity was originally explained. Additionally, children are not consistently challenged in their play, some staff do not regularly use open-ended questioning to promote children's thinking and problem-solving skills more.

Children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, have their speech and language skills promoted. For example, staff encourage children spontaneously as they demonstrate an interest in joke telling. By choice, children take turns to stand up in front of the other children and share their jokes to which they laugh favourably. Children's personal, social and emotional development is encouraged and this supports their moves within the school and their self-esteem. For example, younger children are given an older 'buddy', who is there at the club, to help support them in their first few weeks. This helps children with their readiness for school and provides older children with some light responsibilities, which they clearly enjoy. Additionally, older children enjoy a range of activities, which supports their development across the specific areas of learning. Consequently, all children's learning and development is well supported in the relaxed environment of the club.

Partnership with parents is good. They are requested to share what they know about their children before they start at the club. Parents state confidently that their children cannot wait to attend the club once they start at the adjoining school. Additionally, they say that, on occasions, their children ask to attend on days when they are not due at the club. Parents and staff have strong communication methods to ensure that the club staff are always kept up-to-date with everything they need to know. As a result, the staff knowledge of each child is good and this supports them in planning effectively for individual children. Parents are happy with the staff. During the inspection, they are very keen to share their positive thoughts, including the consistency with staff and the real enjoyment their children have.

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

Children are warmly greeted by staff and settle quickly. The staff show a genuine interest in what the children have been doing at school and listen attentively to them as they talk about their day. Staff are supportive and children are not rushed in their explanations. As a result, their emotional well-being and self-esteem are promoted. Children behave well at the club because staff are consistent in their approach, listening to all sides and being fair in their response when minor conflict situations arise. Children are aware of the club boundaries and show a genuine kindness for others. For example, older children are seen supporting younger children as they build their models with a range of different materials. Additionally, they sit together at activities and chat happily to each other. Consequently, children of differing ages get along together and are learning about appropriate ways in

which to behave.

Children in the early years age range have a designated key person who regularly observes their play and assesses their learning. Children are forming effective bonds and relationships with staff and peers, these are clear to see. For example, children work well together as they create 'motivational paper chains', which are positive images to be displayed around the dining hall. They talk of what they are going to write and older children are observed to help younger children as they have difficulty with a piece of equipment, such as, a pattern stamper. The club provides a warm and friendly environment where children are encouraged to be independent. They confidently access equipment, make choices about their play and explore the outside area. Children demonstrate strong personal, social and emotional skills, supported by their awareness of the setting as they move around.

Children access a range of healthy options at tea time and their independence is once more encouraged. For example, they spread their own butter and jam on the crackers and help themselves to water as required. They independently use the bathroom and access a range of activities by choice. However, staff do not maximise opportunities for children to learn about the impact of hot weather. For example, during hot days while children are playing in the outside area they are reminded to drink plenty of water, but there is no discussion as to why this is required. As a result, children's understanding of the benefits to this or the impact on their bodies, if they do not regularly drink water is not maximised. Resources and equipment are age and stage appropriate and there are good opportunities for children to make choices about their play. Children's interests are incorporated well and this contributes to their overall well-being. Children are reminded about safety as staff direct them to refrain from climbing on chairs or leaning back on them.

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

Staff ensure that they are vigilant when it comes to protecting children in their care. For example, registers, for signing in and out are consistently monitored and staff are aware of parents arriving and collecting at all times. All the required staff suitability checks are in place and additional safeguarding training is completed to ensure that staff have the most up-to-date knowledge and understanding of how to protect children in their care. Written procedures, such as, the safeguarding and welfare of children policy, are regularly reviewed and updated as necessary. Additionally, a poster banning the use of mobile phones in the club is also displayed to further protect children. The nominated person is responsible for recruitment and induction procedures. As a result, the well-established staff team work consistently to support and safeguard the children in their care.

The nominated person demonstrates a good understanding of her role and responsibility in monitoring and evaluating the teaching and learning at the out of school club. She observes staff practise on a regular basis, completes supervision meetings and carries out a yearly appraisal for each member of staff. Regular monitoring of observations made by key staff ensure that activities, topics and themes always include children's interests. As a

result, children are learning well, through play. Staff work well together and as a team they provide an environment, which has a positive impact on children's learning. Consequently, children are effectively supported to ensure that they make good progress in their learning and development.

Partnerships with parents are good. Staff promote friendly, yet professional, relationships with all the parents. Communication is effective and young children, in the early years, are very well supported. For example, key staff regularly talk to parents to ensure that their care needs are well met. Partnership links with the adjoining school are effective in promoting communication and staff at the club work closely with teachers to ensure that children benefit from this consistent approach. Staff evaluate regularly to ensure that they are able to continuously improve. For example, they hold daily discussions to evaluate activities and learning journals. Additionally, the nominated person is able to have an accurate view of the quality of the provision from the observations she carries out on staff practice. The views of parents and children are incorporated through child and adult questionnaires and these views are addressed, where possible. Furthermore, staff have focused plans of where they want to be, which demonstrates that they have the capacity to improve.

### **The Childcare Register**

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

## 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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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>	EY472887
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	946355
<b>Type of provision</b>	Out of school provision
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 17
<b>Total number of places</b>	24
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	52
<b>Name of provider</b>	Juliette Christina Heggie
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	not applicable
<b>Telephone number</b>	07979401209

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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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