

St Albans Pre School

St. Albans Community Centre, St. Albans Road, SMETHWICK, West Midlands, B67 7NL

Inspection date

28/04/2014

Previous inspection date

07/03/2014

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

2

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

- Staff have a good knowledge of child protection and have attended training. They are clear about the procedures to be followed to report any safeguarding concerns they may have. As a result, children are kept safe.
- Children who speak English as an additional language are very well supported in the setting because they receive individual targeted support. This ensures they are well prepared for the next stage of learning, including readiness for school.
- Staff provide a wide range of stimulating activities and resources, and this, along with the good quality teaching practice, supports children to become motivated learners. As a result, children are making very good progress in their learning and development.
- Children are settled and happy in this welcoming setting. They have good attachments to the attentive staff who know them very well. Children explore the environment with confidence as their emotional well-being is very well supported.
- Effective information sharing with parents and providers who may be involved in the care and learning of the children is strong. This helps parents to support their child's learning in the setting and to continue this at home.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to improve the support given to students to help them build the confidence they need to join in singing and action songs confidently, so that children benefit from the full range of activities to support their learning.

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 compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the main playroom, the two smaller side rooms on the first floor, a small room on the ground floor and the outdoor play area.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and had discussions with staff.
The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation,
- evidence of suitability of staff working within the setting and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector had a tour of the community building and used the lift from the setting playroom.
- The inspector also took account of the views of the parents and carers spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Karen Laycock

Full report

Information about the setting

St Albans Pre School was registered in 1991 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It is situated in a community building in the Smethwick area of Sandwell. The setting serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from a large hall and two smaller rooms on the first floor and a smaller room on the ground floor. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The setting employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, one holds level 2 and one holds level 5. The setting opens Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions times are 9am to 12 noon and 12.30pm to 3.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 61 children on roll who are in the early years age group. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. It supports children who speak English as an additional language.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance support for students to help them to build the confidence they need to join in singing and action songs, so that children benefit from the full range of activities to support their learning.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff are very enthusiastic about their work and ensure that children enjoy a range of interesting and challenging experiences. Children learn through activities that cover the seven areas of learning, which are carefully planned to support children's interests and learning preferences. Staff gather information from parents prior to each child starting to find out about each individual child's interests, what they know, like and can do. Well-documented learning journals are accessible to parents and children. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning through workshops and regular meetings to discuss their child's learning and development with staff, including the progress check at age two. Parents are encouraged to make their own observations in the setting and at home, and these are recorded in the children's records in the setting. This helps parents to support their child's learning in the setting and to continue this in their home environment. Staff frequently reflect on the planning and this helps staff focus on the intended learning objectives so that each child's needs are met during activities. Teaching is very good, as staff are constantly attuned to what the children are doing and when it is appropriate to intervene to support and extend their learning opportunities. Staff constantly observe children during play and routines to note their current interests and abilities. These sharply focused observations are used to move learning forward, as

staff plan purposeful learning opportunities which challenge children constantly to help them think and develop new ideas and achievements during their play.

Children use a variety of different home languages and staff are employed to meet the needs of the children and their families. Staff speak several languages, in addition to English, including Urdu, Hindi, Marathi, and Punjabi, and children who speak English as an additional language are supported exceptionally well. The good partnerships with parents and carers, the precisely focused observations and planning for individual children mean they make very good progress in their learning and development. Children are well prepared for their move in to full-time school as they become independent and eager learners. Staff provide a good range of resources to encourage children to make marks, such as sand, chalks, water and crayons to draw pictures of what they see, which promotes their early writing skills. Using these resources, children develop pencil control, express imagination and write for a purpose. Some children attempt to write their names and some draw the shapes they have been learning recently, experimenting with the creation of patterns. Children's mathematical skills are fostered extremely well and staff extend more-able children's thinking as they provide them with more complex problems to solve. For example, staff hide shapes and have some in sight and skilfully encourage the children to work out the total number of shapes, those that the children can see and those that they cannot. Children are supported to learn about simple everyday information and communication technology and recognise that when they use a camera, they can print off the picture for all to see.

Children enjoy circle time as they discuss the story book and the characters within. Staff provide different props related to the story, and the children are fully engaged as they use these alongside the telling of the story. Staff encourage the children to recall their own experiences and they learn to listen attentively to what each other has to say. This develops their communication and language skills as they extend their vocabulary and learn from each other. Children join in enthusiastically with action songs. However, students sometimes lack confidence to join in the activities, which does not always encourage some children to join in so that they benefit from the full range of activities to support their learning. Staff engage well with children at their self-chosen activities to promote learning. They ask searching questions to explore children's understanding and to develop their thinking skills, such as 'What are you making?' and 'Where can we find something green?', which helps to promote children's thinking skills and language development. Children learn to recognise their names as they self-register on arrival. Staff help children to learn about letters and their associated sounds and model how letters are formed when children make marks during small group sessions. Outside, children enjoy working together as a team as they eagerly include each other in their play activities. For example, they share a wheeled toy, with one child pushing and the other pedalling, which also promotes their physical and social skills. Children enthusiastically explore the 'bug hotel' in the outside area as they search for different insects. They use magnifying glasses to investigate and staff encourage them to look closely at the features of the insect. Staff take this opportunity to introduce mathematics as they use positional language, such as 'under' 'on top' and 'beside', as the children explore and investigate. Children count the legs of the insects and others compare sizes. Staff introduce new vocabulary as the children are tasked to look for a centipede and they jump with joy as they find one. Staff

teach all children simple signing so that those who use non-verbal communication are included in the activities.

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

Children are settled and very happy in this setting. This is due to the good relationships they build with their key person and other members of the team. Staff are skilled at getting to know children quickly and assessing their individual needs when they first start at the setting. Well-organised and flexible settling-in sessions help to make the transition from home or other carers to the warm, welcoming and relaxed setting. Staff gather comprehensive information from parents and record information about their development, daily routines and interests through completion of a learning journey document. This means that children's needs are met from the outset as staff have a good understanding of each child's individual needs. Staff form strong bonds with children, parents and families. This secures children's emotional well-being and so they are happy to attend and confidently separate from their parents on arrival. In addition, it supports smooth transitions when children move from the setting and on to school.

Children enjoy choosing their own resources and are encouraged to lead their own play, which builds their confidence and enhances their learning opportunities. Staff recognise when children are ready to take responsibility. Children are encouraged to manage their personal needs by taking themselves to the toilet, which is safely located in a small room at the edge of the main hall and by washing their hands to make sure they 'have no germs and are clean'. Children's independence is being developed by encouraging them to put on their own coats and shoes, and staff intervene to give support appropriately. Staff are keen to ensure children's safety and supervision, and provide high levels of support for children who have medical or dietary requirements. Children enjoy lively and bubbly conversations at snack and mealtimes, which help them to understand the importance of a healthy diet through discussions about foods that are healthy and those which are not. This supports children to make healthy choices which they inform 'fill our tummies' and 'make us strong'. At lunchtime, staff explain the dangers of the hot food and why the food is cooled before being brought out of the kitchen. Staff also talk about the sharp knife they use and how to use it safely, before closely supervising the children to cut their own fruit. These opportunities enable children to take risks under adult supervision and support children in understanding how to keep themselves safe. Parents and children are encouraged to be involved in the food eaten at the setting. Staff ask parents to discuss the menus with their child and choose from the menu of healthy options for the following week.

The outdoor area is used by all children, so that they benefit from regular fresh air and exercise. Children's understanding of how to keep themselves safe outdoors is promoted by the 'rules of the setting'. For example, children learn that they must make sure that 'a grown-up helps us on the big slide'. Children learn how to cross the road safely when visiting the local schools. The staff give the children lots of praise for what they have achieved, and the children respond with big smiles. This is because staff are good in building children's confidence and the children feel valued. This, alongside the displays of the children's work and photographs of the children showing the skills they have used,

supports their developing self-esteem and sense of belonging in the setting. Staff support children to work together and the setting has basic rules, such as sharing and taking turns. Staff are consistent in their approach to good behaviour and set clear boundaries to ensure children are thoughtful and kind. Staff provide good role models in being kind and respectful to one another. These important personal skills in managing emotions and developing positive relationships support children well towards the next stage of their learning, such as school.

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

Staff have a good understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements for the Early Years Foundation Stage. They confidently describe the signs and symptoms of abuse and know how to promptly refer any concerns about a child's well-being. All of the required checks are made to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. This means that children are safe and secure in the setting. The manager undertakes comprehensive risk assessments indoors and outdoors and for all outings. She reviews these regularly to ensure that they meet the current needs of the children attending. This helps to ensure that children are well protected from harm. Following a recent incident, the provider appropriately notified Ofsted and has taken appropriate and effective action to ensure that this one-off incident cannot be repeated. Staff have been informed of new procedures and risk assessment to ensure the door which leads to the lift and play area can only be opened and closed in the presence of a minimum of two staff. The manager has placed signs on the doors as an additional reminder for staff. During this inspection there was evident supervision of the children and during tidy-up time, and children were grouped with staff at these times so that staff are responsible for a specific group of children. The door had been repaired to ensure it closes completely so that children cannot leave the playrooms unnoticed. As a result, children's safety is maintained.

The manager and staff demonstrate a secure understanding of how children learn and develop. They use their professional skills and expertise very well, to plan and monitor a varied programme of activities that cover the seven areas of learning in depth. They carefully observe children as they play and use this information effectively to guide and support children's continuous progress. This ensures that children quickly develop their confidence and means that all children are making good progress towards their next stage of learning. The managers and staff conduct a thorough evaluation of practice, taking into account the views of parents obtained from daily discussion and questionnaires. Staff listen carefully to children and encourage them to express their likes and dislikes, during group discussions and everyday conversations. This helps staff to continually review and adapt their practice to meet children's needs. All staff are highly committed to continuous professional development and attend regular and varied training courses to enhance and update their knowledge and skills. For example, staff use sign language to support children who use alternative methods of communication.

There is a strong relationship in place with parents and carers. Staff welcome parents' involvement in their child's progression and ensure that they are fully included as often as possible. The accessible planning and learning journeys ensure that parents are always

updated regarding their child's activities and progress. The setting's evaluation takes into account the views of children, parents and staff, as well as ongoing support from the local authority. Management identify training needs to encourage and promote professional development. There is a well-established programme of regular appraisals which ensures staff are monitored and under performance is tackled effectively. Recommendations raised during the previous visit have been met successfully to improve the quality of care and education of the children. Required documentation is well maintained. It is evident from discussions with parents that they greatly appreciate and value the service provided. For example, one parent commented that 'My child's confidence has grown and her progress is so amazing'. Other comments include how caring and friendly staff are, how much their children enjoy attending and the 'super' range of activities provided. Partnerships with external agencies are very strong. The setting is fully aware of maintaining good links with the local schools and other settings attended by the children in order to promote consistency of care and learning.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory 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

Unique reference number	EY398937
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	968689
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	61
Name of provider	St Albans Community Association
Date of previous inspection	07/03/2014
Telephone number	0121 5580018

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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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