

St Josephs' Preschool

The Parish Hall, Highview Crescent, Hutton, Brentwood, Essex, CM13 1BJ



Inspection date

14 April 2015

Previous inspection date

3 June 2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Inadequate	4
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Inadequate	4
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Inadequate	4
The setting does not meet legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is inadequate

- The environment is not safe as fire exits are obstructed and broken drainpipes are present in the outside area. Risk assessments are not effective as these hazards, even when identified, are not acted upon.
- Many of the records required to support children's well-being and learning are incomplete. Other records are not available for inspection as they are kept off the premises, without Ofsted's prior agreement. This compromises children's care, welfare and learning.
- The provider has failed to notify Ofsted of committee changes and failed to maintain a record of complaints received. Accident records lack sufficient detail and do not consistently show that parents have seen them.
- Planned activities lack depth and challenge as learning intentions are vague. Activities and routines, such as snack time, do not always promote independence and creative thinking, limiting children's progress towards the early learning goals.
- Provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is not consistently robust, so children do not always receive timely help and support.
- The monitoring of staff does not always focus on how they can improve their practice to strengthen learning by extending and broadening activities.

It has the following strengths

- Children form effective bonds with the adults caring for them and make friends with one another. This helps them feel safe and confident to play and learn.
- Children are emotionally prepared for the move to school, as staff talk with the children about this and take them on regular school visits.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- ensure that fire exits are kept free from obstructions, to maintain children's safety in the event of an emergency evacuation
- strengthen and extend risk assessments to ensure that they cover all areas used by children and clearly identify how risks or hazards will be removed or minimised. This includes hazardous, broken waste pipes and open drains in the outside play area
- ensure effective systems are in place to demonstrate that staff, and any other person who is likely to have regular contact with children, are suitable
- record and maintain up-to-date information about any adult who has parental responsibility for each child attending the setting
- maintain a record of all complaints and their outcomes
- maintain all records required to support children's welfare and learning; including effective arrangements to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the progress check at age two years, and have these readily available and accessible on the premises at all times
- improve the breadth and depth of activities so that children can use their imagination and creative thinking skills to make links, thereby, extending learning. Think carefully about the presentation and quality of resources, such as reading materials, text and signage. Use routines, such as snack time, to promote children's independence
- ensure that Ofsted is notified of any changes to individuals who are members of the pre-school committee
- ensure that accident records are completed with sufficient detail and consistently shared with parents.

Inspection activities

- The inspector looked at areas of the premises used by children, including the outdoor play area.
- The inspector interacted and held discussions with committee members, staff and children, and carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector viewed the available documentation regarding staff suitability, and looked at a selection of policies and children's records, planning documents and risk assessments.
- The inspector spoke to a sample of parents during the inspection and took account of the views of parents gathered by survey in advance of the inspection.

Inspector

Sarah Williams

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is inadequate

Children with identified special educational needs and/or disabilities do not always receive focused and timely support to ensure they make the best possible progress. Some parents are unsure what next steps their children are working towards, so they are less able to help them at home or be involved in their child's progress. No assessment records, including the progress check at age two years, are available to show that staff are tracking children's progress accurately as these are kept off the premises, without prior agreement from Ofsted. Children move freely around the premises and have a choice of activities set out for them. They use blocks for building, and jump and balance on low-level surfaces and equipment, developing their physical skills. Staff consider children's interests and plan with these in mind. This helps to prepare children with the skills they need for future learning and in readiness for school. However, staff do not always plan in sufficient detail to make the most of the learning potential, so opportunities to extend learning are missed. Children benefit from close links with the main feeder primary school, and gain valuable experience, as they regularly visit the school for different activities.

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

Children's well-being is compromised as some areas of the premises are unsafe or unsuitable due to ineffective attention to identified risks and hazards. Fire exits are known to be regularly obstructed with brooms, which are placed across the exit door. Outside, waste water pipes are perished and in need of replacement, causing water to spill onto areas where children play. Documentation to support children is incomplete. Parents are not asked about parental responsibility, and evidence of correspondence or care plans for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are not available. Accident records are scant and do not clearly show why or how an accident occurred. Many do not show that parents have been made aware of an accident involving their child. While staff are affectionate and caring towards children, their suitability checks are not available to prove that vetting is complete.

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

The leadership and management team has failed to address several breaches to the safeguarding and welfare requirements. Much of the required documentation to support children is not available, therefore, their welfare is compromised. Evidence of staff suitability checks are unavailable and changes to the committee have not been notified to Ofsted. Staff are encouraged to attend training courses to improve their professional development. This has had some positive impact on the care and learning they provide for children. Monitoring of the quality of teaching is carried out by the manager, and staff have some input into the planning. However, activities are, at times, basic and not fully challenging. For example, children like to play with cars and vehicles but staff do not extend this area of interest with further activities, such as books and catalogues to inspire discussion, or model making to promote design skills. Seeds and plants are successfully

sown and harvested, but there are no added labels or signs to show children how text is used to convey meaning or information. The manager has attended training to enable her to take a lead role in safeguarding children. Partnerships with parents benefit from information gathered by surveys, as parents' ideas and wishes are taken into account.

Setting details

Unique reference number	402029
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	872205
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	45
Name of provider	St Joseph's Pre-School (Brentwood) Committee
Date of previous inspection	3 June 2009
Telephone number	01277 212591

St Josephs' Preschool registered in 2000. The pre-school employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above, including one with Early Years Professional status. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 9am until 3pm on Mondays and Tuesdays, and from 9am to 12 noon on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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