

Pre School at St Albans

St. Albans RC Primary School, First Avenue, Harlow, Essex, CM20 2NP



Inspection date

24 June 2015

Previous inspection date

4 May 2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Good	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Good	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Requires improvement	3
The setting meets legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision requires improvement. It is not yet good because:

- The provider has failed to notify Ofsted of changes to the manager and trustees of the pre-school. This is a breach of welfare requirements.
- Opportunities outdoors for children to further develop their mathematical learning are not maximised.

It has the following strengths

- Children's communication and language development are good and fully encouraged, because staff provide opportunities for them to express themselves through activities that promote speech and language.
- Staff provide a wide range of activities that promote children's learning. Consequently, children are enthusiastic learners who are keen to explore and investigate.
- Children are happy, confident and secure because staff sensitively settle children into the pre-school and build positive relationships with them.
- Staff establish strong and trusting partnerships with parents. They work closely with them and other professionals to support children's individual care, development and learning needs.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- extend opportunities outdoors for children to further develop their mathematical learning.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the pre-school and spoke with the staff.
- The inspector and manager undertook a joint observation of a teaching activity.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation, evidence of the suitability of staff and a range of other documentation, including safeguarding procedures.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day of the inspection.
- The inspector reviewed the provider's self-evaluation form.

Inspector

Clair Stockings

Inspection findings

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

The pre-school provides a good start to children's learning and play experiences. They happily enter the setting and eagerly choose what they wish to do from the interesting activities and good quality resources provided by the staff. Staff know children extremely well because they take the time to meet them and their parents, gathering information that helps children to settle in quickly. Staff regularly observe children and effectively use these observations to plan individual next steps in their learning. Children enjoy leading their own play and taking part in adult-led activities. Staff interactions with children are strong. They talk to them and use open-ended questions to extend children's communication and language. As a result, children are gaining skills which help prepare them for their next stage of learning. Indoors, staff plan a range of activities that support children's mathematical learning. However, staff do not maximise opportunities to enhance learning further outdoors. For example, during practice for the forthcoming sports day, staff do not encourage children to count and compare their team sizes.

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

Children receive a warm and friendly welcome to the pre-school. They demonstrate a positive approach to learning, supported by the cheerful interactions of the staff team caring for them. Staff apply consistent boundaries and are excellent role models. Consequently, children's behaviour is good. Staff support children's developing understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle that involves physical exercise and a healthy diet. Children benefit from regular fresh air and exercise during outdoor play. Snack time is a sociable occasion, where staff encourage children to learn independence skills as they choose from a selection of fruit and pour their own drinks. Consequently, children enjoy their pre-school experiences and have some emerging skills to underpin their eventual move to school.

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

The nominated person demonstrates insufficient understanding of the changes that must be notified to Ofsted. This affects the efficiency of leadership and management. Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of safeguarding policies and procedures and are aware of their responsibilities. Staff work very well as a team to promote the smooth running of the session. They are well deployed, both indoors and outside, ensuring children's safety and supporting them in their play and learning. The manager and staff team demonstrate a commitment to the continual development of the whole provision and continue to identify priorities for improvement. The manager monitors staff performance, by working alongside the staff and through annual appraisals. Staff are supported to attend relevant courses and gain additional qualifications to further promote effective outcomes for children. The manager monitors educational programmes effectively for individual children.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY289249
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	856327
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	3 - 4
Total number of places	16
Number of children on roll	32
Name of provider	Pre School at St Albans
Date of previous inspection	4 May 2010
Telephone number	01279425383

The Pre School at St Albans is run in association with St Albans Roman Catholic Primary School and was registered in 2004. The pre-school employs four members of childcare staff, three of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 3 and above, including one who holds Qualified Teacher Status. The pre-school is open five days a week during school term time, from 9am until 12 noon and 12.20pm until 3.20pm.

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.

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