

St Paul's Walden Nursery

St. Pauls Walden Junior School, Bendish Lane, Whitwell, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 8HX



Inspection date

8 October 2015

Previous inspection date

18 January 2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Leadership and management are good. The nursery manager implements regular opportunities to clearly identify strengths and possible training needs during staff supervision and appraisals. Self-evaluation is effective. The staff team and committee work together applying the ongoing development plan and evaluating the nursery to promote continuous improvement.
- Partnerships with parents are effective and parents speak fondly of the well-established staff team. Parents are warmly welcomed and regularly encouraged to extend their children's learning at home. Visual information about their children's day is provided daily alongside an informative communication book for each family.
- Children's progress and achievements are good, given their starting points and capabilities. Children enjoy a range of interesting and enjoyable activities across all areas of learning. This supports them in acquiring the skills they need for school.
- Children's physical development is good because staff provide daily opportunities for them to enjoy fresh air and exercise. Children engage in a range of stimulating and imaginative activities in the outside areas, such as when they dig with soil to create a worm castle.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- On occasions, staff do not adapt activities to meet the individual needs of children at different stages of learning.
- The tracking of children's progress is not sharply focused on assessing how well specific groups of children are achieving.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- adapt activities to provide appropriate challenge for children of differing ages and abilities
- refine the system for assessing children's progress to give a clear picture of the achievements made by specific groups of children, in order to sharpen planning where necessary.

Inspection activities

- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery manager and nominated person. She looked at relevant documentation, such as, evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery, supervision, appraisal and induction records.
- The inspector reviewed the provider's self-evaluation record and discussed how the manager and staff team reflect and evaluate to make continuous improvements.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector observed some adult-led small-group activities and jointly evaluated these with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to a small selection of parents during the inspection and took account of their views. She spoke to staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.

Inspector

Jo Rowley

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

Arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of how to keep children safe. They know the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child in their care. Children's safety and overall well-being is further supported because the management team and committee work closely together to effectively recruit, induct and manage staff performance. The well-qualified staff team is regularly encouraged to attend training to improve teaching. They confidently share their experiences with other staff at weekly meetings. Staff provide good opportunities for parents to find out about the Early Years Foundation Stage. They share information about children's progress and achievements through informative learning profiles. The management team has built strong connections with staff in the adjacent school and other schools and also with childminders in the area. Consistency of care is promoted well and these relationships are effective in supporting the moves children make between carers.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Children's speech and language is promoted well through regularly planned and spontaneous opportunities for them to speak and be listened to. They eagerly take part in show and tell sessions and are confident to talk in front of their friends. Staff interaction is positive. They question children to encourage their thinking during small adult-led group activities that are organised to develop children's next steps in learning. However, staff do not always adapt activities to accelerate the progress of children of different abilities and stages of development. Staff identify children's interests and use these to plan activities that motivate them. For example, by adding dinosaurs to the cornflour mixture, children who normally do not like to get messy join in and demonstrate good curiosity and engagement. Staff use the outside mud kitchen to encourage children's imaginative development and show genuine enjoyment in their roles as children create 'mud and sand cakes' for them.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children's personal, social and emotional development is strong. They build firm relationships with their key person, staff team and friends because settling-in procedures are effective. Children are warmly welcomed by kind and caring staff, who support their well-being and care needs effectively. Staff are good role models and they manage children's behaviour effectively by promoting consistent boundaries. Children eat a variety of healthy and nutritious snacks. They show good levels of independence as staff encourage them to develop good social skills and do as much for themselves as possible.

Outcomes for children are good

Staff are aware of children's starting points and capabilities and they support them well. Planning focuses heavily on all areas of learning and incorporates children's likes and interests to ensure that they make good progress. However, staff are not yet fully focused on tracking the progress made by different groups of children to sharpen this planning further.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY293964
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	856397
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	36
Number of children on roll	26
Name of provider	St Paul's Walden Pre-School Limited
Date of previous inspection	18 January 2011
Telephone number	01438 871166 or 07748 170675

St. Paul's Walden Nursery was registered in 2004. The nursery is situated in the grounds of St. Paul's Walden Junior School in the village of Whitwell. The nursery employs five members of childcare staff all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications ranging from level 2 to level 4. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, from 9am to 3pm, term time only. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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