

Saint James Pre-School

St. James School, Guildford Road, COLCHESTER, CO1 2RA



Inspection date	26 November 2015
Previous inspection date	12 March 2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Inadequate	4
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is inadequate

- The provider does not have robust systems in place to ensure that all committee members are suitable for their role. A legal requirement to ensure that Ofsted are provided with the necessary details of each individual, so that suitability checks can be completed, has not been met. This poses a risk to children's safety and welfare.
- Staff have not yet devised highly effective systems to monitor groups of children's progress, to analyse any emerging gaps in learning more swiftly.
- On occasions, staff miss opportunities to promote children's thinking skills during activities, to promote their communication and language development even further.

It has the following strengths

- Staff provide innovative ways for children to develop their independence. Children enjoy becoming snack helper for the day. They eagerly sign themselves in as they arrive and know to hang up their coats for themselves. The encouragement and praise they receive from the dedicated staff help them to develop high levels of self-confidence.
- Partnerships with parents are superb. Staff actively welcome parents to contribute to their children's learning through shared learning files, key-person discussions and progress summaries. They are confident to provide activities, such as the lending library and resource bags, to support and extend children's learning at home.
- Children are inspired to play and learn in this well-organised and appealing environment. Effective small-group activities are specifically focused on supporting every child's individual needs. This helps to ensure that any gaps are narrowing, supporting all children to make consistently good progress in their learning.
- Inclusive self-evaluation strongly values the views of parents and children and is clearly focused on improving practice.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

	Due Date
■ provide Ofsted with the necessary information about each committee member to ensure that the required suitability checks are carried out for all those involved in the leadership and management of the pre-school	10/12/2015

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

- devise even better ways to track groups of children's progress, to analyse even more closely any emerging gaps
- make better use of opportunities for children to think for themselves, to promote their language and communication skills.

Inspection activities

- The inspector toured the pre-school.
- The inspector took account of the views from parents spoken to on the day of the inspection.
- The inspector observed children during their freely chosen and group activities.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager during a planned activity.
- The inspector held discussions with the provider, manager, staff and children throughout the inspection.
- The inspector examined a range of documents, including evidence of suitability checks, staff qualifications and training, the policies and procedures, self-evaluation documents and children's learning files.

Inspector

Charlotte Bowe

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is inadequate

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective. The provider has failed to ensure that Ofsted has the information they need to carry out the checks that ensure that all committee members are suitable for their role. However, all staff have a good understanding of the procedures to follow to protect a child's welfare. Children have access to an environment that is clean and safely organised. Effective mentors and regular supervision meetings help to ensure that staff performance is monitored closely. The members of the highly-qualified team aspire to improve. They observe each other's practice and share information gained from training. Key persons monitor children's progress well. However, highly effective systems have not yet been devised to analyse groups of children's learning more closely.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

The quality of teaching is good. Staff have high expectations of the children and are responsive to their individual learning needs. Staff provide exciting ways for children to develop their literacy skills. Children competently use tools to make marks and learn about the initial sounds in words, such as their own name, to enhance their awareness of letters and sounds. Overall, staff promote children's communication and language skills. They engage children in learning words in a variety of languages to support all children, and help them express their feelings through early signing. Children eagerly engage in their focused group sessions and listen to instructions well. However, staff sometimes miss opportunities to promote children's thinking, language and communication skills further. Children are helped to develop good physical skills when winding up toys and when moving in a variety of ways during physical activity sessions.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are inadequate

The welfare of children is not totally secure because members of the committee have not been thoroughly vetted through Ofsted. However, children's physical and emotional well-being are fostered well. Staff form very good relationships with children from the very onset. Home visits, gradual settling-in sessions and carefully selected key persons contribute to children feeling assured, happy and settled with devoted and caring staff. Children enjoy the responsibility of carrying out tasks for themselves to develop a firm understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, they competently use safety knives to cut up their fruit independently and take a leading role in conducting their own risk assessments. Children eat a healthy range of foods and have many opportunities to access their extensive outdoor area for fresh air and exercise, to promote their good health. Regular visits from teachers help to prepare children for their move to school.

Outcomes for children are good

Staff work in close partnership with parents and others to support all children. Gaps in learning and development for all children, including disabled children and those with special educational needs, children who speak English as an additional language and funded children, are narrowing. This helps to ensure that all children are making

consistently good progress and developing the key skills they need for their next stages in learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY390889
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	859303
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	34
Name of provider	Saint James' Pre-School Ltd
Date of previous inspection	12 March 2010
Telephone number	07765401802

Saint James Pre-School was registered in 2009. The pre-school employs eight members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including the manager, who holds level 5, and the deputy manager, who has Early Years Professional status. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 8.45am until 11.45am on Mondays and Fridays, and 8.45am to 3.30pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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