

Walkern Pre-School

C/O Walkern Primary School, High Street, Walkern, STEVENAGE, Hertfordshire, SG2 7NS



Inspection date

Previous inspection date

9 February 2016

24 March 2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
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

- The key-person system is used effectively to meet the needs of all children and promote successful interaction with parents. Children develop a close relationship with their key person, which helps them to feel secure.
- Staff provide very good support for disabled children and those with special educational needs. They work closely with other professionals to support these children's individual care, development and learning needs.
- Staff provide a variety of interesting and stimulating activities to promote children's good progress in all areas of learning.
- Staff work sensitively with children to promote an understanding of their feelings and manage their behaviour, so that they show kindness and respect for each other.
- Children develop good levels of self-confidence. Staff use equipment, such as story sacks, to encourage children to talk in group activities.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff do not consistently and effectively plan activities which provide the highest level of challenge for the most-able children.
- The committee members are not fully focused on reviewing the work of the manager or supporting her in making improvements to provide the best possible outcomes for children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the planning to consistently provide more challenge for the most-able children and support them to make the best possible progress
- review the focus of the committee to strengthen the performance management of the manager and to support improvements to provide the best possible outcomes for children.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the pre-school manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and the chair of the committee. He also met with the special educational needs coordinator.
- The inspector talked with staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection. He looked at relevant documentation such as the pre-school's self-evaluation and evidence of suitability of staff working within the pre-school.
- The inspector spoke to a selection of parents from both the morning and afternoon sessions during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

John Ubsdell

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The manager reviews her practice, taking into account the views of staff and children. She implements the action plan to make some improvements for children. However, the committee has limited involvement and plans are not always sharply focused to support the best possible improvements. Staff receive regular training, which has been identified through effective performance management by the manager. The manager and her staff work well as a team to promote the smooth running of the sessions. The manager monitors children's progress and ensures that individuals or groups of children who have identified needs are supported. The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The manager and staff have a good knowledge of the possible signs of abuse. They understand the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child in their care. The security of the premises is good and children are supervised well at all times.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Children demonstrate a positive approach to learning. They are well supported by the cheerful and caring interaction of staff. Staff regularly observe children and effectively use these opportunities to plan their next steps in learning. Staff use stimulating resources as a way of enabling children to explore and develop their knowledge. They plan activities to encourage children to develop creative skills. Children enjoy painting, cutting and pasting to make Valentine cards. Staff encourage children's language through conversation as they play. They help children to communicate their thoughts and ideas. Children use good descriptive words, such as long and spikey, as they draw a picture of their relatives on the card. The activities do not always provide as much challenge as possible for the more-able children. Staff work closely with parents to exchange information about children's learning. This includes parents who may lack confidence to contribute to their children's learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

There is a stimulating environment with designated well-resourced learning areas. Children are keen to learn and staff provide an environment that promotes their motivation and interest. Staff are highly alert to children's needs. Children are confident, emotionally secure and keen to learn, and know when to ask questions or seek help. This raises their self-esteem and belief in their own abilities. Children feel safe within a caring and calm environment. Staff promote healthy eating at snack time. Children enjoy nutritious snacks and staff talk to them about foods that are healthy. They have regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise in the well-resourced outdoor area. Staff offer children lots of praise, which promotes motivation and encourages them to try new experiences and persevere.

Outcomes for children are good

Staff support all children to make good progress. They understand the individual needs of children with special educational needs and use effective support and interventions to promote their progress. This ensures all children develop key skills that they need in readiness for school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	149665
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	854251
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	22
Number of children on roll	26
Name of provider	Walkern Pre-School Committee
Date of previous inspection	24 March 2010
Telephone number	01438 861285

Walkern Pre-School was registered in 1991. The pre-school employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during term time. Sessions are from 8.55am until 11.45am and from 12.30pm until 3pm. A lunch club is available from 11.45am to 12.30pm. The pre-school supports disabled children and those with special educational needs.

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