

Friends Together

St. Dominic RC School, Southdown Road, HARPENDEN, Hertfordshire, AL5 1PF



Inspection date	16 January 2018
Previous inspection date	19 May 2014

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Outstanding	1
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Outstanding	1
Outcomes for children		Not applicable	

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is outstanding

- All children's behaviour is exemplary. The highly effective buddy system supports children to swiftly settle and embeds very strong and warm relationships with each other. Older children give younger children a cuddle when they become a little cold from playing outdoors and help them to put on their gloves.
- The inspirational manager and her experienced and dedicated team demonstrate an exceptional passion for excellence. They consistently reflect on the outstanding service they provide. Children's and parents' views are paramount in everything the club does. Their suggestions are consistently valued and acted upon.
- The well-qualified manager works in close partnership with staff from other out-of-school clubs. She shares her expertise and experience to help other children to benefit from high-quality experiences and care.
- Staff provide excellent opportunities that are highly responsive to the interests of children. For instance, children discuss their concerns about the negative impact of rubbish on the environment and ocean life after watching a television programme at home. Staff and children now place a strong emphasis on recycling a vast range of materials within the club.
- Exceptional partnerships are in place with children's key person and the Reception staff team. Weekly meetings enable their key person and all staff in the club to provide excellent continuity of care. Staff have chosen to consider the learning and development requirements of the early years foundation stage and precisely plan experiences that fully complement children's learning in school.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- continue to enhance children's understanding of the excellent choices of resources available.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the activities indoors and outdoors, and the interactions between staff and children.
- The inspector talked to staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the club manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager. She looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the club.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents through written feedback provided and also spoke to parents during the inspection.

Inspector

Lorraine Pike

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is outstanding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff have an excellent knowledge of the action to take should they have any concerns about children's welfare. They deploy themselves extremely well in all areas and are highly vigilant that children remain safe at all times. The manager places the utmost priority on staff supervision meetings and excellent training opportunities to fully support staff in their professional development. She regularly observes their practice and staff carry out their own self-appraisal of their performance. All new knowledge and skills is shared between staff. For instance, newly implemented behaviour management strategies result in the creation of a harmonious environment. Parents receive meticulous feedback as they collect their children, this also includes relevant information about their child's day at school. Parent's comment on the professionalism of the exceptional staff team.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

Staff demonstrate a fun and bubbly attitude. This motivates children to immerse themselves in exciting activities. For instance, they hear the sound of an owl in the outdoor area and use all of their senses to locate it in the dark using torches. Children have the freedom to make independent choices from the superb selection of resources. They confidently ask staff to retrieve anything they would like from the large storage cupboard. The manager is currently considering innovative ways to keep children fully informed of their choices. Organised visits from a guide dog and its handler provide children with wonderful opportunities to help them to understand about the needs of others. Children try on glasses, which provides them with a first-hand experience of what it is like to be blind or partially sighted. Other activities sensitively challenge stereotyping.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

Children thrive in this nurturing club and refer to it as their second home. They are warmly welcomed by all children and staff. Children jump up and down, and wave with excitement as they are collected from their classroom by the staff. Children display very high levels of independence and a real sense of belonging. For example, they prepare their own healthy nutritious snack and eagerly clean up after themselves without being asked to. Children demonstrate a superb understanding of a healthy lifestyle and the importance of drinking enough water. They say that drinking water is healthy and that it makes them feel alive. Children have a fantastic time developing their physical skills. They learn various gymnastic moves and carefully move from one piece of outdoor equipment to another. This helps to challenge their balancing skills and assess their own risks. Staff skilfully help them to understand the effect of exercise on their body and mind.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY472887
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	1102949
Type of provision	Out of school provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	4 - 11
Total number of places	48
Number of children on roll	20
Name of registered person	Juliette Christina Heggie
Registered person unique reference number	RP904471
Date of previous inspection	19 May 2014
Telephone number	07933046834

Friends Together registered in 2013 and is situated within St. Domonic Roman Catholic School, in Harpenden. The club employs eight members of childcare staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The club opens from 7.50am until 8.50am and 3.05pm until 6pm, Monday to Friday, during term time only.

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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