

Inspection of Junipers Pre-school

St. Albans Community Centre, St. Albans Road, SMETHWICK, West Midlands B67
7NL

Inspection date: 8 July 2025

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children arrive happy and are keen to come into the pre-school on arrival. They form close bonds with staff who know them well. Children go to them for cuddles and reassurance, which they receive from staff who are warm and nurturing towards them. This helps children to feel safe and secure in their care. Staff arrange the environment purposefully for children to gain the most access to the play resources. Children confidently access toys and resources for themselves. For example, younger children enjoy the imaginative play area and re-enact what they know from home. They organise roles between themselves to care for the baby doll, set out the tablecloth and collect plates and cutlery. The pre-school is inclusive, and staff ensure that activities, some routines and their interactions are adapted to enable all children to take part in valuable learning experiences.

Children generally show positive behaviours. Staff use gentle guidance to reinforce the use of good manners and being kind to their friends. Children respond well to staff. They are kind and help each other. For example, older children support others to put away their pictures into their bags. Children gain the skills and understanding to prepare them for their next stage of learning and, for some, the eventual move on to school.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The pre-school's curriculum shows that it has clear intentions for what children can achieve. The curriculum is sequenced to help children continually build on their skills and understanding. Staff gather useful information from parents, which helps them to know where children are developing and prepare for their next learning. Staff monitor children's progress effectively and share regular information with parents about their learning.
- The promotion of communication and language in the pre-school is a strength. Staff use additional programmes that help them to focus precisely on where children may need support. Children enjoy a range of stories, songs and rhymes and engage in conversations with staff during play interactions. Staff model language and include new vocabulary for children to learn and understand. As a result, children make positive progress in their speaking skills.
- Routines in the pre-school are generally effective in helping children to engage in a range of learning experiences throughout the session. That said, some parts of the routine, in particular the larger group story times, are less effective as children distract each other, which affects their engagement in this learning experience.
- Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive the support they need to engage in play activities alongside their peers, which helps them to make positive progress from their starting points. Staff are proactive in

liaising with parents and seeking guidance from outside professionals to ensure the provision for these children meets their needs effectively.

- Staff promote independence well. Children show increasing abilities to manage their self-help skills. For example, children feed themselves, help tidy away toys and make choices about the resources they collect that they need for their games.
- Children enjoy mark-making in a range of ways with various materials. For example, they use pencils and crayons on paper or enjoy using dry-wipe pens on an easel. Some choose to use play dough to shape letters and numbers. They count how many pieces they need to represent the number. Children develop strength in their fingers in readiness for writing. They build on their knowledge of mathematical concepts when they create shapes and count them. Children are proud of their work and receive timely praise for their achievements. This helps to raise their self-esteem.
- Managers ensure that staff receive the mandatory training that is required to fulfil their duties effectively. Staff receive support and guidance to enable them to reflect on their practice regularly. That said, there is scope to use other methods to help revisit knowledge and understanding to ensure staff's confidence and that knowledge remains current.
- Parents are happy with the pre-school. They say how friendly the staff are. Parents particularly comment on how well their children's speech has developed and the support they receive to help their children at home. They are happy with the information they receive at collection times about their child's care and learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- review the arrangements for some parts of the routine to enable children to more fully engage in these purposeful experiences
- build further on the methods of support that are provided to staff to ensure their knowledge and understanding remain consistently current.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY398937
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10410588
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	50
Name of registered person	St Albans Community Association
Registered person unique reference number	RP529239
Telephone number	0121 5580018
Date of previous inspection	18 May 2023

Information about this early years setting

Junipers Pre-school registered in 2010. It is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 3.30pm and provides morning and afternoon sessions, during term time. The setting employs 10 members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds an appropriate childcare qualification at level 6, six at level 3 and three at level 2. The pre-school provides funded early education for children aged two years onwards in the early years age range.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Suzanne Taylor

Inspection activities

- The manager showed the inspector all areas of the premises and discussed how staff ensure that they are safe and suitable for children to attend.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching throughout the inspection and considered the impact this has on children's learning. A joint evaluation of the quality of teaching during an activity took place between the manager and the inspector.
- The inspector spoke to parents at appropriate times and also took account of their written views of the nursery.
- The inspector spoke to children and staff at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and the leader and discussed how the setting was organised. The inspector reviewed relevant documentation, including evidence of the suitability of staff working in the setting.

We carried out this inspection 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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