

Stoke Holy Cross Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	254295
Inspection date	20 June 2007
Inspector	Pauline Margaret Todd
Setting Address	The Pavilion, Long Lane, Stoke Holy Cross, Norwich, Norfolk, NR14 8LY
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Registered person	Stoke Holy Cross Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Sessional care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Stoke Holy Cross Pre-School is a well established group and operates from The Pavilion in the village of Stoke Holy Cross, close to the city of Norwich, Norfolk. A maximum of 18 children may attend the group at any one time. The pre-school is open Tuesday - Friday from 09.00 until 15.00 during term time. Most children attend for a morning or afternoon session. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are 26 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these, 24 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local catchment area. The setting supports children with learning and/or disabilities and children who have English as an additional language.

The pre-school is committee run and has charitable status. It employs five staff. Three of the staff, including the supervisors, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted appropriately because the setting takes reasonable steps to ensure the premises and equipment is clean and well maintained. However, some carpet pieces are frayed at the edges, the floor cushions look worn and faded, and the toilet floor and toilet training equipment are not sufficiently clean to prevent the spread of infection. Children are becoming increasingly independent in their personal care, for example, they use the toilet independently. They collect their own towel at the beginning of the session and thoroughly wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating to prevent the spread of illnesses. Staff take some positive steps to prevent the spread of infection. They use anti-bacterial spray and table cloths are placed on the tables before snack and meal times. Staff help children to stay healthy. They explain to the children why they should not eat the playdough and why they need to chew the apple well. Children's health details and medical requirements are clearly recorded to maintain their good health. All staff have current first aid knowledge to ensure children's well-being in the event of an accident.

Children are adequately nourished. They learn about healthy foods by eating fruit such as kiwi, apple and grapes for snacks. Children with allergies and preferences have their needs met appropriately because the parents have provided the setting with detailed information, for example, vegetarian. Fresh water is available. Children help themselves after playing actively outside and staff ensure they drink sufficient amounts to keep them healthy. Children pour their own drinks of milk or apple juice at snack time which helps to promote their independence. The group enables children to develop their understanding of what foods are good for them through everyday activities. Staff discuss eating healthily as children make different foods from the playdough.

Children have regular opportunities to experience physical activity. They have a very positive attitude to exercise and are keen to go outside to play. They demonstrate good control, co-ordination, and spatial awareness when throwing balls through the hoop, jumping on the trampoline, crawling through the tunnel, playing 'follow my leader' and kicking footballs. They run avoiding obstacles when playing in the garden and control their speed when practising for sports day. Children routinely use malleable materials with and without tools, for example, playdough. They develop their manipulative skills, for example, when using scissors to cut wet spaghetti. Children fulfil their own needs with regard to rest and relaxation by using comfortable cushions on the floor by the book corner as they wish.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit greatly from being cared for in a room that is very warm and welcoming with colourful displays on the walls which help them to feel secure and at ease in the setting. Creative use is made of the space available to provide children with free movement and well spread out activities to promote their development.

Children use a wide range of resources which are suitable and safe. Staff place items on table tops and the carpet for the children to use. Children select further items themselves from storage units, for example, animals, dinosaurs, construction. The group provides children with sufficient tables and chairs to enable them to play and eat together in small groups.

Children are learning to keep themselves safe because staff remind them to keep the sand in the tray, to sweep it up so they do not slip over and to hold hands when walking outside to the garden. The group uses risk assessments and daily checklists to reduce potential hazards and minimise most risks. Procedures for fire safety are simple and clear and staff understand their responsibilities and roles in the event of a fire. There are effective procedures regarding entry to the premises to keep staff and children secure.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff have a sound working knowledge of child protection procedures. They are able to put appropriate procedures into practice and have undertaken training for their roles. Relevant documentation and referral details are displayed on the wall for staff and parents to see.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children's welfare is promoted successfully because they undertake a wide range of activities and play opportunities that develop their emotional, social and intellectual capabilities. They are happy and well-settled. They enjoy playing with the playdough and wet sand. They join in enthusiastically with songs and stories. Children respond positively to adults who are interested in what they do and say. The staff talk and listen to them and maintain good eye contact. They position themselves at the child's level to support them with their activities, for example, with the playdough and sponge printing activity.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The staff are enthusiastic about what they are doing and try to make the activities fun for the children. They have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They give sufficient time and opportunities for speaking, listening, reading and writing. Planning is used to help the staff deliver a broad, balanced curriculum through their basic play provision. However, there is no detailed planning of the activities. Staff are not always clear about their purpose or how they will extend the activity to provide challenge for children that are more able. Ongoing observations are made of the children and the information transferred to their assessment record. These are used to guide the daily planning so staff build on what the children already know and what their interests are. Currently, there is no base line assessment made to gauge children's starting points to indicate properly their progress. Staff make effective use of resources and accommodation.

Children are developing a positive sense of themselves and have many opportunities to talk about their home. They discuss their pets, recent holidays and how they got on at their visit to the school. Children are not always able to select or initiate activities for themselves, adults often take the lead. They are not encouraged to operate independently or make decisions about their play and learning. Children are encouraged to share how they are feeling. Staff make a sad face and a happy face and children copy them. Children are forming good relationships, for example, they help each other to put on their dressing-up clothes. They solve their own problems, for example, when they find it difficult to cut out their pictures they turn the picture around to have another go.

Children interact readily with others and are confident to initiate conversations. They use language well during their imaginative play. They say to each other, 'I'm being a turtle'. More able children recognise sounds in words, for example, their names. They look at books independently and show an interest in the illustrations. They are able to recall popular stories

such as 'going on a bear hunt'. Children are learning the purpose of writing as they use notepads with the telephone and paper and envelopes. Some children attempt to write their names on their work.

Children undertake a wide variety of enjoyable, practical activities to promote their mathematical development. They use puzzles, tape measures, dice, compare bears and sing number rhymes counting up and back, for example, 'five cheeky monkeys'. Children often count independently, for example, they ask staff if they would like two or three biscuits, count eight tentacles on the octopus and sixteen farm animals. They ask each other, 'how many animals have you got?' and they respond by saying "ten". Children see numbers in their environment on posters.

Staff write "1234" on the wall in the garden and children try to hit a number with a ball. They use their fingers to count the number of raisins they have on their plate at snack time. Staff ask them how many they have left after they have eaten one.

Children are learning how to make sense of their world and acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding that will help with their later work in history, geography, science and technology. They observe change over time by planting seeds in pots in the garden. They explore the natural world by going on bug hunts and nature walks. They have some opportunities to discover how things work and experience cutting, joining and building using a variety of construction materials. Children confidently use everyday technology, for example, telephones, tills and computers. They see photographs which remind them of past events. They create their own small world environments by using the farm yard.

Children learn through using their senses. They feel different textures during collage activities, feel wet spaghetti, wet and dry sand. They explore colour when using paints during sponge printing activity. Music times are held regularly and children make and use instruments such as rain sticks. They use their imagination well when playing in the home corner indoors and have 'picnics' outside in the garden.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have high self-esteem and confidence because the staff give them lots of praise, for example, for their lovely cutting and thank them for helping to tidy up. The group liaises well with parents to ensure that children's records contain sufficient information to enable suitable care to be given, for example, their food preferences. Children with additional needs are warmly welcomed into the setting and given appropriate support to promote their welfare and development. Children are helped to develop a positive attitude to others by using play equipment which reflects positive images of race and culture and celebrating festivals. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children is fostered. They play together cooperatively, share the play equipment and are well-mannered, for example, they say 'yes please', 'thank you' and 'excuse me'. They have many opportunities to learn about the local community. They visit the school, go on trips and outings and have visitors come into the group.

Children's well-being is promoted because of the positive relationships which have developed between staff and their parents. There is a useful exchange of information at the beginning of each session. Staff greet parents and children with a cheery 'hello' and 'how are you'. Parents are welcome to stay until they feel their child is settled. There is an informative notice board in the entrance lobby. Parents receive termly newsletters to inform them of forthcoming events

and themes. Parents have sufficient information about the procedures for making complaints and the process for resolving them.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is satisfactory. Parents gain appropriate knowledge of the early learning goals through displays and reading the group's prospectus. They have some discussions with staff about their child's progress but many have not contributed to their child's assessment record and have not had the opportunity to discuss fully their children's achievements with staff.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The organisation of the setting ensures that children are well cared for by staff who are suitable to meet their needs. The staff and volunteers work together well to promote children's welfare and learning. Appraisals are regularly undertaken to make sure staff are given sufficient opportunities to improve their skills and identify their training and development needs. An effective key worker system aid communication with parents and ensure continuity of care. The setting operates a high adult:child ratio which means children receive a great deal of support to ensure they feel secure and confident. However, this sometimes leads to the routine becoming very structured with children frequently spending time in large group activities which does not involve them fully, for example, show and tell.

Documents, records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision are kept. They are available, accessible, and sensitive information is stored confidentially in a filing cabinet in the store room. Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed to meet current guidance and practices. The register is marked as children arrive and leave the setting to keep them safe. A visitors book is available to record others present on the premises.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. Although there is no formal system to monitor teaching and learning, the committee and staff are committed to the improvement of care and education for all children. Regular discussions take place during committee meetings and open meetings about the provision, for example, the outdoor play area, to help all children make progress towards the early learning goals. Staff are able to work with parents to support children's progress. There is an experienced staff team who are aware of their roles and responsibilities. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the group agreed to develop the child protection policy and staff files. The child protection policy now contained sufficient information regarding the procedures to be followed if an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer and satisfactory evidence of staff's suitability is included in the staff files to safeguard children.

There was one key issue arising from the last nursery education inspection. To ensure staff are given formal opportunities to reflect on their professional development. Annual appraisal sessions are now held to identify the training and development needs of staff to improve the quality of teaching to help all children make progress.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- make sure all areas of the premises and furnishings are clean and in a good state of repair
- review the structure of the sessions to enable children to make further decisions about their play and learning.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop planning to make sure staff are aware of the purpose of activities and how they can be extended to provide challenge for more able children.
- provide further opportunities for children to operate independently select their own activities and take initiative
- introduce a base line assessment for children on entering the setting and organise further opportunities to share children's achievements and progress with their parents.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk