

Stantonfields Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	141805
Inspection date	27 February 2008
Inspector	Sylvia Crawford
Setting Address	Wood End First School, Redbridge, Stantonbury, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, MK14 6BB
Telephone number	01908 316424
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Registered person	Stantonfields Pre-School Playgroup
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional care, Out of School 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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Stantonfields Pre-School Playgroup opened in 1996. It operates from two rooms within the main building of Wood End First School in Stantonbury, Milton Keynes. A maximum of 32 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The group is open each weekday from 09.00 to 11.30 and 13.30 to 16.00. The group also offer a lunch club for a maximum of 20 children from 11.30 to 13.00.

There are currently 61 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 54 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local and surrounding areas. The pre-school has procedures in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities although none currently attends. They are supporting some children who have English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs ten staff. Of these, four have level 3 qualifications in early years, two are undertaking level 3 training, one has a level 2 qualification and one is undertaking level 2 training.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because staff follow current environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. Children use appropriately equipped washing and toilet facilities and they are becoming increasingly independent in their personal care. Children are beginning to understand simple good health and hygiene practices; they wash their hands after using the toilet and use anti-bacterial gel before eating snacks. The provision safeguards and promotes children's welfare through staff's knowledge and experience in first aid, sick child procedures and recording practice. However, records of incidents and pre-existing injuries are not countersigned by parents.

The outside play area has been recently upgraded and the children are able to enjoy a wide range of well planned activities and equipment. This promotes children's physical development, which contribute to their good health. They learn to control their movements and develop fine and gross motor skills as they play outside on the climbing equipment, the balance bar and the hoops. Staff also ensure the children are able to enjoy activities under the canopy such as drawing, chalking and the dolls house. The children are able to experience music and movement in the school hall. Staff support and encourage children to move confidently, imaginatively and safely during these sessions.

Staff ensure they have sufficient information from parents so they can meet the individual dietary needs of each child. Snacks are offered as a rolling programme for small groups of children and consequently they enjoy a social occasion and good interaction with staff. They are offered a healthy range of snacks including porridge, cheese, raw vegetables and fruit. Drinks are readily available and children choose whether they would prefer to drink milk or water. At the lunch club children have the opportunity to have a cooked lunch through the school or packed lunch from home. Staff advise parents to provide healthy food in their child's lunchbox and children are encouraged to eat the healthy options first before sweet things. Lunch boxes are stored appropriately. Children enjoy a social occasion while they eat and are well supported and supervised by staff who encourage them to have good manners.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in premises that are welcoming, secure and child-orientated. The group have use of two classrooms and these are light, airy and well decorated. Children's artwork is on display in all areas contributing to their sense of achievement. Children use the areas available to them confidently and are able to select from a wide range of good quality toys and equipment set out in each room. Resources are suitable and sufficient for the age and developmental stage of children in the group and staff check them regularly to ensure that they remain safe and are stored appropriately.

Risks of accidental injury to children are minimised because staff are vigilant and use regular risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. The premises are secure and staff and parents are clear about the procedure that is in place for children's arrival and departure. Staff remind children about possible dangers and they are learning to keep themselves safe, for example, not to run when moving from one room to another. Children practise fire drills and have a good

understanding of what to do in an emergency. However, drills are only conducted in conjunction with the school and this does not take account of children who are new to the setting.

Children are well protected because staff are clear about lines of communication for dealing with concerns about a child in their care. They have a good understanding of the procedures to follow if they have child protection issues. Parents are aware of the role and responsibility of staff through the well written policy. This ensures children's welfare is safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the staff's knowledge of them as individuals. The group ensures they have good details of each child's needs through information taken at admission and afterwards through frequent communication with parents. This enables them to begin to meet children's individual needs from their first day in the group. Staff are skilled at settling children and reassuring parents, this means that children are confident and comfortable in the setting. They form good relationships with the adults and other children within the group and play happily together. Staff demonstrate a very caring attitude towards all children and are always available to join in their play.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children participate fully in the session and are motivated by an interesting range of activities and resources that support all aspects of the Foundation Stage Curriculum. They are making good progress in all areas of learning and benefit from the positive interaction and good use of staff questioning during free play and activities. Most staff have a good understanding and knowledge of the stepping stones and early learning goals and how children develop and learn effectively. Staff plan the curriculum well to promote children's learning and they make regular observations of their achievements. However, they do not fully record the next step in individual children's development and use this information in future planning. Staff know the children and their abilities very well; they are able to challenge them and give them one to one attention.

Children show a sense of belonging as they greet each other and the staff on arrival. They are eager to do activities; they concentrate well and listen attentively. Staff encourage children's language skills on all levels and skilfully support children who have English as an additional language to develop their vocabulary.

Children have free access to all resources and enjoy making choices. They have the opportunity to explore new experiences, for example, making Mother's day cards and presents. They enjoy listening to music, singing familiar songs and joining in with action songs in the larger group. They are particularly enthusiastic about doing music and movement in the school hall. Children are developing good social and communication skills. Their language and vocabulary is developing well and they confidently speak out in group situations and engage each other in conversation as they play. Children have free access to books and handle them with care both in groups and alone. They participate enthusiastically at story time and enjoy the anticipation of a well known story, for example, 'The Hungry Caterpillar'. Children make good use of the home corner, dressing up clothes and the puppets; consequently they are developing and extending their imagination.

The children have many various interesting opportunities to learn about the world around them through practical experiences and visitors to the group. For example they explore and investigate how magnets work and have visits from the police and firemen. Children learn about the living world through the school nature trail, growing their own sunflowers and watching tadpoles turn into frogs. They are able to use the computer each day and improve their IT skills through good software and support from staff.

Children are beginning to develop a sense of time and place through discussing and exploring past, present and future events. For example, staff discuss with the children what they did at the week end and when the new outside play area was finished. Most children know their primary colours and they have access to a variety of activities to help them develop their creative play, for example, painting, drawing and play dough. They are gaining good levels of hand/eye co-ordination through activities that allow them to use tools and smaller pieces of equipment such as scissors and shape cutters. Children have every day opportunities for them to find and recognise their own names, for example, at registration. Children take part in organised activities where they can practise their writing skills. However, there are limited opportunities for children to practise their reading and writing skills during free play activities such as the home corner.

Children can name and recognise basic shapes and are using mathematical language appropriately, such as heavy and light. They are beginning to develop their counting skills through planned activities, for example, the teddies and the Hungry Caterpillar story. However, there are few opportunities for them to practise counting and calculation skills through routine times and other activities. Children have regular everyday opportunities to enjoy physical and/or outside play. They can ride on, jump, hop and play with hoops and balls. Children learn about control and co-ordination through stimulating rhythm, dance and music activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff have a high regard for the wellbeing of all children, giving good levels of individual support, care and concern. Consequently, children are developing self-esteem and a respect for others. Staff act as good role models, talking to children respectfully and ensuring all children have the same opportunities. They encourage children's independence and praise their achievements. Children demonstrate a growing awareness of their own, and others' needs and know they can call upon adults, and other children, when help is needed. Overall, children's social, moral, cultural and spiritual development is fostered well.

The group have good procedures in place and well trained staff to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities although none currently attend. Children with English as an additional language are learning to communicate well. Staff manage children's behaviour very positively and children are supported to understand what is acceptable therefore, children's behaviour is extremely good. Staff remain calm and patient and help children to learn self-discipline and consideration of others. They use praise and encouragement to promote good behaviour.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents are made very welcome into the setting and feel very supported by staff. This positive relationship reinforces children's sense of belonging and promotes continuity of care. Parents receive information in a variety of ways about the setting and the nursery education provided. They have the opportunity to attend regular parents' meetings where they can talk to the key worker and see their child's profile. All staff are available, on a daily basis, to discuss any issues to do with their child.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The pre-school environment is warm, welcoming, safe and secure for children. Staff organise the rooms very well to promote an environment where children are able to participate in a wide range of age appropriate activities. This enables children to build their confidence and self-esteem. Staff ratio and deployment of staff all contribute to children's good health, safety and enjoyment. The key worker system works extremely well; it provides the children with a sense of belonging and ensures that their individual needs are met.

The recruitment and vetting procedure ensures children are well protected. All staff have knowledge and understanding of child development and most have early years qualifications. The induction procedure is good and ensures staff are clear about their role in the setting and are able to act in the interest of children's welfare and safety. The operational plan is a comprehensive working document and along with the policies and procedures is reviewed regularly. All required documentation is kept, including parental consents and most records are shared appropriately with parents. Documentation is regularly updated to ensure children receive consistent care. The policies and procedures support children's care and staff are familiar with them.

Leadership and management is good. This contributes to children's progress towards the early learning goals. Regular staff meetings and planning meetings take place and staff work very well as a team. They have individual training development plans and are supported to attend on going training. The play leader and the committee have a very good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and a commitment to develop the pre-school. They support staff both professionally and personally. Staff make observations, monitor and record children's achievements, which are shared with parents. However, they do not record the next step in individual children's development and use this to inform future planning. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the provision was asked to ensure all documentation contains the necessary details and that policies and procedures are made available to parents. To ensure that effective procedures are put in place for appointing and vetting staff.

Since the last inspection, the provision updates their records regularly to ensure they have all necessary information from parents. They have a copy of the policies and procedures freely available to staff. The group now have a rigorous procedure in place for the recruitment and vetting of new staff.

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.

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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):

- ensure that fire drills are conducted to meet the needs of all children
- ensure that records of incidents and pre-existing injuries are countersigned by parents or carers.

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):

- enhance the planning of the curriculum, by ensuring that the next stage of children's learning is recorded and used to guide planning
- provide opportunities for children to develop their counting, calculation, and mark making skills during routine time and other activities.

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