

# Stenson Fields Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	206879
<b>Inspection date</b>	27 February 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Geraldine Barford
<b>Setting Address</b>	Stenson Fields Primary Community School, Heather Close, Stenson Fields, Derby, Derbyshire, DE24 3BW
<b>Telephone number</b>	01332 772452
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Stenson Fields Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 satisfactory. 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?

Stenson Fields Pre-School opened in 1987. It operates from the community room at Stenson Fields Primary School. A maximum of 25 children may attend the Pre-School at any one time.

The setting serves the local and surrounding area.

There is a secure enclosed outdoor play area and the Pre-School have the use of the school playing field during the summer months.

The Pre-School opens five days a week during school term only. Sessions are from 09.15 until 11.45 Monday to Friday, and 12.30 until 15.00 on Monday, Tuesday and Friday afternoons. The group also operates a rising fours session at Sinfin Library on Friday's.

There are currently 60 children from two years to five years on roll. This includes 35 funded 3-year-olds and 21 funded 4-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language.

The Pre-School employs 8 part-time/full-time staff. All members of staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 3. Childcare students are placed in the nursery by local colleges. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and receives funding for nursery education. The setting is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PLA).

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is generally promoted because staff follow satisfactory hygiene procedures such as cleaning the tables before snack time and ensuring food preparation areas in the kitchen are clean. Access to appropriate toilet facilities are available and children clean their hands after using the toilet and before snack.

A selection of snacks are provided which are usually nutritious and which meet the children's individual dietary needs such as a selection of fruit, vegetables, toast, crackers and muffins. There is a choice of milk or water to drink at snack time, or children are able to bring their own drink if they prefer. Water is available throughout the sessions to ensure that children do not become thirsty.

Staff follow clear procedures if the children feel ill or have an accident and appropriate care is provided. At present there is only one member of staff with a current first aid certificate and she does not work at the setting on a Friday morning. Although other staff have applied to access training, they have been unsuccessful and the setting rely on a qualified member of the school staff, who share the site, being available, which means that children are not totally safeguarded. The first aid box is stored in the kitchen and is easily accessible, but many of the contents are out of date which could potentially compromise children's health. Staff are aware of the correct procedures for administering medication and permission is obtained from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment and information is gathered from parents about individual children's health care needs. Accidents are generally recorded appropriately, however some staff do not always sign entries therefore, procedures are not entirely robust.

Children are developing a positive attitude to physical exercise and their skills are being adequately developed. They have access to the outdoor area where they run around, and use ride-on toys and other appropriate equipment. Staff have some warm, outdoor clothes that children can borrow if necessary, to ensure that they can take part. A variety of physical activities also take place indoors, for example when children take part in action songs, kick balls into a net and learn how to play hopscotch.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure indoor and outdoor environment where staff take positive steps to minimise risks, for example, they monitor children's arrival and departure and ensure that the entrance to the provision is kept secure to prevent unauthorised access. Fire safety precautions including a fire blanket and extinguishers are in place and staff practise emergency evacuations with the children to ensure they know what to do in the event of a fire.

Staff create a bright and interesting environment. The room is made welcoming with displays on the walls, some of which include children's own artwork. The layout of the playroom provides children with space to move around freely and safely and encourages their independence, for example, children can pull out trays to choose the jigsaw that they want and younger children know where to collect an apron from and ask for help to put it on, before bathing the dolls. Children are able to self-select from a sufficient range of toys and equipment which meet safety standards and are well-maintained.

Children develop a good understanding of safety rules, for example they understand that toys must be tidied away so that nobody will fall over them, that they must not run around when the tables are out and that they should not push one another. Their welfare is safeguarded because there is a designated member of staff with child protection training and all staff are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities in protecting children.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children arrive happy and settle well and separate from their parents and carers confidently or are sensitively supported by staff to do so. Comfort toys can be brought if necessary and they are kept in a basket and returned at the end of the session unless they are needed. Children who are new to the setting are treated with consideration and are given someone to sit with and a sticker at the end of the session to make them feel valued and welcome. Staff encourage the contributions that individual children make, for example by giving them an opportunity to speak during story and circle time and allowing them to take it in turns to choose some of the resources that are to be set up.

A satisfactory balance of focused and free choice activities keep children generally interested throughout the session. Occasionally children are not fully engaged, but staff are usually quick to notice this and point out to children the alternative activities available to them. Children are fairly confident and can play well on their own or with others. The organisation of activities and routines of the setting generally help children to initiate their own play and follow their own interests, as they freely choose to spend their time engaged in activities that interest them, for example making models with the construction kits, rearranging furniture and people around the rooms in the doll's house or moving trains along a track.

The setting has appropriately developed the use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework in their practice with this age group. There is a key worker system in place and all staff are sensitive and aware of the needs of younger children. There is an appropriate system to record children's achievement and progression but records made are not dated and it is not possible to form a clear picture of individual children's progress. The framework is reflected in the planning and staff give additional support to ensure younger children are able to participate and make progress. For example they limit the numbers to ten in numeracy activities and have dual-use scissors to assist children to cut along a wavy line. Children understand the routines of the group and anticipate when it is time to tidy up as they recognise the 'bell'.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. A suitable balance of adult-led and child-initiated play ensures children are generally motivated and engaged in a range of developmentally appropriate activities. Staff use their sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn to provide an interesting environment which reflects all children's

background and the wider community. Staff use an acceptable range of teaching methods to motivate children so they learn and make progress, for example they invite the children to give themselves a clap when they have all listened well to the story and they praise the efforts of children when writing numbers or using a stencil cutter to make flowers for their 'Mother's day' cards. Clear strategies are used to interest children, for example introducing toothbrushes to the water play when bathing the dolls and allowing children to choose which dried flowers they will put in their bags. Staff spend much of their time joining in with children's play to extend their learning and they sometimes informally adapt activities to provide children with realistic challenge, for example, they encourage children to choose different ways of travelling along a bench and they encourage older and more able children to write their own name. Once a term activities are verbally evaluated but as this takes place some time after the activities, it does not allow for the evaluation to assist with future planning for individual children's progress.

Planning is written around topics and is generally balanced across the six areas of learning and is linked to appropriate stepping stones. Assessment is based upon observations recorded by Key Workers and staff usually record children's next steps in learning and incorporate them into future planning. However, records are not dated and therefore opportunities to promote children's individual further development may be missed. Staff manage children's behaviour effectively and provide them with successful strategies to help them learn to manage their own behaviour, for example, they use the egg timer to show when it is someone else's turn on the computer and they praise children for helping one another.

Children generally enjoy their time at the setting. They have a positive attitude to learning and become self-assured in their play, interacting with their peers to share ideas and experiences. They develop their self-esteem and take pride in their achievements, for example, when they take home their craft work. Children play together well, cooperating and offering their own suggestions when sharing a pretend picnic, pouring drinks for one another or working on the computer.

Most children confidently recognise their own name and they are developing some pencil control, for example, when attempting to write their names on cards they have made. They join in with animal noises at story time and can say that children should share when hearing a story about children being selfish. They use some mathematical language during their play when visiting the role play 'shop' and they learn early calculation skills when they compare the number and size of bears or beads. Counting abilities are reinforced during register time and when singing number rhymes and songs. Children recognise simple shapes and can sort them appropriately. They move around confidently indoors and outside, safely negotiating objects such as tables, chairs and people. They enjoy physical play and staff support younger children sensitively by moving the net to help them to score a goal. Children are beginning to learn about technology and are keen to use the computer. They gain an early understanding of the passage of time when they change the calendar each day and talk about the months of the year and yesterday, today and tomorrow. Visits to the library and the recycling centre help children to gain a sense of the community in which they live.

Children take part in activities to learn about living things; they show curiosity when observing carrot tops, cress and broad beans growing. They make use of their imagination in planned and spontaneous role play situations. They explore their creativity while experimenting with a varied range of media and materials when making junk models. Overall, children make satisfactory progress in their learning and achieve appropriately during their time at the setting.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are given due consideration by staff who take steps to ensure that all children are able to feel comforted and secure. For example, detailed information is gathered at the point of registration, which makes sure that staff have all relevant information about children regarding routines, likes, dislikes and fears. The setting has a very positive attitude towards children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and they are well cared for. Staff adapt activities and give lots of additional support to ensure that they are included and can take part. Guidance is taken from parents and where required, external agencies to be sure that children's needs are consistently met.

The setting liaises with school staff, where appropriate, to ensure a smooth transition and this works well and helps children to feel secure. Children are able to feel a sense of belonging. They contribute to the displays on the walls and staff value their individual personalities. Children learn about the wider world through visits from police officers, paramedics, the dental hygienist and when they go to watch the Diwali celebrations in the school hall. Positive images of other people in the world are promoted when the register is called in different languages and children are given opportunities to access a broad variety of appropriate toys, posters and books.

Children behave well. With support from staff they effectively learn about how to negotiate for popular items such as the computer when they attempt to write their name on the 'waiting for a turn' board. Children are aware of the rules of the setting as they are on the wall and they can tell others what they are, for example 'you must put up your hand if you want to speak during story time'. This enables them to take some responsibility for their own behaviour and begin to understand the difference between right and wrong. When the 'tidy up' bell sounds, children put their hands in the air and wait until they are asked to tidy up. Most children join in and cooperate well together. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

All the required documentation and consents are in place to ensure children are looked after according to their parents' wishes. Parents are invited to view some of the group's policies and procedures and booklets given to parents contain some effective information about the setting. However, parents are currently provided with the incorrect address details for Ofsted. Children benefit from staff having positive relationships with their parents and parents are very complimentary about the care their children receive. A regular exchange of verbal information promotes consistency of care for children. Parents are asked about their views on the setting in a questionnaire that is sent out.

The partnership with parents and carers of children receiving nursery education is satisfactory. Parents are invited to formally discuss their children's progress twice a year and they are invited to look at and add any comments to written records. A parents sheet, detailing areas of learning to be developed is completed sometimes by Key Workers but at present this is not shared with parents which means that they are unable to reinforce and support their children's learning at home. Information about planned future events is included in the termly newsletters which can be translated by some staff members for parents if necessary. The setting make parents aware of how they can make a complaint and are aware of their duty to log them, should they ever receive any.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by adults who are appropriately vetted. Suitable qualifications and experience of the staff mean that they have a sound understanding of the development and care of children. Recruitment procedures are adequate. For example, the supervisor is fully aware of the requirement of staff to undergo Criminal Records Bureau checks and committee members also have relevant checks carried out. The organised environment and general staff deployment enhances children's enjoyment and achievement. Sessions are structured with clear routines which help children settle and become confident. Staff work together as an effective team to support children's care, learning and play.

Operational plans, policies and procedures are generally effective and evident within practice; they promote children's good health, safety and ability to make a positive contribution. The plan is adequately organised and details the running of the provision and is readily available to parents. The required documentation is mainly in place but there are some areas where documentation does not contain appropriate signatures or up to date information and this means that children's welfare is not sufficiently protected.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The supervisor is experienced and very established within the setting. The staff team work together to plan and provide the nursery education; staff meetings mean that staff are all involved with the planning, which provides some consistency for children. Staff appraisals are used to identify strengths, weaknesses and areas for professional development but they have not been formally recorded in the last two years. Regular discussions which take place assist in the monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum and areas for improvement are identified and addressed with the support of the local authority advisory teacher. Overall children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the setting was asked to: improve the documentation to ensure the safe and efficient management of the provision and bring policies, records and procedures in-line with requirements; to improve hygiene procedures, in relation to current hand washing practices and to improve staff awareness of health and safety requirements.

The management team have reviewed all policies, records and procedures and they generally contain all relevant information, are shared with parents and are in-line with requirements. This means that parents are informed of all aspects of children's health, care and security. However, there are still some records that need more attention to detail and so there is a further recommendation at this inspection. Hygiene practices have been improved and children now clean their hands with an antibacterial spray before having their snack. This means that children's health is safeguarded. A new policy, which details health and safety requirements has been adopted and all staff are aware of the requirements. Further, there is now a designated member of staff who is responsible for health and safety issues.

At the last education inspection the setting was asked to: ensure assessments are used effectively, to link children's individual progress and achievements to the next steps in learning; to ensure planning and opportunities in the daily routine promote opportunities to raise children's awareness of basic calculation and to ensure parents have regular opportunities to share their child's progress and achievements and are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning at home.

The setting have developed some systems to ensure that children's progress is linked to their next steps by carrying out initial assessments to establish starting points and by the use of observations which are used to assess and record progress along the stepping stones for each area of learning. However, since these records are not dated a clear picture of children's progress cannot be seen and so a further recommendation is made at this inspection.

Opportunities to raise children's awareness of basic calculation have been addressed by the planning of activities that provide opportunities for simple addition and subtraction operations. This means that children's mathematical development is promoted. Formal parents' evenings are now offered twice a year when the parents can discuss their children's progress and add any information or comments to records themselves. Although a sheet, giving details of areas that parents could help their children's learning with, has been devised, it has not been consistently shared with parents and so a further recommendation has been made at this inspection.

### **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**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. 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):

- ensure that the first aid box complies with health and safety regulations
- ensure that there is a qualified first aider available at all times
- ensure all documentation contains appropriate signatures and up to date information.

#### **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 the rigour of assessment records to show a clear picture of children's progress
- develop the evaluation of activities to assist with future planning for individual children's progress



- continue to develop methods of sharing children's learning with 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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)