

# Stoke Hill Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** 106048

**Inspection date** 22 April 2008

**Inspector** Sara Bailey

**Setting Address** 183a Mincinglake Road, Stoke Hill, Exeter, Devon, EX4 7DS

**Telephone number** 01392 426898

**E-mail**

**Registered person** Stoke Hill Pre School Group

**Type of inspection** Integrated

**Type of care** Full day 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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Stoke Hill pre-school was registered for full-day care in 2001. It operates from a former mobile classroom on a plot of land next to allotments and a children's playground, within a residential area of Exeter, Devon. The premises consist of one large room with a separate kitchen area, office and toilet facilities. There is a fully enclosed garden area with lawn, vegetable patch and soft surface area for outside play. The pre-school serves the local area. There are currently 48 children from three to five years on roll. This includes 42 funded three and four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group supports children who speak English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and disabilities. The group opens five days a week during school term times. The pre-school runs every morning from 09.15 until 11.45, with an optional lunch club until 12.45 or full day session until 15.20 on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursday and Friday. The rising five's group runs every Tuesday 13.00 to 14.30 for the Autumn and Summer terms. There are eleven staff members who work with the children, all of whom are part time. The supervisor holds a level 6 qualification in Early Years, the deputy and two members of staff hold a level 3 qualification in Early Years, two hold a level 2 Early Years qualification and four staff are working towards a level 2 or 3 qualification. The group receive support from the Local Authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health and well-being is effectively promoted and given the highest priority by all of the staff. For example, children learn the importance of hand-washing before eating, cookery and after using the toilet, through discussion about germs and the staff being excellent role models. They use liquid soap and individual paper towels to prevent the risk of cross infection. Children independently and spontaneously take responsibility for their own hygiene. They learn about the importance of cleaning their teeth through supported role-play, where staff interact about needing to buy toothpaste on sale in the 'general store' whilst buying sugary cakes. Staff are also seen by children cleaning the tables before and after mealtimes, using anti-bacterial spray, which gives them positive messages. Staff are proactive at maintaining high standards of cleanliness within the premises, each taking responsibility for the spontaneous cleaning of the toilets regularly throughout the session and recording this. The room is well ventilated due to the door being open for most of the session to the outside play area. Staff are vigilant at other times in observing when children appear hot and take immediate action to ensure children's good health, for example, offering a drink and opening more windows. Children are involved in the hygienic disposal of food waste by collecting it from their peers when they are special helper of the day and helping staff to dispose of it in the correct bin. All staff hold valid first-aid certificates. Staff deal with minor accidents and the administration of medication confidently. They record all accidents and medication accurately and share information with parents effectively.

Children's dietary needs are met exceptionally well by the parents providing all food, with advice and guidance from staff. For example, snacks consist of fruit from home. At the request of staff, this is prepared in advance or left whole and labelled to ensure the correct children receive the correct fruit. Lunch-box contents are monitored to ensure they are healthy and nutritious, with an excellent understanding from staff of cultural differences to packed lunches to meet individual needs. Staff sit with the children for their own packed lunch, where much discussion takes place about the food. Children cook and taste food regularly, they learn about healthy foods through topics and discussions. They also grow, care and eat fruit grown in their allotment. Children have easy access to fresh, drinking water from a cooler situated within the play room. Each time new children start at the group, staff remind all children at circle time about the importance of drinking and how to access it at any time. Staff also remind children to have a drink after playing outside or if they appear hot.

Children greatly benefit from a free-flow system for inside and outside play, whatever the weather. Children dress appropriately for the seasons, with support and discussion with staff to ensure they are not too hot or too cold. Children enjoy climbing, balancing and jumping off of apparatus, riding on wheeled toys and exploring the setting's allotments. Children's confidence at physical play is excellent as their experiences are well supported by staff. For example, younger, less able children watch with excitement as older, more able children jump independently from the top of a climbing frame. They ask for help to try this for themselves and gradually jump without holding on to staff's hands, and from higher points each time.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely safe within the setting as staff are vigilant about children's safety. For example, all potential hazards have been identified and addressed through daily risk assessments, to minimise the risk for children. The main door is kept locked at all times, with all staff holding keys upon their person, in case of an emergency. Visitors to the premises are carefully vetted and recorded. A collection book for parents to inform staff of different adults collecting their children is used effectively, with children only being allowed to go with a known person. A wipe on board, maintains an accurate record at all times of how many children and adults are on the premises. Fire drills are practised at regular intervals each term, to ensure all new children are familiar with the routine. The staff are proactive at seeking advice and training from the fire officer to ensure they are confident in the event of an emergency. The kitchen area is out of bounds to children at all times due to the effective use of the gate by all staff.

Children can safely access a wide range of inside and outside play resources due to the effective use of space and the layout of the environment. For example, children independently access their individual labelled drawers and have a wide selection of toys available on the tables and floor. In addition to these activities, children are also able to request any favourite toy, which staff access safely for them. Staff constantly check the toys and dispose of any that are broken, explaining to each other and the children their decision. This develops the children's understanding of risk assessing for themselves and they are able to point out any potential dangers to staff.

Children's welfare is extremely well safeguarded as the child protection policy and procedures are very strong to protect children. This includes allegations against staff. The policy is shared with all staff and parents to ensure everyone is knowledgeable about what to do in the event of being concerned about a child, in line with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children are incredibly happy at the setting. They thrive on the clear routine of the day and opportunities to develop their independence. They make choices in their play and relish the free-flow from inside to outside play space. Laminated pictures on Velcro, display the days events, which make children feel safe and secure in the knowledge of what is happening next. They are encouraged to think for themselves and recall events, for example, at morning circle-time they are asked if they are staying to lunch and if so they self register. This makes them feel very important.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children learn through rich, varied and meaningful experiences planned by the supervisor, who is very knowledgeable, and implemented by all the staff who have been fully briefed by her about the learning intentions. All activities are extremely well thought out to cover all six areas of learning and lead the children naturally through the stepping stones. Their progress is recorded by the child's key worker in a variety of ways to show each child's individual assessment. For example, activities are evaluated, observations of children at play are recorded, along with examples of their work and photographic evidence. This is all kept in each individual child's 'Treasure Book' to show their progress and enjoyment of their time at the setting. Each term's topic is also recorded and

evaluated in detail to share with parents and to influence future planning. Staff expertly support children's play in a very natural way. For example, they deploy themselves effectively around the room and outside to ensure that children who need or request help have it immediately. This is done through extending ideas in the role play area, developing children's language with new words and vocabulary or giving them the courage to try something more physically challenging, such as jumping from a height.

Children learn about letters and numbers through everyday experiences. For example, vibrant wall displays include lots of labelling and the current grouping of children are referred to by the sounds a, b and c, of which giant letters of these are hanging from the ceiling. The daily planning also incorporates the 'sounds and letters' Primary National Strategy, which ensures high quality phonics are introduced into the children's curriculum. Children are skilled at listening and answering questions as much emphasis is put on them 'putting on their thinking caps', even pretending to tie them up. They engage in story time with excitement. Children problem solve and think for themselves in situations. Staff give children time to attempt tasks for themselves, such as putting on their coats and fastening them before offering help. Children lead the play, for example, when role-playing in the post-office, they decide how much they are charging for different items and learn about money through playing with toy money and a till.

Children are creative with paint and explore with sand. They comment on their findings to peers and staff, showing great delight in changes to medium as it dries or leaves patterns. Children are very knowledgeable about colours and shapes they are painting and show great skill in using tools such as paint brushes, scissors and a pretend workbench. Children's artistic talents are stretched through the links with a local art project. Children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world through an exemplary curriculum of exploring different cultures and traditions. They also visit local attractions, such as the library and cathedral, as well as enjoying visits from a variety of emergency services, different professions, to learn about their bodies and animals.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children gain a well-developed respect for others and their beliefs, cultures and traditions through discussion, planned activities and resources, which promote positive images of diversity. For example, toys, books and posters reflect different skin colours. Children explore different festivals and celebrations, with the support of the families attending, who reflect the rich diversity of the community. Staff are very aware of the need to offer additional support to those families who speak English as an additional language, and work closely with other agencies to meet their needs. For example, translating simple sentences to help parents communicate with staff or children feel welcomed. Inclusion for children with learning disabilities or difficulties is fully promoted. One-to-one support is provided for some children to ensure everyone has equal opportunities in all they do. Boys and girls also have equal access to all resources and enjoy exploring toys that are traditionally stereotypical and maybe they do not have access to at home. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. They show respect for each other and staff, waiting to talk if they are already engaged in conversation and saying 'please' and 'thank you'. Their relationships with the staff are warm and positive. They respond to requests promptly and with enthusiasm, knowing something else exciting is going to happen. Staff praise and encourage children at every opportunity, which builds their self-esteem. Each day a 'special helper' assists

staff with duties such as shaking the tambourine at packing away time, collecting the food waste and sitting on the chair at story time. Children take great pride in their responsibilities. Staff are excellent role models in the way they speak to the children. For example, the twice daily register is called using 'good morning' or 'good afternoon' followed by each child's individual name.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Children greatly benefit from the effective sharing of information between staff and parents. For example, a variety of informative notice boards have photographs of staff and key-worker information, policies and latest information. Each child's treasure book and the topic book keep parents informed about their child's time at the setting. These contain photographs, art work and observations. Parents communicate with staff verbally and through a variety of books, for example, compliments are written in the 'sparkle' book and a collection book identifies anyone different who is collecting their child. They also complete information about their child on admission to ensure the staff are well informed about how best to meet their individual child's needs. For example, information about their home life, pets and favourite toys. Parents are kept very well informed about their children's achievements through the stepping stones assessments. The curriculum is well explained both verbally at parents' evenings and through written information in the prospectus and displayed on the notice boards. The planning is also displayed and explained to parents. Ideas are sent home on how to further support the current topics and areas of learning. This includes a book share system.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is significantly enhanced by exceptional organisation. Every aspect of the daily operation of the setting is exemplary. For example, the supervisor oversees all children, staff and procedures but delegates tasks to give staff ownership of responsibilities. This impacts positively on the staff morale and makes the team very enthusiastic about their roles. A new office has enabled the documentation to be given the utmost importance. All records are clear and accurate. The registration certificate is clearly displayed along with all comprehensive policies and procedures. Children benefit from the highly effective organisation of space and resources. For example, staff are extremely well deployed to enable children to have free-flow between inside and outside play areas. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management is outstanding. The supervisor is an excellent role model to her staff. She involves herself in every aspect of the daily routine and leads by example. Regular staff meetings, appraisals and planning meetings every morning ensure the provision is monitored and evaluated constantly to meet the needs of the children. Practices are continually being improved to maintain the high standards and deliver a very effective curriculum.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection in June 2007, when the outcome was inadequate, five actions were raised relating to documentation and safety. All have been addressed exceptionally well. All written policies and procedures are now in place and shared with staff and parents routinely. They are very comprehensive. This ensures practices are consistent and parents are kept very well informed. In particular, the child protection policies and procedures needed to be addressed to safeguard children. This is now given the highest priority by all staff and the policies reflect this. Children's well-being is now safeguarded in a superior way, with management following

the allegations against staff procedure when necessary. An operational plan is now in place and used effectively as an on-going working document. The key-worker system is extremely beneficial to both children and parents. Staff now support families extremely well. The register is clear and accurate. All visitors are now routinely recorded and daily risk assessments are maintained, this identifies and addresses potential hazards immediately and keeps children safe. There are no longer any weaknesses identified with safety. Staff are vigilant at informing Ofsted of all changes, this is in line with their conditions of registration.

At the last nursery education inspection in June 2007, when the outcome was also inadequate, four actions were raised. All have been exceptionally well addressed. Observation and assessments have been introduced to monitor children's progress along the stepping stones, which ensures their individual needs are met effectively. Planning is now extremely comprehensive, covering all six areas of learning in an effortless way. All staff are now knowledgeable about how to deliver the curriculum and cover the learning intentions of activities to help children learn through play. The management now continually monitor and assess the effectiveness of the nursery education, which constantly improves the delivery of the curriculum. Parents are now very well informed about the Foundation Stage curriculum and their individual children's progress along the stepping stones, which further ensures that children's individual needs are met.

The improvement in both care and nursery education since the last inspection is outstanding.

### **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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

### **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

#### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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)