

Stondon Massey Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Ann Marie Cozzi

Setting address Remembrance Hall, Blackmore Road, Stondon Massey,
Brentwood, Essex, CM15 0DT
Telephone number 01277 824181
Email wallace467@aol.com
Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Description of the setting

Stondon Massey Pre-School was registered in 2004. It is registered to provide care for a maximum of 30 children in the early years age group at any one time. The setting is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 42 children on roll, 25 of whom are in receipt of early years funding.

The Pre-School operates from a community hall in Stondon Massey, Essex. The Pre-School is open each weekday from 09:15 until 12:15 Monday to Friday, term-time only. They run an extended lunch club session on Thursdays until 13:10. The Pre-school have a fully enclosed outdoor play space. The entrance is accessible as there is a slope leading into the main entrance, all playrooms and toilet facilities are on the ground floor. They have systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or for those who speak English as an additional language. The Pre-school currently employs nine members of staff, of whom seven hold appropriate early years qualifications.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. There are effective strategies in place to meet the needs of all children which recognise their uniqueness and supports each of them so that no individual is disadvantaged. Children are enabled by staff to make good progress in their learning and development; however, there is a weakness in the current systems for observation and planning. There are clear and effective systems in place to ensure the safety and welfare of children, although, there is a weakness in current risk assessments. The provider is eager to promote improvement; ongoing self-evaluation and reflective practice helps to promote improvements and the development of the service offered in the best interests of children and their families. Open partnerships with parents, carers and others, in the wider context, are used to promote cohesion and smooth transitions for children as they move between settings.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop further the arrangements for assessing young children to consistently ascertain their achievements
- reappraise risk assessments to ensure that they include anything with which a child may come into contact.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The provider and her staff work closely and effectively together creating a motivated team who provide good care and learning opportunities for children.

There are an appropriate range of policies and procedures in place which are shared with parents and carers, for example, a safeguarding policy which clearly details procedures to follow should there be an allegation made against a member of staff. These are implemented in practice to promote positive outcomes for children and ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting. There are a number of safety measures in place including effective drop off and collection procedures which ensure that no child leaves the setting with any persons, other than those authorised by their parents or carer. There is a high level of staff supervision, however, there is a weakness in relation to ensuring risk assessments include all areas of the environment accessible to children. Information regarding each child's needs is obtained during prior placement interviews; this ensures that key persons can care for children's individual needs effectively.

Children's records are stored securely in a locked filing cabinet which ensures confidentiality is maintained. All required records are in place including a daily register which records children and staffs hours of attendance, this ensures that everyone can be accurately accounted for at all times. The setting is kept secure and visitor identification is checked. Staff ensure that visitors are never left alone with children at any time. Some members of staff have completed current paediatric first aid training. The good organisation of the setting ensures that accident and medication records are maintained and shared with parents and carers as required. In addition, at least one person who has a current paediatric first aid certificate is on the premises at all times when children are present. This protects the welfare of children and ensures that they receive appropriate care and treatment in the event of a minor accident.

The manager and staff demonstrate a good understanding of what their role involves in promoting children's learning and welfare within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). They encourage a two-way exchange of information with parents, carers and other agencies which supports children's ongoing learning and development. This has a positive impact in promoting inclusion and children's progress towards the early learning goals. Parents and carers are enabled to take an active role in their child's learning and development and speak very highly of the Pre-school and its staff.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The dedicated and enthusiastic staff team help children to become independent learners, sparking their curiosity and participation in an extensive range of exciting learning opportunities and experiences. Children are happy and confident as they are sensitively encouraged by staff to consistently broaden their knowledge and skills across all areas of learning. Individual learning styles are supported well by staff who use a varied range of teaching methods, for example, visual clues which help bring learning to life, open ended questions, thinking time and kinaesthetic opportunities. Children are well behaved and respond positively to requests from staff who act as good role models promoting clear, appropriate and consistent boundaries. Children's achievements inside and outside of the setting are consistently and positively acknowledged by staff. This further reinforces positive behaviour and develops their confidence promoting participation in activities.

Observations and assessments of what children know and can do are good. Each child is delegated a key person, who along with other staff, undertakes observations of them at play. This information is then used to inform the weekly planning, however, although children are progressing well towards the six early learning goals, the arrangements to ascertain their achievements and next steps in learning are not always secure.

Communication language and literacy are promoted well. Staff provide children with lots of good opportunities to develop their language for thinking, speaking, listening and writing, for example, as they write their names on their creations or make a list on a clip board whilst pretending to be a builder. Staff are skilled at promoting meaningful conversations which encourage children's thinking and listening skills and increase their vocabulary. A wide range of creative opportunities are provided to enable children's problem solving skills to be challenged, for example, working out how to make a camp from tyres and tarpaulin with staff in the garden. Young children enjoy exploring the properties of dough as they cut, stretch and roll it discovering with delight that they can make lots of different shapes. They develop an understanding of how things grow as they help to care for plants and herbs in the garden. They use their senses as they smell the lavender and taste chives. Their experiences are brought to life when learning about animals, for example, as they look at and handle a giant snail and search for bugs in the garden. This is further enhanced by regular walks in the local community when they have the opportunity to feed a horse with carrots.

Children are encouraged through the daily routine to consistently learn about how to keep themselves and each other safe, for example, as staff discuss with them how they might hurt others if they throw pieces of puzzle across the room. In addition, children learn how to evacuate the pre-school safely in case of an emergency. Personal independence and good hygiene practice is encouraged and acknowledged by staff as children independently access the toilet and handwashing facilities and serve their own snacks using tongs. They are supported to develop an understanding about healthy living as they choose from a wide range of snacks such as pasta, lots of fresh fruit, cheese and bread. Staff are vigilant regarding children's individual dietary needs and ensure that all children have access to fresh water so that none remain thirsty.

The organisation of the setting ensures that children enjoy ample opportunities to independently access and choose what they would like to do from an exciting and stimulating range of indoor and outdoor activities. Staff work closely with other agencies to ensure that they promote an inclusive environment which supports all children. There is no bias in practice in relation to gender, race or disability.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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