

Stepping Stones Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY400095

Inspection date

30/04/2010

Inspector

Deborah Kerry

Setting address

Wells Hall Primary School, Wells Hall Road, Great Cornard,
SUDBURY, Suffolk, CO10 0NH

Telephone number

01787 370861

Email

Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

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).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

Stepping Stones Playgroup is privately owned and managed. It opened in 2009 in the present setting and operates from purpose built premises within the grounds of Wells Hall primary school in Great Cornard, Suffolk. A secure enclosed outdoor area is used for outdoor play activities.

A maximum of 26 children aged from two to under five years may attend the setting at any one time. The group is open five days a week from 8:00am to 3:00pm during term time. Children may attend for breakfast, morning and afternoon sessions and an optional lunch club. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years, Compulsory and Voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The pre-school employs five members of staff and one volunteer. Of these five staff, including the owner, hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards an appropriate early years qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's welfare, learning and development in the Early Years Foundation Stage is effectively supported by the staff. Children's individual needs are fully understood and through regular observations their interests and the next steps in their learning is clearly identified and included in the plans each week. The setting has good relationships with parents and seeks support and advice from other professionals to ensure that children's individual needs are fully understood and can be supported. The playgroup regularly undertake evaluation and monitor their good practice.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment in the future (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 21/05/2010

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

- develop further the partnerships and exchange of information with other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure children's learning and development is supported

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

There are clear procedures in place for staff to follow regarding safeguarding children to ensure that their welfare is effectively promoted. Staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities so that maintaining children's welfare remains a high priority. Risk assessments ensure that all areas are safe for children to access. The daily check list for setting up ensures that safety is maintained and monitored, enhancing children's welfare. Procedures for emergency evacuation are practised regularly and recorded ensuring that children's safety is effectively promoted.

There is a comprehensive range of policies and procedures in place to support the clear aims of the playgroup which are shared with parents. Through the notice board and regular newsletters, they are kept fully informed about topics and activities within the playgroup to ensure they are kept informed about their child's early education. Parents' views are sought through questionnaires when deciding on any changes to practice, ensuring that they are kept involved and their views acknowledged. Parents are kept fully informed and involved in their child's progress, as they can discuss their child's records with staff at any time. Parents are encouraged to add comments on their child's learning and development at home, so that they are fully involved and support their child's learning. The head teacher of the primary school is in full support of the playgroup. There is a good relationship between the primary school and playgroup staff to ensure that children are fully supported for a smooth transition when they transfer. Staff at the playgroup have developed good relationships with other settings delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage that the children attend through attending regular network meetings. However, there is limited exchange of information on children's learning and development to ensure children's needs are fully supported and for the continuity of their care.

Staff undertake evaluation of their practice and planning of activities each week. They ensure that all staff and parents' views are sought to ensure the improvements have a positive effect on children's learning and development. Staff are fully supported in their ongoing training by the manager. This helps to enhance their knowledge and experience to ensure outcomes for children's learning and development remain positive. All staff and parents are involved with inputting ideas for the Ofsted style self evaluation form. This shows a commitment to ensuring continuous improvement is maintained. Since moving into the new premises, the garden has been developed to include raised beds for the children to dig and plant bulbs, seeds and vegetables. This will help develop their knowledge on their environment and allow them to taste a variety of different foods to promote their health.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children's health is promoted as they have a variety of fresh fruit at snack time that meets their individual dietary needs. Staff sit with children at snack time making it a social occasion asking them questions which helps to promote their thinking. Children's independence and self-care skills are promoted as they help to prepare the fruit for snack. They are encouraged to pour their own drinks and to clear away their cups and plates. Children have developed a good understanding of why they need to wash their hands before eating or after using the toilet. Children have regular access to the outside play area where they can access a wide range of additional equipment to promote their physical development well. Additional resources and equipment are provided in the outside play area to help support children's all round development. All accidents and medication records are kept up-to-date and include parents signatures to ensure they are kept fully informed on any concerns regarding their child's health. However, there is currently no written permission for staff to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. This could compromise children's health in the event of an emergency.

Children are provided with a wide range of resources and activities to fully promote their learning and development. Resources are set out in open, low-level shelves. This enables children to make choices and self select resources to meet their individual interests and learning needs. Staff are fully involved with the children which ensures that they can get the best from the activities provided and make good progress. Children help at tidy up time, this encourages them to learn about being responsible and caring for resources and their environment. Children are learning to share and take turns with resources and activities. Children communicate well with each other and through effective questioning by staff they are developing their thinking skills. Children enjoy looking at books. They handle them carefully and know that words are meaningful. At circle time staff link letter sound to children's names to develop their letter recognitions and early reading skills. Children are provided with resources that show positive images of the wider world. They participate in activities based on the beliefs of others through celebrating different cultural festivals during the year. Children measure out the different ingredients to make pizza dough. This helps to develop their understanding on numeracy and reasoning. They use their fingers to mix the ingredients and press out the dough to make a base for the pizza; they then add toppings before they are cooked. This allows children to explore different textures, observe the changes as the ingredients are mixed and then cooked.

There is lots of interaction between the staff and children to develop their vocabulary and speech. Children have access to a wide range of resources for mark making, both inside and in the outside play area to promote their early writing skills. They enjoy listening to and joining in with songs and action rhymes which helps to develop their language and physical skills. All staff have a good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and work together to plan a range of activities around children's interests to support their progress. They undertake regular observations on children to identify their interests and the next step in their development, which are included in the weekly plans. The planning includes a mix

of adult and child-initiated activities to promote children's individual interests and learning. Children's records show what they can do, have achieved and are clearly linked to the six areas of learning and show how children are making good progress in their development.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
--	---

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met