



Old Stratford Pre-School, Community Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	219885
Inspection date	28 November 2005
Inspector	Rachael Mankiewicz
Setting Address	Deanshanger Road, Old Stratford, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, MK19 6NL
Telephone number	07821630058
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Registered person	Old Stratford Pre School Playgroup
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.

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?

Old Stratford Pre-School opened in 1989. It now operates from the Community Hall on the outskirts of the village of Old Stratford in the extreme south of Northamptonshire. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time, or 40 children when there is access to the main hall. The pre-school opens each weekday during school term time. Sessions are from 09:15 to 11:45 and from 12:15 to 14:45. There are opportunities to stay from 09:15 and 14:45 for some days

of the week.

There are currently 44 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 28 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from Old Stratford and surrounding villages.

The pre-school employs six staff, four of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. Staff are currently working towards further qualifications.

The setting receives support from a teacher from the local authority. The pre-school has been awarded the PSLA 'Aiming for Quality' accreditation scheme.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning about health and good personal hygiene through well-organised daily routines and planned activities. Children are encouraged to learn independence in their personal care and good hygiene practices. For example, they know why they need to put on warm clothes before choosing to go outside and to wash their hands before they eat their snack. Healthy lifestyles are being promoted through the good use of the outdoor space. They enjoy active play which is developing their large muscles, and other activities which are taken outside, such as music and artwork. Children experience changes to their bodies as they exercise and move to music in the main hall. They begin to understand that they need to cool down and to take drinks regularly. Children help themselves to easily accessible drinking water throughout the session. Staff are developing the use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to provide a good range of indoor and outdoor physical play experiences for the younger children. Children have good arrangements for quiet play and relaxation through the day.

Children learn the benefits of a healthy diet through cooking activities and staff talking about food at snack time. Special dietary requirements are complied with in partnership with the parents. Children learn that snack and meal times are sociable occasions as they enjoy a shared meal time with their friends eating snacks and lunches provided by their parents. Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff have up to date knowledge of food hygiene and first aid, and appropriate procedures are in place if children are unwell.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are safe as a result of the adults' very good awareness of health and safety and because all reasonable steps are taken to reduce the risk of accidents. For example, the good use of risk assessments and clear procedures for entering and

leaving the premises ensure that children cannot leave the premises unsupervised. Children use a very good range of safe, good quality resources which are regularly inspected by the staff to ensure that they are suitable and age-appropriate to the children. They are encouraged to use equipment and resources safely and with respect which helps them learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe. For example, they learn some sense of the dangerous properties of scissors, cooking utensils and of large outdoor play equipment.

Children are well protected as the staff understand their responsibilities and keep up to date with training and information about the local Child Protection Committee guidelines.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children play, learn and have fun with the company of friends and adults at pre-school. They benefit from the care and encouragement of knowledgeable staff in the welcoming, learning environment. Children develop their own independence and also learn to play in groups as they participate in a range of interesting activities. For example, they all enjoy the range of outside equipment and enthusiastically participate in the Billy Goats Gruff story. They are developing positive relationships as they listen and communicate well with each other and with the adults. Children use their imaginations well and with enjoyment as they take part in a wide range of art and craft activities and music, both indoors and the sound frame outside. Their perseverance to complete activities and their confidence to share feelings develops as they play. Children's needs are met through effective organisation and planning for the progress of all children from 2 to 5 years. Staff have begun to use the 'Birth to three matters' framework as a formal developmental system for the younger children.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children participate enthusiastically in the planned activities on offer and as they take the initiative, choose resources and express ideas. They use their imagination well as they deliver the Christmas post from the post office, and creative and imaginative skills are being promoted with an excellent range of art resources. Children begin to make sense of the world around them as they explore a variety of materials, including experiencing the swamp with their model animals. They investigate how things are made and how they work as they explore construction materials. Information technology is developed through good access to the computer and remote controlled toys. Children are aware of their own bodies and their ability to use their senses through planned and unplanned activities. They find out about the environment as they grow plants and go for walks around the area. They begin to explore the wider world through visits, looking at holiday destinations and taking part in the celebration of festivals.

Children develop good relationships with staff and each other, as they take turns and work together well in small and large group activities. They show concern for others as they play, making sure their friends are included in the game. Children interact and chat, showing awareness of the listener and listening well. They understand that

print has meaning and make marks freely throughout their activities. Older children are beginning to develop the use of mathematical ideas to solve problems in planned activities and by participating in many day-to-day domestic routines. For instance children compare two numbers as they count bears and work out how many children can sit at the snack table.

Staff make effective use of time and resources to provide a broad and balanced range of activities and experiences across the six areas of learning which motivate the children and enable them to make progress. Children are encouraged to make the most of their experiences by the staff's careful consideration of what the child might be able to learn. Appropriate individual challenge is ensured through good questioning and enabling by the knowledgeable staff. Observations and assessments of children's progress towards the early learning goals and information gained from the parents are used to inform planning. Systems for planning for the individual child's progress are at an early stage of development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settle well at the pre-school. They confidently select from the resources and play materials. Children relish the option they have of staying indoors or experiencing a range of activities outside as they make independent choices in their play and follow their own interests. They play their part in the pre-school because staff make them welcome and respect them as individuals. They begin to feel a sense of belonging as they learn about themselves, each other and the world around them through planned activities. Gaining knowledge of different cultures and religions as they celebrate festivals and use instruments and artefacts from different countries helps them understand about the diversity of the wider world. They enjoy meeting people from the local community when they visit the group or as they join in local activities. Older children understand their own needs and begin to respect the needs of others, including helping them in their play. They make sure their friends are included in the activities and are aware that some children have different needs to themselves. Children receive regular reassurance, praise and encouragement which promotes their confidence and self esteem. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Children's well-being at the pre-school is enhanced by the good relationships between parents and staff which ensure that the needs of the children are met. Parents are informed of how the pre-school operates and they take an active part in the management through membership of a committee. They receive information through a welcome pack, written notices, newsletters and displays and verbal information about the care of the children. Staff obtain information about the children's needs, and their achievements are recorded on settling in at the pre-school. Children's progress in nursery education is fostered by regular discussions to ensure that parents know how their children are developing and how they can contribute to their children's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children benefit from the effective organisation of the space and resources. Indoor and outside space is laid out very well to allow all children choice and excellent opportunities for free expression through their play and activities. They benefit from good deployment of qualified and knowledgeable staff who work very well together as a team and create a happy and purposeful atmosphere. Children's care and welfare are safeguarded by clear and well-maintained documentation including comprehensive policies and procedures, and assessment records which reflect children's progress. Induction procedures for staff are effective. Staff show a commitment to the continuing improvement of the care offered by evaluating their practice and developing their skills as part of an accredited quality assurance scheme.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. There is a very supportive parent committee, who have begun to develop procedures to ensure that the nursery education is of a high standard. There are regular staff meetings and all members of staff share the planning. The pre-school works closely with Pre-School Learning Alliance and an advisory teacher from local authority. Overall the needs of the children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the provision was asked to address several issues regarding records and safety. These have all been addressed and contribute to maintaining children's safety and well-being.

At the last inspection of the nursery education, the provision was asked to further develop systems for observation, assessment and planning. These systems have been put in place to help ensure that children make progress in their nursery education.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last care inspection a concern was raised with Ofsted about the ability of staff members to manage children's behaviour and about a lack of activities available to children at some times during the sessions. Ofsted wrote to the provision and asked them to provide information in relation to these issues under National Standard 3 (Care, Learning & Play) and 11 (Behaviour Management). The information provided, including action taken by the setting since the concerns have been raised, confirms that the National Standards are being met with regard to the concerns raised. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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 all staff are knowledgeable of the frameworks to improve the outcome for children from birth to three years, such as 'Birth to three matters'.

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):

- consolidate the use of systems influencing the planning and assessment cycle to ensure that children continue to make progress in each area of learning.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk