

Sithney Stepping Stones Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Jayne Pascoe
Setting address	Sithney CPS, Crowntown, Helston, Cornwall, TR13 0AE
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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.

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Description of the setting

Sithney Stepping Stones Pre-School is a committee run group. It opened in 2000 and operates from the pre-school room in Sithney School, near Crowntown, in Cornwall. A maximum of 15 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school operates each weekday and opens on Monday to Thursday from 9am until 3pm and on a Friday from 9am until 1pm, during term times only. All children share access to a secure enclosed play area. The pre-school is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 22 children in the early years age group on roll, some are in part-time places. Of these, 11 receive funding for nursery education. Some children also attend other early years settings. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are four members of staff who work with the children, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least level 2 or 3. One member of staff is currently working towards Early Years Professional Status.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Positive partnerships have been established with parents and as a result, children's unique needs are identified, respected and met. Advice and support is welcomed from other early years agencies. A key strength of the setting is the close relationship it maintains with the school. Staff demonstrate an ability to make effective use of reflective practice, to identify appropriate areas for future development, such as establishing links with other providers and improving assessment records. However, there is currently no system in place with which to monitor when and how this has been achieved.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- maintain continuity of care and cohesive learning experiences for children attending more than one setting, for example, through sharing relevant information with each other and parents
- use observations and assessments to identify learning priorities and plan relevant and motivating experiences for each child
- develop effective systems with which to monitor and evaluate pre-school practice, in order to drive continuous improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The pre-school follows robust procedures to safeguard the children in their care. Children practice regular emergency evacuation procedures with the adults, in order to develop their confidence and familiarity. The setting have developed effective written risk assessments, which are used to maintain children's safety and security. These are regularly reviewed and updated as required. Appropriate procedures are followed to protect children when using shared areas of the school building. Children are closely supervised at all times. They are protected from unvetted persons and staff demonstrate confidence in their ability to identify, record and report any child protection concerns, in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. Staff organise the setting very well to provide a safe, secure and enabling indoor and outdoor environment in which children can grow and flourish. Although there have been very recent changes to the structure of the staff team, children are familiar with the adults working with them and all staff are suitably qualified and experienced.

Most children enter the pre-school enthusiastically and those who are still settling-in are monitored closely to ensure they receive high levels of adult support, interaction and encouragement. Staff know children and their families very well and as a result they are able to plan to provide appropriate opportunities for children to enjoy and achieve and to share home experiences. Good use of children's photographs and name cards promote a sound sense of belonging. Children are also encouraged to take responsibility as they make suggestions for future planning, help tidy away after snack and make decisions about what they would like to do next. Children are confident to initiate ideas for play and engage in adult-led activities based upon their individual abilities, which are respected and planned for by their designated key person. Staff use generally effective assessment systems, which include written observations, photographs and examples of children's work. However, these records do not yet identify specific next steps for children's learning and development, which can be linked to future planning in order to maintain a progressive cycle of learning.

Good opportunities are provided for children to explore their own cultures and beliefs and those of others. Children's differences are valued and respected. Staff demonstrate a commitment to providing a fully inclusive environment in which every child matters. They have identified the importance of maintaining positive links with other providers and are successful in promoting a smooth transition for children moving into school life. Staff intend to build upon the positive partnerships they have developed with parents, in order to establish effective links with other early years providers. A good range of written policies and procedures, contracts and consents are used to agree and maintain appropriate practice. Newsletters, a notice board and daily verbal information sharing also enhance the practice further. Staff recognise the benefits of implementing formal systems for self-evaluation, in order to monitor pre-school practice and to drive further improvement.

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

Children are very happy, settled and content in the care of staff. Most have formed strong and trusting relationships with adults and other children. Those that are still settling in are well supported. Most children enter the setting enthusiastically and separate from their parent easily. They follow the good examples set by adults and are polite, kind and helpful. They demonstrate good social skills and are very well mannered. All children are busy and occupied in purposeful and worthwhile activities. Children work well together to establish and maintain harmonious play with their friends. As staff know children very well, they are able to provide interesting activities, based upon their particular interests. Children chat happily with adults and other children as they play. Most are confident to share experiences and ideas during whole group times. All enjoy story time and are able to concentrate well and listen attentively. Children freely select from a good range of books for personal enjoyment. They communicate very effectively through facial expression, body language and vocabulary. Children have access to an extensive range of materials with which to draw and write, such as chinks, paint brushes, coloured pens, crayons and pencils. They are encouraged to self-register and label their own work.

Children capably build and construct to make wooden block towers, successfully identifying the number and colours of the blocks used. They have free use of a good range of resources with which to weigh and measure, sort, count and match. They successfully cooperate and negotiate with others, to achieve desired outcomes. Children count as part of daily routine activities; some recognise numerals and the associated number of objects. They add and subtract when singing favourite counting songs and complete increasingly complex puzzles with and without adult support. Children are creative and imaginative in their role play as they pretend to be pirates. They enjoy playing with their pirate island, collecting hidden treasure and listening to pirate songs playing on the music tape. Children are able to express themselves freely through painting, collage, play dough, sensory play, music and dance. Their art work is admired by all and is displayed very attractively on the pre-school walls.

Children have good opportunities to explore the local community, as they enjoy regular outings to local places of interest. They benefit from the use of programmable and interactive toys and computer equipment, which they share with the school children. Planned opportunities are provided for children to develop a positive respect and awareness of people's differences. They are beginning to develop an awareness of sustainability, as they collect used packaging to make junk models and grow fruit and vegetables in the garden. Children benefit from free access to the outdoors to enjoy fresh air and exercise as and when they like. They know that warm clothing is required should they choose to play outdoors in cold weather. The outdoor learning environment is safe, secure and stimulating. Children are able to enjoy water play, climb, dig, ride-on bikes, explore and investigate freely. Healthy eating is promoted very well within the setting. Nutritious food is provided in sufficient quantities for children's individual needs. Children routinely follow good health and hygiene procedures and are developing

an understanding of the importance of maintaining their own health. Overall, there is evidence that children are making good levels of progress during their time at the setting.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
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
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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

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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