

# Stonham Aspal Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

EY408916

**Inspection date**

26/01/2011

**Inspector**

Janet Keeling

**Setting address**

Stonham Aspal C of E Primary School, The Street, Stonham  
Aspal, STOWMARKET, Suffolk, IP14 6AF

**Telephone number**

01449711593

**Email**

stonham-aspal@btconnect.com

**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*.

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## **Description of the setting**

Stonham Aspal Pre-School re-registered at their current premises in 2010. The pre-school is run by a voluntary management committee and operates from a purpose built building located in the grounds of Stonham Aspal Primary School in Stowmarket, Suffolk. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school serves children and families from the local and surrounding areas.

A maximum of 26 children from two to five years may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 46 children on roll, all of whom are within the early years age group. The pre-school receives funding for early education places. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday from 9am to 3pm during school term time only. The pre-school is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register.

There are seven members of staff who work directly with the children. Of these, three hold an appropriate qualification at level 3 in early years, one holds a qualification at level 4 and another holds a teaching certificate. The manager holds a degree in early childhood studies and is currently working towards Early Years Professional Status. The pre-school receives support from the local authority.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children blossom with the exceptional level of care and support that is provided at this stimulating pre-school. Staff work cohesively as a team and offer a fully inclusive service where the uniqueness of every child is recognised and celebrated. Children make significant progress in their learning because staff are highly skilled at providing appropriate learning experiences that support all children's needs and interests. Highly effective relationships with parents and other agencies have been firmly established. The pre-school is led and managed by an experienced, highly motivated and enthusiastic manager who strives to achieve outstanding levels of care and education for all children attending the group. The capacity to improve further is excellent.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- improving induction procedures for parent volunteers to ensure they are fully aware of their responsibilities while working at the pre-school.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Excellent priority is given to safeguarding and protecting children. All staff have successfully completed their safeguarding children training and are fully aware of the procedures to follow should they be concerned about a child in their care. There are robust recruitment and vetting procedures in place and valuable appraisals systems, which encourage the continued professional development of all staff. Staff routinely verify the identity of all visitors to the pre-school and have a visitors' book in place. The pre-school maintains comprehensive policies, procedures and records to support the safe and effective management of the provision. Detailed risk assessments are completed with great care and consistency, and as a result, children play in an environment that is safe and child-centred. The manager and staff are extremely competent, caring and demonstrate an excellent understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The environment both indoors and outdoors is inspiring, well organised and provides wonderful learning opportunities for all children. Staff are deployed effectively throughout the sessions to ensure children are supervised safely at all times. Resources and equipment are clearly labelled and allow children easy access, so there are excellent opportunities for children to make choices about their learning. Outstanding outcomes for children are attributed to the excellent use of time, space and resources.

The manager and staff have a very clear vision for the pre-school and demonstrate an inspiring commitment to continuous improvement. Through the effective use of their self-evaluation procedures and regular parent questionnaires they are able to monitor and evaluate the quality of the provision. Currently, the manager is reviewing procedures to ensure that parent helpers are fully aware of their responsibilities while working at the pre-school. Currently, these are not formally set out which can limit their effectiveness. Daily team meetings provide valuable opportunities for staff to discuss children's interests, share good practice and plan future events. The recommendation made at the previous inspection has been fully addressed. Methods to promote equality and diversity thread through the whole pre-school. This is successfully achieved through planned activities, the use of visual displays and posters, role-play equipment and through open discussion between staff and children. Managers demonstrate an excellent commitment to working with external agencies to support the inclusion of children with special needs and/or disabilities. Excellent links have been established with the host school to ensure children's smooth transition into the classroom environment. In addition, pre-school children are regularly invited to attend events at the main school, and so children become familiar with their new environment and the teaching staff.

Partnerships with parents are outstanding. Staff dedicate time getting to know children and their families, ensuring that children settle and feel secure. The recently introduced home visits provide valuable opportunities for staff to get to know the children in their home environment before they start at the pre-school. Parents are very well informed regarding their children's care and learning and are aware that they can speak to their child's key person at any time. Staff routinely involve parents in their child's continuous learning through the use of feedback

sheets and ongoing discussions. The relaxed and friendly way that daily information is exchanged ensures that children's changing needs are consistently met. Parents access a wealth of information regarding the group through the use of a parents' notice board, newsletters, parents' evenings, regular e-mails and a welcome pack on their child's admission to the pre-school. All required documentation, such as contracts and consents are completed and very well maintained. Parents also receive a prospectus before their child starts at the group and have access to all policies and procedures. Parents expressed very positive views during the inspection. Comments included, 'staff are approachable, friendly and very welcoming' and, 'we are delighted with the care provided for our children'. One parent commented that they were very pleased with the security procedures in place at the pre-school.

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

Children benefit enormously from staff's excellent knowledge of how to develop learning through play. The vibrant atmosphere allows children to blossom and to lead their own learning as they freely access a wide range of activities and resources both indoors and outdoors. There is an outstanding balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities that result in children being active learners. Children show inspiring levels of independence, curiosity and imagination. They work independently and in groups and share their ideas with staff and their peers. All children are valued and treated with equal concern, with any specific requirements being sensitively met through discussion with parents and other professionals. Staff have an excellent understanding of children's individual needs as they observe, discuss and record information on a daily basis. Key workers use information gained to tailor activities and learning experiences in order to fully maximise children's ongoing development. On admission to the pre-school an 'all about me' form is completed with parents, which clearly demonstrates children's individual care and learning needs. Consequently, children are cared for according to their individual needs and parents' wishes. Children's learning is meticulously documented in their individual learning journey, which contains both written and photographic information of children's learning, achievements and records of their own work. These folders are regularly shared with parents and are available for parents to see at any time.

Staff wholeheartedly recognise that children learn best when they are having fun. Children's personal, social and emotional development is inspiring. They have developed a true sense of identity and have formed wonderful relationships with their peers and adults. They respond to the feelings and wishes of others as they play in harmony together and take pride in their own achievements. They relish an excellent range of first hand learning experiences. For example, they use magnifying glasses to look for mini-beasts in the garden, go pond dipping at the school's nature area and help to take leftover food to the compost bins. They have also helped to plant bedding plants in the outdoor area. Children are developing a love for books as they sit attentively at story-time and freely access a wide range of titles in the quiet corner. They enjoy music and movement and engage in physical activity every day. There is great excitement as the children shake their

hands, bend their knees and wiggle around. They then do the 'monster stomp' in rhythm with the music and skilfully make circles with ribbons on sticks. Children express their ideas creatively through their drawings and adore imaginary play, where they use an extensive range of props to extend their experiences. In addition, staff make excellent use of incidental opportunities to enrich children's natural curiosity. Children benefit hugely from meeting visitors who enrich their learning, such as a vet, ballet teacher, community police officer and dentist. They also enjoy visits to the local fire station, attend the harvest festival at the local church and enjoy exploring Hollow Trees Farm.

Children develop confidence and self-esteem and are developing an understanding of other people's needs. They learn to share, take turns and respect each other. They are beginning to develop an understanding of the wider world as they access a wide range of resources that are representative of diversity and also celebrate cultural festival throughout the year. Children have excellent opportunities to learn how to stay safe as they regularly engage in emergency evacuation procedures and learn about road safety as they talk with the community police officer. Many are independent with toileting skills and are very aware of washing their hands before snacks. Their understanding of the importance of hand washing is further supported through the excellent use of pictorial prompts in the bathroom. Children develop a significant understanding of healthy eating through topic work and ongoing discussions with staff. At snack-time children independently collect their named snack bag, which contains their chosen snack. They sit at the designated table, competently pour their own drink and enjoy a very sociable time sharing their news with their friends. They develop a strong sense of responsibility as they use tools such as scissors in a safe manner, help to tidy away their toys and competently put on an apron before playing at the water tray. Children successfully demonstrate that they are acquiring excellent skills that will help them in the future and prepare them for their transition from pre-school into school.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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