

Stone Cross Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Stacey Sangster

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Stone Cross Pre-school has been running since 1952. It operates from one large room and a smaller room in a community hall in Stone Cross. The hall is situated near to local amenities and a primary school.

The Pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 30 children in the early years age group may attend at any one time and there are currently 51 children on roll; no children under the age of two years are permitted. The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9.15am until 12.15pm. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The committee also runs a sister group nearby, which takes children from three years of age.

The setting is in receipt of funding for the provision of early years education for children aged three or four years old. Children come from a wide catchment area. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The setting employs six staff; of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications. A number of additional unqualified bank staff can be called on if needed. All six staff are first aid qualified.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are supported well by this setting. They are cared for in a safe and nurturing environment where their individual needs are effectively supported. Most of the systems and documentation in place support the effective running of the setting. The staff team and committee work well together, resulting in clear and achievable development plans that support the ongoing development of the setting. The capacity to continually improve is strong.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend the assessment arrangements in place to include benchmarking which enables the prompt identification of gaps in children's learning and development, so that next steps can be identified to support the narrowing of any such gaps
- extend the partnerships with parents and others in relation to the sharing of next steps identified, so that all involved in the child's care and education can focus on providing targets and consistent support to each child.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding arrangements are robust. Recruitment procedures and risk assessments are thorough, helping to ensure that children are cared for by suitable people in a safe and secure environment. No un-vetted person is permitted to have unsupervised contact with children. Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of issues relating to child protection and systems in place to record concerns are appropriately maintained.

The setting is run by a parents committee, enabling all parents to take an active role in deciding how the setting is organised, funded and who it is staffed by. The support provided by the current committee is extensive. Successful fundraising has enabled the setting to recently replenish its resources with a wide range of new high quality furnishings and play equipment. The committed and well qualified staff team are fundamental to the effective manner in which the resources are used to support children's learning and enjoyment. Interaction is warm and caring and staff are deployed very effectively to provide high levels of support where needed. Children's progress is clearly linked to their engagement and interest in the equipment on offer. All children throughout the session are fully engaged in learning through play. The atmosphere is busy and purposeful. Children are keen to take part in the activities on offer and are encouraged to say if there is a piece of equipment that they would like to use, which has not been put out.

Partnership with parents is strong. The arrangements to share information about children's care needs are well established and ensure that the setting and parents inform each other of any issue that might impact on the care of a child. The arrangements for the two way sharing information about children's education are emerging but are not so fully embedded.

The setting are successful in providing an inclusive provision. All children are cared for according to their individual needs. The resources offered include a range that enables children to find positive images of themselves and their families; these include a range with disabilities that children use sensitively in their play. The setting works effectively with other professionals in the field of child care and has good links with the local authority professionals, who offer support and guidance to develop their practice and improve their service to children.

There are clear arrangements in place to reflect regularly on how the setting operates and to consider ways of extending this. The setting demonstrate a good awareness of their strengths and look for ways to build on these. Any areas of weakness identified are targeted and addressed promptly. All staff share a common vision for the group and are passionate about ways of securing continual improvement.

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

Children's welfare is supported by arrangements in place to keep them safe and promote their health and wellbeing. A range of good quality policies outline the arrangements for caring for children; they also inform parents about their role in supporting these, such as not bringing children into the group if they are infectious. Children are developing a good awareness of how to stay healthy; for example, hand washing routines, regular discussion about healthy eating and encouragement to enjoy active and energetic play both inside and outdoors.

Children demonstrate through their actions that they feel safe in this setting. They approach staff without hesitation, make clear their ideas, views and feelings and are confident to ask for help or to direct adults in games and play. Children's behaviour is very good. All children are supported to negotiate and resolve issues between themselves, with discussion and reasoning. Children were observed to be skilled negotiators, bartering with toys and equipment and making 'deals' about whose turn it was next to use popular equipment, without the need for adult intervention. Children show respect for each others abilities. Older children can be seen to support the play of the younger ones by showing them how complete activities or use equipment. Children are developing an awareness of diversity, including disability. One child was observed recognising that the play person with callipers may need help to climb the stairs of the doll's house. She chatted about this to herself in her play and placed another doll beside it, so that the doll with callipers was 'helped' up the steps.

Children are making good progress in all six areas of learning. The systems for noting observations and tracing children are maintained to a high standard and much staff time is dedicated to producing records of children's achievements. Arrangements in place track progress but assessment against the Early Years Foundation Stage takes place periodically rather than continually. As a result, the opportunity for a key person to promptly identify emerging gaps in children's abilities or skills is weakened. When gaps are identified appropriate support is offered to narrow these. Children are developing skills which will support their future learning. They have good access to a wide range of information and communication technology equipment; these include digital cameras, a light box, play tills and a CD player. Children are becoming active learners, asking questions and seeking to explore and investigate so that they may find answers for themselves. They are growing in confidence, independence and demonstrate a love of learning which will support their progression to school and beyond.

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	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
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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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