

Stanway Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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08/02/2012

Inspector

Lynn Smith

Setting address

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Type of setting

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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

Stanway pre-school was registered in 2011 in its new premises, however, it originally registered in the 1970's. It is committee run and operates from a room within a newly built Children's Centre, in Colchester, Essex. A fully enclosed garden provides an appropriate area for outdoor activities. The pre-school is open from 9am to 3pm five days per week, term time only.

A maximum of 26 children under eight years may attend the pre-school at any one time, of whom all may be in the early years age range. There are currently 72 children on roll. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register.

The pre-school employs 11 members of staff, of whom nine including the manager hold appropriate qualifications to at least level two.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's welfare, learning and development needs are very well met as staff demonstrate a secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how to deliver it. Children enjoy participating in a wide and exciting range of planned and freely chosen activities which evolve from their ideas and interests. The setting's established and effective partnerships with parents and other early years providers ensure that children's early years experiences are consistent and purposeful. The setting's systems for reviewing and evaluating the provision are very good, providing them with clear direction and demonstrating their firm commitment to continuous improvement. Parental information required for each child in the documentation section of the Early Years Foundation Stage is currently not recorded.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the organisation of snack and meal times to ensure every child receives an enjoyable and challenging learning and development experience that is tailored to meet their individual needs.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff demonstrate a very clear understanding of their responsibilities with regards to protecting the children in their care. They sign to confirm that they have read and understood all of the setting's policies and procedures. Staff are actively involved in reviewing the policies and know when a change or amendment has

been made. All staff have recently updated their safeguarding knowledge on line and are confident about the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child. Children play and learning in a safe and secure environment as staff are vigilant about conducting daily safety checks indoors and outdoors. A clear list of staff vetting and clearance is held on file demonstrating that all adults who come into regular contact with children are checked for suitability. All required records are available for inspection, with the exception of parental information and details of which parent each child lives with.

This pre-school has been operating for over thirty years, but moved into new premises in Autumn 2011. The new premises are brand new and situated in a Children's Centre close to a local primary school. Staff and management have worked hard to review and establish new working practices as their previous premises were very different. A proactive and very effective committee support the large staff team who work very well together, ensuring the smooth organisation of the sessions. Everyone involved in the pre-school plays an active role in the self-evaluation process ensuring that they all 'own it' and are able to benefit from the setting's continuous improvements. There is a firm commitment to provide very high standards of care and education which is apparent in every aspect of the setting's provision.

The pre-school room is bright, welcoming and invited. Staff present the toys and play materials at children's height to prompt them to safely select resources of their choice. They do this proficiently and understand the importance of clearing them away again at the end of the session. A very good adult to child ratio ensures that every child is well supported and supervised. Staff know which role they are undertaking each day as the manager devises clear and effective staff rotas well in advance. All staff demonstrate a firm commitment to further developing their childcare knowledge and understanding. They attend a wide range of training courses and cascade their new knowledge back to other team members. The setting's equality and diversity policies are well reflected throughout the setting ensuring that the pre-school offers a fully inclusive and welcoming provision for all families.

Parents spoken to at the time of the inspection are extremely complimentary of the staff, the environment, the way in which their children are learning and the excellent written and verbal communication they receive each day. Some parents travel from surrounding villages to bring their children to the setting based on positive feedback from other users. Parents are encouraged to play an active role in their children's learning by taking their learning journeys home on a regular basis to share with other family members. Partnerships in the wider context are very well established. The setting works well with other agencies and welcomes the support it receives from Local Authority Development Workers. Links to aid transition between the setting and local schools is very good and the systems in place ensure a smooth and easy transition for children. Where children attend more than one setting, effective systems enable key persons from this pre-school to liaise and work closely with key persons from the other provisions. Staff are very knowledgeable about which children attend more than one provision and talk confidently about how they develop these partnerships.

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

Children thoroughly enjoy their pre-school experiences. They are busy, active and engaged throughout the sessions. The excellent opportunities they are provided with to make choices and decisions about their play and learning enable them to become strong and independent young people. Staff support is superb, they are on hand to facilitate and take forward children's ideas and suggestions. For example, a den is required for children to sit in a read books. In a very short time the den is in place and children excitedly use it to fulfil their imaginative needs. Children are creative and enjoy expressing themselves through a range of materials. Confident children provide staff with a paint order, detailing the colours they want made up and remember to say thank you once their list is complete. Children are very friendly and examples of small friendship groups are seen throughout the setting. Children hold hands, plan games for each other and negotiate their roles within the games proficiently. Staff observe children throughout the day and use their observations to plan effective individual activities based on each child's next steps in learning. A small group time towards the end of the session provides opportunities for more focussed activities. However, the large staff team working each session means that those children not wanting to participate in group time are provided with individual adult attention and are able to choose what they want to do.

Children enjoy a healthy diet at the pre-school. The setting holds an award for healthy snacks and provides an exciting range of fresh and dried fruit, raw vegetables and savoury biscuits. Children have some opportunities to become involved in snack time as they collect their own utensils and wash them up afterwards. However, they do not consistently play a part in the preparation of snack time, for example, by chopping whole fruit. Children are very fit and active and have excellent opportunities to make decisions about whether they play indoors or outdoors as the main door to the garden area is open and accessible at all times. Children learn about healthy habits, such as, regular hand washing as staff act as good role models and remind them to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Children are very aware of safety in the setting and follow the staff's clear directions. For example, they understand that the snow and ice in the garden is slippery and that they need to move more carefully on it. They feel very safe and secure and demonstrate this by moving confidently around the provision.

Children are very settled and comfortable in their pre-school environment. They approach staff with ease and enjoy the good quality interaction they receive from them. The setting has simple rules which ensure the smooth running of the session, children are very aware of these and follow them. For example, to attract children's attention staff shake a tambourine, children know they should stop what they are doing and hold their hand up and listen for the next direction. Staff mostly use this system to alert children that there is going to be a change in the routine, such as, tidy up time. This ensures that children have opportunities to complete a task or to play with a favourite toy before it's too late. The well-planned and effective resources on offer to children enable them to participate in a wide range

of activities which build skills for the future. They are proficient talkers and converse with each other and with adults confidently. They use the materials on offer to help them to solve problems and to think critically. Their technology is enhanced through the use of computers and mechanical equipment. Children regularly go on walks to the local shop and library to learn about the wider community.

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	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	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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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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