

Stone Cross Pre-School Playgroup

Stone Cross Memorial Hall, Dittons Road, Stone Cross, East Sussex, BN24 5ET

Inspection date	03/10/2012
Previous inspection date	23/05/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	3
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is satisfactory

- Children have access to a varied curriculum of activities and experiences complemented by a wide variety of resources and equipment that support all areas of learning throughout each session. There is an effective balance between child-led and adult-supported play.
- Staff ask open-ended questions encouraging children to think about their actions, reinforce their learning and develop their communication and language skills.
- All children learn a lot from the daily 'circle time' sessions. Even very young children sit for extended periods singing, learning about numbers, the weather or the days of the week and listen intently to the stories being read. This helps them to develop important skills towards many of the areas of learning.
- Parents are happy with the care provided, and particularly like the regular newsletters informing them of the planned activities giving them the opportunity to feel involved with their children's learning and development.

It is not yet good because

- The revised Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is not yet fully implemented. Children's starting points are not clear, and observation, assessment and planning cycles are not always used effectively to plan the next steps in their learning.
- There are limited methods in place to share information with other settings that children attend, hindering the ways these children are able to benefit from regular

communication and the delivery of a seamless educational programme.

- Self-evaluation is in its early stages. The pre-school staff have not yet fully met the recommendations set at their last inspection and the monitoring of the educational programme is not always effective.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector spent time observing children indoors. It was a wet day so the children did not go outside to play. The inspector sought the views of children through discussion with them and observation of their play.
- The inspector discussed the leadership of the setting with both the manager and the nominated person.
- The inspector sampled records and documentation relating to: children's progress and development; safeguarding; staff training and suitability.
- One parent was interviewed and their views taken into account.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the nominated person during circle time.

Inspector

Fler Wright

Full Report

Information about the setting

Stone Cross Pre-School first opened in 1952 and is run by a committee. It operates from one large room and a smaller room in a community hall in Stone Cross, East Sussex. All children have access to an enclosed outdoor area. The committee also runs another group nearby, which children move on to when they reach approximately three years of age.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and is open each weekday from 9.15am until 12.15pm during school term times. A maximum of 30 children in the early years age group may attend at any one time and there are currently 35 children on roll, all are aged two or three years. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years-old. They currently support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who learn English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs six members of staff; five of these hold appropriate early years qualifications and all have a valid first aid certificate.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- Improve the systematic observations and assessments of each child's development and learning, and use these to plan for their next steps.

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- maintain a regular two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise with other settings delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage that children attend, to help support and extend children's learning and development in order to ensure effective continuity and progression.
- develop the use of reflective practice and self-evaluation to identify strengths and priorities for development that will continuously improve the quality of the provision for all children.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children enjoy their time here and most arrive happily and settle well. Those that find it harder to settle are quickly comforted by staff showing close relationships are formed. Children with additional needs or who are learning English as an additional language are supported to ensure they are able to progress. Individual Education Plans are in place to support children as required. The learning environment available and the routines in place allow children to become involved in activities and experiences that cover each of the seven areas of learning throughout each session. The large hall has an area dedicated for physical play to ensure children are able to develop their physical skills in all weathers when the garden may not always be accessible.

Circle time is a key part to each session that children enjoy, and learn a lot from. Even young children sit for extended periods showing they are fully engaged. Opportunities for children to build their confidence, count, recognise different colours and shapes as well as their names, and learn the days of the week, months of the year and talk about the weather, ensure they are remain interested and are eager to participate. They listen intently to audio stories and concentrate as staff show them the book and point to the pictures to correspond with what they can hear. The time is planned satisfactorily by staff to ensure the activity is meaningful and children are able to develop their skills in a variety of areas.

Generally, staff support children in their learning by asking a variety of open-ended, thoughtful questions that encourage children to think about what they are doing and develop their communication and language skills. However, some opportunities are missed to further children's learning and development and understanding. For example, during tidy up time, children who are not tidying up are removed from the ride on toys by a member of staff, with no notice given or explanation as to why this was necessary. Staff have just attended training on the revised Early Years Foundation Stage, and as a result it is not yet fully implemented at the setting as they are still deciding on the methods to use to make full and effective use of the observation, assessment and planning cycles. Staff are able to talk about what children can do, but those that started at the beginning of term still do not have a 'learning journey' for staff to begin to record any progress they are making. Other children who have attended for some time do have a 'learning journey' in place, although those sampled contain minimal information. This makes records harder to share with parents to enable them to play a key role in the learning and development of their children. All assessment is currently informal and it is not clear what a child is able to do when they start at the setting as their starting points are not highlighted. Although staff do recognise where children are in their learning they do not routinely identify and plan for the next steps in their individual development. This hinders the opportunities for children to be challenged fully and make further achievements as they progress towards the early learning goals. Overall, they are gaining the skills and attitudes that will help prepare them for school.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

The key worker system is effective, and children are placed with staff with whom they form a natural bond encouraging positive emotional attachments. Children learn how to behave appropriately as any minor disagreements are dealt with efficiently and appropriately, aiding their understanding of sharing and good behaviour. Children bring in fruit that is shared amongst the group, ensuring there are a broad variety of healthy snacks available on a daily basis. Milk and water are freely accessible during sessions. Staff quickly tend to children who need their noses wiped ensuring their needs are met, although the tissues are placed out of reach of the children so they are not currently able to complete this task independently.

The learning environment supports children's all round development and there is a broad range of good-quality toys and equipment set up enabling children to access a wide variety during each session. For example, the role play area is set up as a workshop and children frequently visit the well resourced area to build a wall using large foam bricks, put on hard hats, fill tool boxes with tools, wear goggles, or use pencils and rulers to measure. There is a good balance between child led and adult initiated play, with adults usually supporting children during their chosen activities well. Staff are enthusiastic in their interaction with children, encouraging their confidence and self-motivation. Children demonstrate they are eager to participate and learn, including during routine tasks such as tidying up, indicating the experiences available interest them and meet their developmental needs. Staff encourage this further by welcoming them eagerly into their chosen play spaces. The organisation of the Pre-School means most of the children are aged between 24 and 36 months. Many of them have a vast range of differing emotional and intellectual needs that staff are able to accommodate and meet accordingly.

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

Staff have knowledge and experience of safeguarding issues and there is a designated health and safety officer in place who has completed the appropriate training and carries out routine checks to make sure the premises are safe and children access a safe environment. The required documentation relating to safeguarding is in place and the recruitment procedures ensure that all staff at the Pre-School are suitable.

All but one of the staff team is qualified in childcare and all are skilled in their interaction with children helping to ensure the children in attendance are able to gain positively from the vast majority of experiences available to them throughout each session. Staff have an understanding of the revised Early Years Foundation Stage framework, although have not yet fully implemented the learning and development requirements into the curriculum meaning the formal observation and assessment processes currently lack rigour. The manager is fully aware of this, and the staff team are currently working on improvements. However, the existing gaps in children's developmental records show the educational programme is not always monitored effectively. The nominated person is involved with the Pre-School and has a basic knowledge and understanding of her role and the statutory framework. Staff have regular meetings and appraisals ensuring information is shared,

and opportunities for staff development are identified and progressed helping to benefit the children in attendance.

Self evaluation is in its early stages. The Pre-School has not yet fully met the recommendations set at their last inspection although some progress has been made, especially in relation to gaining information from parents about their child's development in the form of 'good news slips' for example. Children and parents are involved in the self-evaluation process although the lack of targeted plans means progress and improvement is slower than necessary.

Parents are happy with the care provided, and say they feel well informed about what their children are learning at Pre-School through the regular newsletters that contain information on the activities planned for the future. As children grow up, they move onto the Pre-School's sister setting. The same committee run this setting, and regular management meetings ensure information is shared about individual children aiding the transition process. However, there are limited methods in place to share information with other settings that children attend, hindering the ways these children are able to benefit from regular communication and the delivery of a seamless educational programme.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for

registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	507910
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	883741
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	35
Name of provider	Stone Cross Pre-School Playgroup
Date of previous inspection	23/05/2011
Telephone number	01323 769053

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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