

Stondon Stompers Pre-school

Village Hall, Lower Stondon, Henlow, Bedfordshire, SG16 6LQ

Inspection date	04/12/2012
Previous inspection date	27/04/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- The key person system is exemplary and runs smoothly. It directly supports each child, helping them to feel settled, safe and confident in their pre-school. It also provides invaluable support for parents and carers.
- Opportunities for the children to learn about keeping themselves safe and implementing what they have learnt in practice is excellent. This helps children embed critical skills for the future.
- Teaching methods are good. The unique needs of each child are understood by staff and as a result, they provide a stimulating environment where the children engage in a wide range of good quality learning and development experiences.
- Children are protected from unsuitable adults as all members of staff working in the pre-school, and the management committee have a clear understanding about protecting children from harm.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Planning for children's next steps in learning occasionally lacks clarity in how those individual needs are going to be met.
- Opportunities for children to access equipment involving Information and Communication Technology, such as computers with age-appropriate programmable software, have not yet been fully encompassed.

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 observed activities and spoke to children with staff in the main play areas.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager and co-chairperson of the committee.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning, evidence of suitability of practitioners working within the setting, and a range of other relevant documentation.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Lynn Clements

Full Report

Information about the setting

Stondon Stompers Pre-school was registered in 1992 on the Early Years Register. It is situated in the village hall in Lower Stondon, Bedfordshire. The pre-school is managed by a committee of parents. The pre-school appointed play leader is in charge of the day-to-day running to the provision. The provision serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates five days a week term time from 9.05am until 12.05pm morning sessions and 12 noon until 3.15pm afternoon sessions. A lunch club operates from

12.05pm until 1pm. There is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The pre-school employs seven members of staff. These include an administrator, kitchen manager and six staff, who work directly with the children. Of the staff working with the children, one has a National Vocational Qualification Level 2 and is currently working towards Level 3. Three members of staff have a National Vocational Qualification Level 3 and the leader has a Foundation Degree in Early Years and a B.A (Honours) in Education (Early Years).

Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 30 children in the early years age group on roll. During this inspection, 16 children were present. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a small number of children, who speak English as an additional language and those with special needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- refine the planning systems by adding more detail about how children's next steps for learning will be used to further support their continuing good progress
- increase opportunities for the children to explore a range of programmable toys, as well as equipment involving Information and Communication Technology, such as computers.

Inspection judgements

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

The play leader recently joined the pre-school and together with the existing staff, a strong and decisive team has been established. All staff have a clear understanding about how young children learn through play and free-flow investigation. This knowledge is used well to plan exciting environments both inside and outdoors, which capture the children's imagination and participation in activities. Opportunities for children are wide ranging, which helps them to make progress across all areas of learning, given their ages, abilities and starting points. Key person staff make clear observations of the children and use this information to plot their progress across the different age bands. Parents are involved in this, as they are encouraged to share learning, which happens at home. They do this through regular one-to-one meetings with their child's key person and by sending in

information, which can be included in their child's 'superstar achievements'. Planning meetings are held by staff and the play leader to make sure that activities engage the children and help them to build on their existing skills and abilities. However, while planning is in place, it does not consistently include sharp focus on all individual next steps for learning, to make sure that learning opportunities continue to be effectively challenging into the future.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time in the pre-school. They move freely and have fun, making independent choices about what they want to play with or investigate. For example, they have great fun setting up their make believe cafe in the outside play house, where they serve each other and staff hot chocolate and frothy coffee. Children are keen and very competent communicators, seeking out each other or adults to share their ideas and extend their games. They play in harmony in small and large groups. For instance, children sit together enthralled during story time as they share a book about a rabbit's Christmas wish. Every single pair of eyes are transfixed with the pictures and the children eagerly offer their ideas and interact confidently with the story line. They enjoy interrelating with each other and members of staff. The quality of teaching is very good as staff use effective measures, including audio and visual clues, to support and consolidate learning as it takes place. Their use of open questions, facial gestures and intonation helps to relay meaning to the children, who in turn are developing the characteristics of effective learners. For example, children find ways to solve problems, initiate their ideas and show pride in their achievements.

Children enjoy exploring seasonal root vegetables and then following this through with staff as they make home-made soup. Similarities and differences are explored as the children learn about how they are all the same but different. For example, some have blue eyes, others brown while some children have black hair and others blonde, but in their class all have two eyes, a nose and mouth. This leads into further conversations and staff are sensitive in supporting the children's quest for knowledge as they introduce activities, which help them to explore the wider world around them. For instance, celebrating different family customs within the pre-school, including Diwali. Children enjoy expressive art as they sing songs, dance and move to music. They use their imagination to create pictures, paintings and three dimensional models. Children explore some Information and Communication Technology, including torches, music players and telephones in their role play games. They also have access to mechanical toys, which they operate with increasing control and skill. However, opportunities for them to select and use technology for particular purposes, such as interacting with age-appropriate computer software, or completing a simple computer program are not fully embraced.

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

Relationships between members of staff and the children are exceptionally good. Children are clearly very well settled and at home in this provision, which staff make sure is safe and secure. These warm and very confident relationships provide children with an extremely positive environment where they are really willing to try things out for themselves and are allowed to take calculated risks, under the watchful eye of staff. For

example, they engage in wood-working, cooking and climbing trees. Health and hygiene is a priority within the setting and tasks, such as, personal hygiene, healthy eating and limiting the spread of infection, are extremely well embedded within the daily routines. The care practice within the pre-school enables the children to learn through very good first-hand experiences. They learn about the importance of hand washing, eating a healthy balanced diet and why exercise is so good for them.

Children have excellent daily opportunities, in all types of weather, to enjoy the fully enclosed, well-equipped outdoor play area. Here, they engage in tree climbing, washing wheeled toys and setting up their outdoor role play cafe. They plant and grow a variety of fruit, vegetables and flowers throughout the year and dig for treasure in the garden. In addition, the pre-school have daily access to the mainstream school in the village as it is adjacent to the pre-school building. Here, the children enjoy feeding and looking after the chickens and using apparatus and play space on a larger and more robust scale than is possible within the pre-school itself. Children take appropriate and calculated risks as they climb, jump and negotiate safe pathways using an excellent range of large apparatus and wheeled toys. They talk with each other and members of staff about exercise and keeping healthy. These discussions complement those about healthy eating and the opportunities they enjoy to taste foods from around the world, in their cafe-style snack bar.

The relationship between the pre-school and the main school is exceedingly good, allowing for children to make seamless transitions into the reception class when they reach school age. In addition, these partnership bonds help the parents and carers to share information and plan their changing care needs in advance, helping to support positive community cohesion. Staff in the pre-school are highly effective in making sure that all children are well integrated. Excellent partnership working takes place with other agencies to ensure that every child receives high levels of support at an early stage. For example, staff seek support for children with special needs and/or disabilities, such as speech and language. They seek additional resources, for instance, for those children, who speak English as an additional language.

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

The play leader and members of staff have a clear understanding about protecting children from harm and all know how to make a child protection referral if they have a concern about a child in their care. The management committee have robust procedures in place with regard to staff recruitment and no adult is left unsupervised with the children if they have not undergone the appropriate checks. A wide range of relevant policies and procedures are shared with parents and carers. These are implemented in practice, in order to promote the smooth running of the setting and to provide good quality provision for each child. All records required by legislation are in place and updated to meet changes in law or pre-school practice. A significant number of staff have updated their paediatric first aid training, enabling them to provide appropriate care in the event of an accident or emergency. The ongoing professional development of staff is clearly seen as a high priority within the pre-school. This attention to updating their knowledge and skills,

directly impacts on the positive learning experiences the children enjoy. There is a clear understanding across the management committee and pre-school staff about the importance of meeting the safeguarding, welfare, learning and development requirements. Risk assessments are undertaken of all child-accessible areas, enabling them to play in a safe and secure setting.

The pre-school leader has a good overview of the educational programmes as she monitors to ensure a broad range of experiences are offered to help children progress towards the early learning goals. Free-flow play is seen as an integral part of the day and a powerful learning opportunity for the children. This is balanced with a range of interesting adult-led activities, which engage the children's interest and participation. Overall, staff support children well to make good progress in their learning and development. There is a good evaluation system in place, which enables the play leader, management committee and staff to reflect on the services they provide. They listen to user needs, including the children and adapt practice where necessary, in order to promote continuous improvements for the future. The pre-school has a clear plan of action, in order to promote success and remain sustainable.

Partnership with parents is good. A parent forum has been set up, which helps to provide information about service user needs both initially and as their care needs change over time. There are regular opportunities for parents and family to be involved in the pre-school. They can join the parent management committee or attend the 'stay and play' sessions where they can socialise with other parents. There are also regular opportunities to share their children's learning records with their key person. This enables them to find out how their children are making progress and how they can support learning at home. Parents say that all members of staff are approachable and support their needs well. They feel that they have real peace of mind when dropping off their children and would highly recommend the setting to other families.

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	219300
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	818147
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	50
Number of children on roll	30
Name of provider	Stondon Stompers Pre-School
Date of previous inspection	27/04/2009
Telephone number	07775 23326

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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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