

Stephens Early Years Centre

Oakley Road, Southampton, Hampshire, SO16 4LG

Inspection date

21/05/2014

Previous inspection date

27/01/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

1

Previous inspection:

2

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	1
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	1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- The committed and enthusiastic staff have considerable understanding of each child which fully promotes children's learning and care.
- The provider and staff team collaborate with each other to offer the children a vibrant and purposeful environment which is extremely conducive to their learning.
- All children have individually tailored learning plans which are changed as they progress. This results in children making rapid progress in their learning.
- Relationships with parents, carers and other agencies involved with the children have a significant impact on the children's needs being met.

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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector talked to the parents, children, staff and management.
- The inspector observed the interaction between the staff and children.
- The inspector sampled documents kept on the children including their observation and assessments.
- The inspector undertook a joint observation with the manager of the pre-school.
- The inspector spent time observing in each of the rooms and gardens.

Inspector

Amanda Shedden

Full report

Information about the setting

Stephens Early Years Centre opened in 1990 and registered in 1997. It operates from a dance studio in Shirley, Southampton and serves the local community. Entrance and facilities are accessible on the ground floor. The setting is registered on the Early Years register and cares for two-, three- and four-year-old children who are funded to support their special educational needs. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The setting opens each weekday during school term time. A breakfast session runs from 8am. The sessions are from 8.30am to 3pm. There is a holiday play scheme offered during the summer holidays. There are nine full-time staff that work with the children. Of these, one has Early Years Professional Status and all others have qualifications in line with their roles and responsibilities. Stephens Early Years Centre receives support from the Head of Special Educational Needs for Southampton and the Early Years partnership.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- offer parents frequent updates so they are fully aware of their child's next steps to enable them to support their child's learning at home.

Inspection judgements

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

Children thrive in the pre-school due to the comprehensive knowledge staff have of each child. Each child is seen as unique and the staff's continuing purposeful interactions result in children being confident to join in and learn through their play.

Children thoroughly enjoy inspiring and imaginative activities throughout the day. The comprehensive assessment of each child enables every staff member to extend or consolidate children's learning through incidental play and focused activities. Each child has an individual learning plan which results in the interaction throughout the session being purposeful and tailored to their specific needs. Their next steps are shared amongst the staff team which enables all staff to engage with the children in a meaningful way. They teach using open questions to allow children to think for themselves and contribute their own knowledge. All of which supports children to make excellent progress in their learning.

Children are developing their communication and language skills through all activities due to the extremely effective interaction of the staff. While at the craft table they are encouraged to talk about what they have made. The skills of the staff member results in

children making up and telling the story of the 'dinosaur, the Christmas tree and the children' while they proudly show the dinosaur they have created out of a range of craft materials. During water play staff ask open questions and promote imagination as they pretend that a vessel is a flowerpot. Children count how many times it takes to fill it up and they talk about the colour of the flowers and what plants need to grow. They then have a practical activity where they fill pots up with peat and plant flower seeds choosing which flowers they want to use by looking at the packets. This helps children consolidate their learning through excellent first-hand experiences. Staff use all opportunities to promote children's conversations and increase their vocabulary. They promote discussions about the colours and what they are going to look like; children contribute their understanding saying confidently that flowers need 'sun and water to grow'.

Staff plan purposeful activities so that children actively learn through play. For example they pretend they are robots and children stand and listen to instructions like move forward, backwards, to the right or left on the mats. This actively helps their listening skills and thought processes as they think about the instruction and then move accordingly. Young children sit and participate in board games that help them understand about turn taking and matching pictures. The staff member uses the cards to promote children's understanding of colour, how to make the sign for the colours and encourage children to think where they might for instance see a kettle. All of these activities and the comprehensive and knowledgeable skills of the staff help children to be extremely prepared for their next stage in learning. This is because they have developed comprehensive skills and have positive attitude to learning.

Children with additional needs are particularly well supported in the fully inclusive setting. Children that need it have other agencies like speech therapists come into the setting to work with them. Their key person gives them a one-to-one session each day to consistently support their language development. Children with extra needs have one-to-one from their key person throughout the session. The close relationships they have with these children has an extremely positive impact so they feel safe and secure in the setting. Staff have a good understanding and successfully communicate with the children in their home language, particularly for their self-care needs to support inclusion effectively.

Comprehensive information is exchanged with parents so they are fully aware of their child's experiences at the pre-school. Each week they have a newsletter about the week's themes and activities. They have meetings each six weeks with their child's key worker resulting in them having a comprehensive understanding of their child's development. In addition parents are involved with the extra assessments undertaken when children are about two-years-old. However, if their child's targets changed in the six weeks they are not always fully informed of this to support their children's learning further at home.

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

The key person system is exceptionally well embedded and has a significant impact on children's well-being and development. Key persons undertake purposeful observations and assessments resulting in them having a significant understanding of each child's

needs. This helps children have secure attachments, building on their confidence and self-esteem and results in them being emotionally prepared for their next stage in their education.

Children moving on in the pre-school already know this environment and all the staff, which supports their transitions into this room so that they go smoothly. Extensive information is given to their new key person; this ensures they are fully aware of the child's development and caring needs. Those that are moving on to school are supported to be independent and confident in their new setting. Key staff from the pre-school also attend some of their school visits so children have someone that knows them well, helping with their confidence. Reception teachers are invited into the pre-school and good quality information is exchanged which gives the school a thorough understanding of the child's needs and achievements in learning.

The setting is exceedingly well organised to ensure outstanding care and education is provided for all children. The highly stimulating environment both indoors and outside promotes children's development across all areas of learning. Children have access to an extremely wide range of quality resources and activities. Children are extremely confident in the setting as they select from the extensive and stimulating resources themselves. The interaction and deployment of staff enhance their choices as they purposefully engage with the children in their chosen activity.

Children behave extremely well. They respond when asked to help tidy up the resources and they learn to share and take turns from a young age. They have positive relationships with their peers and staff members. The staff focus on the positives of their behaviour, praising the children and, in turn, boosting their self-esteem. They learn to respect and value others through well-planned activities and staff role modelling. Children know the routine of the day and this helps them feel very secure and respond positively as they know what is going to happen next. There are appropriate and different strategies in place to support children with additional needs where needed if they do not have an understanding of the rules of the pre-school. These have been created with the help of the outside agencies already involved in their care so that they are offered continuity in their behaviour management.

Children feel safe in the environment. They know they wear helmets when using wheeled toys in the garden 'in case they bump their heads'. They know there are limits on the number of children on the climbing frame 'so they can move around easily'.

Children are being introduced to healthy lifestyles during the sessions. They take turns to help prepare the snack tables, washing the tablecloths so they are clean. They use anti-bacterial hand wash before eating and confidently help themselves to the fruit on offer. They receive praise as they pour their own drinks. Staff talk to the children and there are activities to promote healthy eating and develop their language. Children are told what the fruits are but they have to try and say what it is they want rather than just pointing. This helps develop their vocabulary and gives a name to what they are eating. Children use excellent manners, saying please and thank you and are praised for doing so, building on their self-esteem. The dentist has been to visit and children know to brush their teeth before going to bed. Each day they go outside and engage in a wide variety of activities to

develop their physical skills and learn about the natural world around them.

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

The setting's approach to safety is outstanding. Records such as daily registers and accident records are all in place with the procedures very well known to all staff. All adults have undergone rigorous checks to ensure their suitability to work with children and excellent communication means all are aware of their role. Staff deployment is very effective and keeps children safe at all times. Staff are required to complete an annual declaration to support their ongoing suitability. There is a thorough induction for any new staff members resulting in them having a clear understanding of their role.

The premises are secure and children's safety is assured. There are detailed and comprehensive risk assessments which staff are fully aware of and use very effectively each day. These cover all areas the children use both indoors and outside as well as on outings. They identify the possible hazards and show the action taken to minimise risk to children. The high adult to child ratio means children always have plenty of adult support when needed. Staff are very aware of their responsibility to report any concerns they have about a child or adult that works in the setting. Comprehensive procedures are in place and readily accessible to ensure safeguarding requirements are met.

Management and staff demonstrate an excellent and extensive knowledge and understanding of the learning and welfare requirements. Appraisals and peer-on-peer observations take place to review the staff's knowledge and skills on a regular basis. Staff identify any training courses or workshops they would like to attend for their personal and professional development and to support and increase the outcomes for children. A significant strength of the provision is the teamwork and staff have a very clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The owner has extremely high aspirations and all aspects of the setting are carefully monitored. Any changes within the setting are assessed in terms of the outcomes for children. The staff team work extremely well together and there is clear leadership from the enthusiastic owner and senior team. As a result staff report that they feel well supported and valued.

There are substantial and effective systems to monitor and evaluate the whole provision. The management and staff complete a self-evaluation form identifying areas that they are doing well and areas for development. The Friends Advisory Group, which is made up of parents, meet regularly to discuss different aspects of the pre-school and contribute to the evaluation of the setting. They participate in a local authority quality assurance scheme. There are regular staff meetings to enable staff to share their ideas. In addition parents and children are encouraged to share their views through informal discussion. The setting receives regular visits from the local authority and staff comprehensively implement any suggestions they make. The setting has made very good progress to meet the recommendations from the last inspection to improve the provision for children even further. For example, they now use ongoing observational assessment to plan around the individual needs and interests of all children.

There are extremely good systems in place to enable management and staff to monitor the learning and development requirements. Staff review children's learning journeys and evaluate activities. This enables staff to make sure all children are progressing well in their learning and development. There are three layers of planning which include the overall weekly theme and activities and further planning is tailored to the individual child's development needs.

Staff foster excellent relationships with parents and carers. They receive good quality information about their children's progress. Parents report that staff know their children's 'individual personalities and needs well and as a result their children are happy and making very good progress'. Parents state that the staff 'provide a wide range of activities that the children enjoy and that staff are friendly and approachable'. There are extensive systems in place to share information with other early years settings and professionals. Staff have excellent partnerships and work extremely closely with professionals such as paediatricians, health workers, psychologists and speech therapists to enable all children to reach their full potential.

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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. 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 monitored and inspected again within six 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	131571
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	975284
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	42
Number of children on roll	71
Name of provider	Kay Alison Doswell
Date of previous inspection	27/01/2010
Telephone number	023 8078 4069

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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, which are usually the childminder's 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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