

# Smarty's Pre-School Nursery

225 Lichfield Road, Little Stoke, Stone Staffordshire, ST15 8QU

|                          |            |
|--------------------------|------------|
| <b>Inspection date</b>   | 03/06/2014 |
| Previous inspection date | 17/06/2010 |

| <b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>                          | <b>This inspection:</b> | <b>1</b> |
|--|-------------------------|----------|
|  | Previous inspection:    | 1        |
| 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

- Children enjoy a superb learning environment. The fantastic outside area provides numerous opportunities for exploration and play, with a kitchen garden, digging area and a storyteller's cottage. Indoors, children enjoy comfortable and homely playrooms with a range of excellent activities that challenge and stimulate them.
- Teaching is outstanding because staff have an exemplary understanding of how to promote children's learning. They make excellent use of their Early Years Teacher to ensure best practice is consistently followed. Activities are precisely tailored for each child's age and ability. As a result, children make extremely rapid progress.
- Children's safety and well-being are of paramount importance. Staff are highly attentive to children's needs and are constantly vigilant to ensure that any hazards are successfully minimised. Safeguarding procedures are fully understood and all staff are trained in this crucial area of practice.
- Partnerships with parents are extremely positive. The staff fully value the role of parents and provide numerous opportunities for parents to be involved with their child's learning and development. This ensures that children benefit from consistent care and a richer learning experience as they continue to develop their skills in both the home and nursery environment.
- The nursery is led by a driven and focused owner, who is committed to providing the best quality care and education for children. All staff are supported and encouraged in their roles and benefit from regular training and mentoring. Consequently, children are cared for by staff who are knowledgeable, confident and passionate about the work they do.

## 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.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the playrooms and the outside learning environment.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the Early Years Teacher.
- The inspector held meetings with the management team for the provision.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with children, the provider's self-evaluation form and improvement plan.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.

## Inspector

Jennie Lenton

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Smartys Pre-School Nursery was registered in 2007 and is one of four settings operated by Smartys. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from a converted two-storey house in Stone, Staffordshire. The nursery is open Monday to Friday throughout the year, from 7.30am until 6pm. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 70 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age range. Seven members of staff work directly with the children. Of these, six are qualified at level 3 or above, with one member of staff holding Early Years Teaching Status.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- share the latest techniques and approaches in early years research with parents to enable them to support their children's learning and development even more effectively, so as to promote even swifter progress for all children.

## Inspection judgements

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

Children are bursting with energy and excitement in this vibrant and busy nursery. They freely move around the beautifully laid out playrooms, accessing a fabulous range of activities. The homely atmosphere and supportive staff means that all children quickly relax. They confidently chat to their peers as they play imaginatively. They act out stories in the storyteller's cottage, which is a designated story area in the outdoor play space. They also pretend to run a fruit and vegetable store in the creative play corner. All children are exceptionally keen to take part in activities, showing high levels of concentration and engagement. They excitedly shout out the words that rhyme during favourite stories, using an impressive range of vocabulary as they rhyme words, such as sky and then more unusual words like implore. This provides an excellent level of challenge for all abilities. Younger children show a mature understanding of how to share and take turns as they work together to make a wall display. Their concentration is exemplary as they carefully paint the wings of a Chinese dragon and add materials to it to make a stunning piece of art. They show great pride in the finished product and consequently, have confidence in their own abilities. Older children really enjoy the challenge of following a recipe as they make bread and even get to use a pestle and mortar to grind wheat into flour. This is linked into a story about a hen and children are fully captivated as they are able to complete the tasks they have read about. Children also have a fantastic sense of the wider community as they regularly visit the local parks on nature walks and even take part in special events such as The Stone Carnival. Children help to design and decorate their own float and enjoy the excitement of carnival day as

they all dress up and take part in the Smartys Airway theme, raising money for local charities.

Staff are exceptionally skilled teachers. Their engaging manner ensures that children's attention is fully captured as they lead circle time and sing action songs. Story books are read with emphasis, with characters coming to life as staff use different voices, holding children's attention and making the stories fun and interactive. Children are fully absorbed as they listen to a story about a favourite dog and cat. They join in with familiar phrases and enthusiastically make the noises of the different animals. Staff successfully get them to predict what happens next, use new and sophisticated vocabulary, such as 'cacophony' and recognise words that rhyme. The staff's delivery of activities is second to none and their enthusiasm is infectious. Children respond with excitement as staff make every learning opportunity fun. Children's interests are used as a springboard to learning, as staff are flexible in their planning, using children's ideas to shape play. For example, children squeal with excitement as they get to experience the feel of cooked porridge after acting out the story of three bears. Staff recognise that children enjoy feeling the texture of the mixture so provide a large tub of porridge for them to explore. Children are fully engaged as they squish the mixture between their hands and discuss the way it feels.

All children are making excellent progress towards the early learning goals given their starting points. This helps to prepare them well for their future learning and the move onto school. Children's achievements are recorded and the key person for each child regularly monitors their development to ensure that they are continually making swift progress. Staff successfully identify ways to help children move forward and use this to inform the planning of future activities. Planned events are shared with parents and staff consult with parents at the start of a placement to determine children's starting points. They ensure that parents are kept informed as to their child's progress through regular reviews and parents' evenings. Parents also have the opportunity to join in with their children's learning through the provision of specific learning tools to help them at home. For example, older children take home details of the letters they are learning and parents know which phonics their child is covering and how to help them blend letters together. Staff are always on hand to provide additional advice and are extremely knowledgeable about current research and techniques. They share their knowledge with parents in informal discussions and are now looking at ways to share best practice with parents on a more regular basis to fully promote sustained learning and development at home.

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

Children display fantastic relationships with the staff and each other. Most children have previously attended the toddler nursery run by the same provider. They have benefited from the excellent transition procedure whereby they are accompanied to this nursery for their first few days with their previous key person. Even those who are completely new to Smartys quickly feel at home. All children are offered settling-in sessions where parents slowly build up the time they leave their children. Staff use these sessions to find out about each child's personality, likes and dislikes. They provide favourite activities to help children settle. Consequently, children are confident with their key person, fully engaged in fruitful activity and more than happy to be left when parents are ready to go.

Information is collated on registration forms to ensure that staff are aware of any special requirements. Dietary or medical needs are fully discussed and all staff are made aware of any specific requirements to ensure that children receive individualised care.

Safety is highly prioritised. All exterior doors are kept secure and staff meet and greet any visitors at the door to make sure that only authorised individuals access the building. Comprehensive risk assessments ensure that all areas and equipment are fit for use. Children also learn how to keep themselves safe. They know how to respond swiftly during a fire drill as these are regularly practised and discussed. They also learn about safety during topics at the nursery. For instance, they learn about the dangers of fireworks as they discuss bonfire night and get to enjoy a safe demonstration by the staff. Children are captivated by this event and really take the learning on board, discussing how fireworks can be dangerous if handled incorrectly. Children behave exceptionally well. They know the rules of the nursery and understand that these are in place for their own well-being. They show a strong sense of ownership for the nursery and consequently treat their surroundings and each other with respect. They take part in tidy up time, putting away toys with little prompting and taking pride in being the special helper. They demonstrate strong self-care skills as they line up to get their lunch and scrape their left-overs away at the end of the meal. This helps them to take responsibility for themselves and encourages them to contribute to the running of the setting. Children receive plenty of encouragement and praise from staff throughout the day which effectively builds self-esteem and promotes emotional security. Any unwanted actions are dealt with calmly.

Children's good health is also exceptionally well promoted. They have an outstanding array of active play opportunities with a large outdoor play area with areas to ride on tricycles and scooters, play with hoops and balls, and use the challenging climbing apparatus. Children also take part in nature walks to the local park, looking for mini-beasts and other items on a checklist, as they enjoy the fresh air. Active play is also effectively encouraged indoors, as children learn the French words for marching, twirling and clapping. This provides them with an excellent level of challenge while still encouraging movement and physical development. Children are provided with a superb range of nutritious meals, which are all freshly prepared on the premises. The nursery has obtained a silver healthy eating award and is working towards obtaining the gold award. Children tuck in enthusiastically to meals, such as chicken casserole with fresh vegetables and potato or salmon with parsley sauce. At teatime, they make their own sandwiches, buttering the bread and adding their own fillings. Children also take part in growing the produce that is used in the nursery kitchen. They plant and tend to potatoes and other vegetables in the kitchen garden and are excited to see these being harvested and used in their meals. Snacks, such as fresh fruit and yogurts, are also provided and drinks of milk or water are offered throughout the day.

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

Staff are fully checked to ensure they are all suitable to work with children. They all hold a current Disclosure and Barring Service check and regularly sign to say that there have been no changes to their circumstances which affect their suitability. Staff are also highly

qualified. There is a positive attitude to continual professional development and staff are enthusiastic about building on their skills as they feel valued and respected as members of the work force. Most staff have been at the nursery for a number of years and children benefit from the consistency this provides. All staff attend regular training to help them fulfil their roles to the highest standards. For example, they have recently completed a range of speech and language courses to level 3 to help them support children in this essential area of learning. Key courses, such as first aid and safeguarding are also regularly completed. Safeguarding procedures are fully understood by all staff, with managers undertaking advanced training in this crucial area of practice. All staff display an excellent understanding of the signs and symptoms that may indicate abuse and are clear about how to follow up any concerns promptly. Vulnerable children are superbly supported as senior staff are experienced in working with other agencies and with families to promote children's best interests. They work alongside parents, helping them to support their children's learning and developmental needs during times of crisis. Staff provide essential information to professionals to ensure that any specific interventions are well targeted. Their practice is underpinned by a full written policy, which ensures that best practice is always precisely followed.

The management team work effectively together to provide inspirational leadership to their staff group. They successfully motivate and develop staff by providing training, support and clear expectations on standards of practice. Staff receive mentoring and support on all areas of their work, including the delivery of educational programmes and the implementation of care routines and procedures. Consequently, all staff, from the most senior to the most junior, are extremely professional and competent in their roles. There is a positive atmosphere at the nursery as all staff are passionate about their work and are keen to provide the best possible standards of care and learning. The progress of children is also expertly monitored. The nursery makes excellent use of their Early Years Teacher to ensure that staff are accurately assessing each child and providing appropriate activities to help them make the best possible progress. The Early Years Teacher oversees the delivery of the educational programmes and monitors each child's development. Any gaps in provision are promptly identified and swiftly remedied. As a result, all children, including the most vulnerable, are making excellent progress.

Staff build effective working relationships with parents and chat to them on a daily basis about their child's achievements and well-being. They get to know parents extremely well and seek to support them in any way possible. For instance, they help them to access additional support for their children where there is concern about development and share ideas about how to tackle any issues at home. Parents comment that they 'can talk to the staff about anything' and praise them for the help and advice they receive. Noticeboards around the nursery provide parents with additional information about childcare issues and about the Early Years Foundation Stage in particular. This helps parents to support and develop their children's learning at home. Key policies and procedures are shared with parents. This ensures that they are aware of the standards to which the nursery operates and provides details of how to make a complaint if they need to. Parent comments show that they are extremely happy with the care their children receive and state that there is nothing to change. They rate the nursery as fantastic and particularly comment on the amazing progress their children have made since attending. The nursery also builds outstanding links with other providers. Staff make contact with teachers at all schools that

children will go on to attend, including those out of the immediate area. Teachers are invited in to meet the children at the nursery and staff also take them to the reception class for settling-in sessions. This ensures that children know their new teacher prior to moving to school.

### **The Childcare Register**

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

## 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

|                                    |                          |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>     | EY344031                 |
| <b>Local authority</b>             | Staffordshire            |
| <b>Inspection number</b>           | 971928                   |
| <b>Type of provision</b>           |                          |
| <b>Registration category</b>       | Childcare - Non-Domestic |
| <b>Age range of children</b>       | 0 - 17                   |
| <b>Total number of places</b>      | 36                       |
| <b>Number of children on roll</b>  | 70                       |
| <b>Name of provider</b>            | Janet Skelton            |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b> | 17/06/2010               |
| <b>Telephone number</b>            | 01785 288992             |

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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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