

Old Stratford Pre-School

Old Stratford Community Centre, Deanshanger Road, Old Stratford, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, MK19 6NL

Inspection date	05/06/2014
Previous inspection date	18/03/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
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		2
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 quality of teaching is good. Staff use open-ended questions and ask children for their ideas. This encourages critical thinking skills, which are vital for children's successful future learning when they start school.
- Children experience risk and challenge in their play, as they attend local woodland and play in the well-organised garden. They learn about their own abilities and what they can do with the guidance of staff.
- Parent partnerships are strong at the pre-school because the staff find multiple ways to engage them in children's learning and encourage their involvement.
- Staff understand and fully put into place, the policies and procedures which relate to child protection and keeping children safe at the pre-school.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The book corner is not as inviting or interesting as other areas within the pre-school, to ignite children's interest in books and develop their literacy skills further.
- There is scope to develop the role of the committee, to fully utilise their shared knowledge and experience, to enhance the good work of the pre-school.

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 observed activities in the main room and garden.
- The inspector had discussions with parents, staff, children and committee members.
- The inspector undertook a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation, evidence of suitability of household/staff members and a range of other documentation, including the safeguarding procedures.

Inspector

Hayley Marshall

Full report

Information about the setting

Old Stratford Pre-School Playgroup opened in 1989. It now operates from the Community Hall on the outskirts of the village of Old Stratford in the extreme south of Northamptonshire, near to Milton Keynes. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during school term time. It operates sessions from 8.30am until 11.30am and 12noon until 3pm, with an optional breakfast club from 8am until 8.30am and a lunch club from 11.30am until 12.15pm. There are currently 56 children on roll. The pre-school employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above. The pre-school provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children with special educational 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:

- extend upon children's good development of literacy by creating an enticing book corner for children to help develop their love of books
- enhance the work of the committee to embed their good knowledge in strong practice to support the work of the pre-school to the very optimum.

Inspection judgements

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

The pre-school staff foster a culture of confidence amongst children which enables them to successfully lead their own play. The staff provide children with activities that require them to think, problem solve and explore. For example, children mix mud, water and sand to find out what happens to the texture and consistency. They delight in the freedom they have to ride bicycles and scooters down slopes, observing their speed and how they can increase it. Staff match their teaching to children's differing abilities. They identify when children's development exceeds expectations, and provide activities which stretch their minds and challenge what they already know. The staff use talk and conversation to help children to organise their ideas. Children are skilled in managing their own interests. When staff invite them to join an activity, children sometimes respond with a resounding 'no, thank-you'. Staff respect their decision and do not interfere, instead taking a step back and awaiting children to approach them. Children ask questions and staff ask them what they think the answer might be. Children think about their responses and engage in discussion with staff until together they come to a conclusion. These are the essential skills which equip children well for their entry into school. Children give a commentary to their play, imaginatively talking to 'mummy' as they cycle and park their bicycle. The

children are keen to talk with adults and share their views. They have high self-esteem and want to show adults their work and tell them what they are good at. Staff are quick to identify when children need extra support and work alongside other professionals to develop individual learning plans for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This enables all children to make consistently good progress given their individual starting points.

The staff make good use of the garden and plan well to develop children's physical skills. There are ample ways that children can develop the use of their large muscles when they play outdoors. The children experience different surfaces upon which to ride their bicycles and scooters. They crawl through tunnels and hide in shelters, which develops their coordination and control of their movements. Each week, children attend a physical play session where they learn about managing their movements by stopping, increasing their speed, direction and actions in time to music. This helps them to master balance and begin to gain spatial awareness to move confidently and safely. The children use their smaller muscles through a wide range of activities. They draw and write with white boards and pens, and crayons and paint. Older children begin to write their name on their work as staff teach them about the letters and sounds which form their name. The children recognise their names as they post them into a box to register each day. Children see words in the pre-school, as familiar items have name labels. There is scope to enhance children's keen interest in literacy and reading further by making the book corner more enticing for children.

Staff undertake observations of children and discuss these with them as they compile their learning journals. Children talk about what they enjoy doing as staff link their observations to areas of learning. The children's learning journals are readily available for parents to read each day. Parents also share their ideas and observations, from home, in a home to pre-school book. So as not to be left out, children also have a book where they draw, write and place stickers to communicate with staff. The staff build upon the information parents share and follow children's interests. This means that the assessments accurately identify children's current abilities, and their next steps in learning are precise, to help children make good progress. Staff track children's learning and can readily identify if they need any extra support, and if there are any areas where their learning needs to be challenged and extended.

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

The children form close bonds of attachment to the key persons who care for them. They display their warmth and affection by placing a hand upon the staff's knee as they talk to them, or by coming for a quick cuddle before running off and playing again. As parents have such close involvement in the pre-school, information about children's home routines, moods and important events are shared. This means that staff can ensure that children's physical needs are met, while also talking about how they are feeling and the people at home who are important to them. The children are keen to arrive at the pre-school and separate from their parents with confidence. When some children are less sure, parents say that they feel welcome to stay until children are ready to be left. This means that children, and parents, cope with the change well. Children are equally well

prepared for starting school. The pre-school staff place a high emphasis upon developing the self-help skills children will need when they start school. As a consequence, children can use the toilet by themselves, wash their hands and dress themselves for playing outdoors. Staff encourage independence at snack time. Children tell staff when they are hungry and thirsty, meaning that they recognise their own needs and know how to meet them. They prepare their snack and help to clear away. Children learn about healthy foods and lifestyles as they spend much time outdoors in the fresh air and enjoy exercise as part of their weekly routine.

The children play together well. When playing with a computer tablet, they understand that when the game comes to an end they must let someone else have a go. As staff explain this clearly and children understand, there are no arguments about this and children surrender the computer tablet without fuss. Children have the social skills they need to negotiate and solve many of their own minor disputes. This leads to the group playing well together and having good levels of confidence. The children behave well because of the many choices they have, and the high expectations and trust staff give them.

Children have active, meaningful experiences where they learn to assess and manage risks. They engage in forest school learning which promotes their resilience and self-reliance. With staff and parent's support, they use band saws and build dens. Children climb trees and explore local woodland as they become confident and capable in handling tools safely. A similar ethos is put into practice back at the pre-school. Children climb over slopes and through tunnels. They enjoy the freedom this gives them. Staff monitor these activities closely, while allowing children a sense of freedom to explore. The staff complete regular risk assessments and review safety measures. For example, they have attached safety mats to the wall to prevent children from injuring themselves as they run down the slope in the garden. Rules are put into place and staff give children guidance to make sure that they know safe ways to travel, climb and jump.

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

The inspection was prioritised to follow up an earlier visit from Ofsted, following a notification from an outside agency that raised concerns about supervision, recording and reporting accidents or injuries and behaviour management. The inspection found that the requirements for staff to child ratios were maintained, and that staff were appropriately deployed, so that children are adequately supervised to meet their needs and ensure their safety. The provision has appropriate procedures for recording and reporting accidents or injuries. Risk assessments have been completed of the premises, identifying aspects to check and how risks will be minimised. The risk assessment has been updated following a recent incident and steps have been taken to minimise the risk. The provision has an appropriate behaviour management policy and this was observed to be implemented by staff.

The pre-school has policies and procedures in place for vetting staff and checking their suitability to work with children. Staff who work with children have a thorough induction.

They follow the procedures of the pre-school, and can readily identify the signs and symptoms which might cause them concern about children's welfare. Staff undertake regular training to maintain their good awareness of child protection issues. The staff maintain a safe environment where children play. They confirm the identity of visitors to the pre-school. Children are signed in and out, recording their arrival and departure in case of an evacuation of the building. The staff record any complaints they receive in a log and respond accordingly. They then discuss arising issues from these at staff and committee meetings to evaluate and monitor practice.

The manager completes supervision of staff. She tackles underperformance appropriately and develops action plans to give staff clear direction in their work. The monitoring of the staff work extends to their observation and tracking of children. The manager gathers information from children's progress files to identify any weaker areas of teaching or trends in achievement. The staff work well together and supervise children closely, especially when they play outdoors. The pre-school has fully addressed the recommendations raised at the last inspection. The staff team undertake frequent training to improve their knowledge and skills. This has a positive impact upon children's learning, such as the introduction of weekly visits to local woodland for forest school teaching. The manager completes self-evaluation to identify the strengths and any areas to develop within the pre-school. The pre-school are seeking further support to find ways to strengthen the committee and find solutions to their difficulty in recruiting volunteer members. The committee have a wealth of knowledge and experience between them. However, they do not always fully utilise this to support the running and monitoring of the pre-school to the very optimum.

The staff at the pre-school understand the importance of working closely with other professionals. Together, staff hold meetings with special educational needs specialists to draw up plans of support for children. The pre-school staff work alongside teachers at local schools to encourage a relationship where they can exchange information to help support children in their move into school. The staff complete regular summaries of children's learning to keep them informed of children's progress. They complete the progress check for children between the age of two and three years, and parents contribute towards these. Parents are kept fully up to date with activities at the pre-school. They receive text message information about important issues, and can access the pre-school website to read policies and procedures. Staff invite parents to join in with children's learning as they attend the pre-school to support art activities and go for walks in the woods with children. This welcoming approach, along with the ability to join the committee, means that parents can choose to have a great deal of control in steering the pre-school and participating at a high level.

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	219885
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	977185
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	27
Number of children on roll	56
Name of provider	Old Stratford Pre School Committee
Date of previous inspection	18/03/2009
Telephone number	07821630058

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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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