

Inspection of Stowey Bears Preschool

Mill Close, Nether Stowey, Bridgwater, Somerset TA5 1NX

Inspection date: 23 November 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children benefit from a well-resourced and welcoming environment. They are keen to engage in enticing experiences, such as making dough. They confidently make decisions about their play and add resources to their chosen designs. Children listen attentively to instructions, such as to fill the cup halfway full of water, which they do so independently. Children communicate their ideas well, describing the mixture as looking like porridge. Children persevere in self-chosen tasks. When writing letters to Santa, children test different ways to fold the paper until it can fit in the post box.

Children gain good independence. They understand they need to put their slippers on after playing outside. Children willingly help to tidy away before lunch and understand that toys left on the floor can pose a risk. After sweeping the leaves from the path outside, children know to put the brooms away, so that others do not trip over them.

Staff have recognised the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on children and work closely with parents to support children back to the setting. Children receive excellent support from nurturing staff to help them settle back into daily routines. Children recognise they are anxious, for example when there is an unfamiliar adult at the setting. Staff are quick to reassure children, introducing them to the inspector, so that they can build relationships and feel confident to continue their learning.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Staff have good knowledge of the children and plan an exciting curriculum, which is adapted effectively to meet children's individual needs. Staff know what sparks children's interests and weave these into their planning to support children's next steps in learning successfully.
- Staff use additional funding to help children achieve well. For example, the sensory room has been developed to provide a calm space for children to reflect in. Staff have considered how best to support children's listening skills, such as providing listening games and taking children on listening walks within the local community.
- Staff work efficiently with parents and other professionals to support children's speech and language development. For example, the use of mirrors is helping children make the correct shape with their mouths to form sounds. Staff respond well to children's verbalisations and provide clear commentary to children's actions to expand their vocabulary.
- Older children use mathematical language precisely, explaining that they have put one spoonful of flour into their bowl and need two more to make three.

Children are introduced to new vocabulary to describe the different textures. On occasion, staff are too quick to offer solutions, such as how to divide the dough, and do not help children to think critically.

- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported in a fully inclusive environment. A calm space has been developed to help children reflect and take time out from a busy environment. Staff provide a range of resources and use effective strategies to help children focus and engage in daily pre-school life.
- Children's emotional well-being is considered effectively. Staff celebrate children's acts of kindness from the 'kindness tree' during group times, raising children's self-esteem. Children are praised for their contributions, for example nominating another child for a 'kindness leaf' when they helped them in a cooking activity.
- Overall, children behave well and are kind to each other. However, staff do not always ensure they consistently apply behaviour strategies for all children to help them understand expectations.
- Children benefit from good care practices. They know the importance of coughing into their elbow and washing hands regularly to protect each other from germs.
- Partnerships with parents are good. Parents appreciate the daily communication they receive through the online tool, which they use to spark conversations with their children when they pick them up.
- Knowledgeable leaders and managers support staff well to develop their professional skills and raise the quality of teaching. Staff communicate daily with each other and attend regular staff meetings to share and improve practice.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers have a good overview of what is happening in the setting. They review documents regularly to ensure children remain safe and follow up any concerns, such as poor attendance, with other agencies. Staff deploy themselves well to ensure children remain safe. They redirect unsafe play effectively, for example, encouraging children to use the small plank of wood to tap and listen to the different sounds they can make on the resources in the mud kitchen. Leaders, managers and staff have good knowledge of the possible indicators that a child is at risk of harm, including extreme behaviours. They understand the procedure to follow should they have a concern about a child or a member of staff. They have good understanding of their roles and responsibilities to protect children. There are robust recruitment and induction arrangements to ensure staff are suitable for their role.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- give children time to think and solve problems for themselves
- consistently apply behavioural strategies that help children understand expectations.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY409802
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10074478
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	21
Name of registered person	Stowey Bears Preschool
Registered person unique reference number	RP523573
Telephone number	01278 734 636
Date of previous inspection	19 April 2016

Information about this early years setting

Stowey Bears Preschool registered in 2010. It operates from the old children's centre in the grounds of Nether Stowey Primary School in Somerset. The pre-school opens from 8.50am to 3.20pm, Monday to Thursday, and from 8.50am until 11.50am on Friday, term time only. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are five members of staff employed; all hold early years qualifications at level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Rachael Williams

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager took the inspector on a learning walk to discuss how the curriculum is planned.
- The manager and the inspector conducted a joint observation of a small group activity.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children at convenient times during the inspection and considered the written views of parents.
- The inspector sampled documentation.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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