

Inspection of Stondon Stompers Pre-school

The Village Hall, Hillside Road, Lower Stondon, Bedfordshire SG16 6LQ

Inspection date: 6 September 2022

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
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The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children flourish in this inspiring setting that centres around their individual needs and interests. Staff are proactive in designing a pre-school that values children's opinions. Their contributions are integral to shaping the experiences offered to them. For example, children choose what they would like on the snack menu and staff link this to what they will grow in their garden. Children excel in their ability to regulate behaviour, resulting in cooperative play which is a pleasure to watch. They negotiate the rules of their games, ensuring they include everyone. Children use the skills modelled for them by staff to deal with conflict. For example, they say, 'Hmm, how about you make a cup of tea and I cook the steak?' in reaction to two children wanting to be a chef.

Children benefit from loving relationships with staff that know them exceptionally well. The team tailors the routine to meet individual children's needs. For example, some children arrive and leave at different times to allow them a calmer transition. As a result, all children settle and quickly become engaged in exciting activities. All children make significant progress in their learning from their starting points. Staff have developed an ambitious curriculum, focusing on developing the skills needed for future learning. All staff understand what they want children to learn throughout their time in the pre-school. A carefully sequenced plan ensures children build on what they know to make rapid progress. Repetitive activities allow children to reflect on prior learning.

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

- Teaching is excellent. Staff are skilled at providing consistently high-quality interactions with children. They use descriptive language to narrate what is happening, helping children to develop a rich vocabulary. Staff expertly build on speech and language skills through meaningful conversations with children and show a genuine interest in what they say. Children make excellent progress in their language development and are confident communicators.
- Staff's high expectations for children's development contribute to remarkable confidence and independence in children. Children enjoy 'having a go' and try to do things for themselves. Staff build on what children can already do and support them with the next step, for example by saying, 'I'll show you, and then you try.' Children learn to join in with routine activities, such as preparing snacks and mixing their paint.
- Mathematical concepts are skilfully threaded into the routine and activities. Children learn that numbers change when they take one away by counting the vacant chairs at the snack table. Similarly, a keen interest in making potions provides opportunities to introduce mathematical language and explore quantities.

- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive outstanding support. The special educational needs coordinator goes above and beyond to support families. She forms close bonds with parents and other professionals, ensuring they make plans together. Visits to children in their homes help staff to gain an excellent understanding of their needs. Children have consistent ways to communicate as staff help parents to use sign language. Parents emotionally describe the support they receive as incredible. Additional funding provides children with one-to-one support, ensuring they can access the whole curriculum. This results in children making significant progress.
- Partnerships with parents are superb. Staff keep parents fully informed about their children's learning and suggest effective ways to continue learning at home. Parents value the support from staff and praise them for how well they communicate. Discussions with parents help staff to plan activities that complement and extend children's interests. Parents highly recommend the pre-school.
- Staff have reviewed the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health of children and parents. They take time to reassure nervous parents by providing updates during the session, offering additional time to settle in and explaining the benefits of attending pre-school. This helps parents to feel comfortable leaving their children. Staff talk to children about their feelings and plan activities that help them label, understand and process different emotions, positively contributing to their well-being.
- The experienced manager leads by example in her quest to provide all children with the very best early years education. Her passion is infectious and results in a shared vision from a team of staff that work exceptionally well together. Staff share their experience and knowledge to support and learn from one another.
- Professional development is a high priority. Staff regularly discuss how they can support every child and consider what specific training is necessary. Targeted training is exceptional and enhances the learning experience for all children. Staff proudly talk about their training and how it has improved their practice.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Good deployment of staff ensures supervision meets the needs of all children. Trusting relationships with parents allow for sensitive conversations to take place. This helps staff to understand what further support families may need. Staff use opportunities to regularly discuss their safeguarding roles and responsibilities. They develop interactive question-and-answer sessions to test their knowledge. All staff demonstrate an excellent understanding of the indicators that a child may be at risk of harm. Staff can explain the correct procedure they would follow if they had concerns about a child. Robust recruitment and probation procedures ensure that only those suitable can work with children.

Setting details

Unique reference number	219300
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	10234348
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 3
Total number of places	50
Number of children on roll	34
Name of registered person	Stondon Stompers Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP518853
Telephone number	07775 233264
Date of previous inspection	27 September 2016

Information about this early years setting

Stondon Stompers Pre-school registered in 1992. The pre-school employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and one member of staff holds a qualification at level 6. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday, 8.05am to 3.05pm, term time only. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Jody Taylor

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 joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

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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