

Inspection of Old Stratford Pre School

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

Inspection date: 12 July 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

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

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are extremely happy and flourish in this friendly pre-school. They are excited to arrive and discuss activities for the day with staff and their friends. The dedicated manager and staff work hard to create an exceptionally exciting environment that children become deeply engrossed in exploring. The outdoor area in particular provides children with wonderful learning opportunities to support their progress. For example, children develop an exceptional understanding of managing risks in their play. They skilfully navigate the bridges and slopes that they create out of logs and planks of wood.

Children behave exceptionally well in the pre-school. They consistently display impeccable manners and are kind and considerate towards one another. Children demonstrate high levels of empathy for others, offering reassurance to their friends. For example, children support and motivate one another when performing songs on their outdoor stage. They clap and cheer, encouraging their quieter friends to join in.

Children demonstrate an exceptionally positive attitude to their learning. They become deeply absorbed in all activities and show great determination in difficult situations. Staff support this incredibly well with continuous reassurance and advice. For example, when children struggle using equipment at the woodwork bench, staff are swift to intervene. They praise their efforts and discuss alternative ways children can complete their tasks.

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

- Managers and staff are passionate about their role in supporting children's development. Staff extend and adapt activities well to ensure they are suitably challenging for all children. For example, children of different ages are exploring a ice-cream shop role-play activity. Younger children count out the scoops of ice cream. They identify colours and explore the different flavours they could be. More able children develop mathematical skills by identifying the correct coins to pay with. Staff then encourage them to calculate how much change they will receive.
- Children show high levels of confidence in new situations. They welcome visitors warmly and are eager to show them around their pre-school. Children enthusiastically discuss their favourite activities, and delight at performing their graduation song along with their friends.
- Partnerships with parents is of a high standard. Parents engage fully in their children's development and play an active role in their learning. Staff encourage parents to share their skills and knowledge with children at the pre-school. For example, children recently enjoyed a visit from a beekeeper. They got to dress

up in protective clothing and explore the hives and honeycomb that the bees create.

- Staff provide meaningful opportunities for children to understand cultures and ways of life beyond their own. When returning from holidays, children mark the countries they visited on a map of the world. They explore relevant books and write postcards about the sights they saw and the different foods they tried.
- Children develop strong communication skills. Staff interact well with children at every opportunity, supporting them to develop new vocabulary. They conduct group sessions throughout the day. These provide children with regular opportunities to engage in meaningful conversation with one another and adults.
- Staff sequence children's learning well. They use children's current interests to develop exciting activities that children become deeply engrossed in. For example, when children find a toad in their garden area, staff use this as an opportunity to explore life cycles. They acquire tadpoles and help children to research the correct environment to create for them. Children monitor their progress daily, reporting their development enthusiastically to staff and visitors.
- Staff morale is good and the team work well together to support one another's practice. They work closely with parents and the provider to evaluate the care they provide and make well-considered changes to the learning environment. However, the same robust methods of self-evaluation are not consistently applied when planning children's daily routines. Snack time in particular does not fully prepare children for their next stage of learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff demonstrate excellent knowledge of the signs and symptoms of abuse. They are particularly aware of specific local issues, which could affect children's safety and well-being. Staff confidently discuss the correct process to follow when reporting any concerns to the appropriate authority. Furthermore, they clearly explain the process they would follow if they felt their concerns were not being addressed. The provider ensures that appropriate suitability checks for staff and committee members are conducted in a timely manner.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- evaluate the effectiveness of current daily routines to offer children consistently high-quality learning opportunities that fully support their progress and prepare them for school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	219885
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10295290
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	27
Number of children on roll	46
Name of registered person	Old Stratford Pre School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP903934
Telephone number	01908 260664
Date of previous inspection	14 December 2017

Information about this early years setting

Old Stratford Pre-School registered in 1989. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, during school term time. It operates sessions from 8.30am until 11.30am, and midday until 3pm, with an optional breakfast club from 7.30am until 8.30am and a lunch club. The pre-school employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above, including one member of staff who holds qualified teacher status. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Antonia Campbell

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the pre-school 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 setting.
- The inspector considered the views of parents by speaking to several during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at relevant documents, including evidence of the suitability of all staff.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children during activities.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching to assess the impact on children's learning.
- The inspector and manager completed a joint observation of an activity to assess the quality of teaching.
- The inspector held discussions with staff about the monitoring of learning and development in the setting and tracked the progress of several children.

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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