

Inspection of Stone Cross Pre-School Playgroup

Stone Cross Memorial Hall, Dittons Road, Stone Cross, East Sussex BN24 5ET

Inspection date: 7 October 2024

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 quickly engage in the enticing experiences that the curriculum has to offer in this warm and inspiring pre-school. Staff know the children very well and continuously monitor their interests to adapt the experiences on offer. For example, staff observed that children were particularly enjoying playing 'washing up' in the mud kitchen so they incorporated washing up into their daily routine. This has further improved children's independence, sense of belonging and social skills as they patiently queue up by the sink after snack time. Staff think carefully about which resources to provide to support the skills that they want children to learn. For example, wind-up torches are supplied to encourage the children to build their coordination, resilience and determination. This has a very positive effect on children's self-esteem.

Staff have high expectations of children and encourage them to make choices, to encourage their thinking skills. They successfully encourage this in a variety of ways. For example, they provide a range of resources for children to explore in the dressing-up area, including scarves and brightly coloured material. Children's imaginative skills are also practised via this approach. Children take pride in their achievements and are encouraged to peg their own artistic creations on the washing line. This helps to build their confidence as well as practise using their small-muscle skills.

Children's understanding of the local area and other cultures is a strength. Staff provide many opportunities to enhance children's experiences and understanding of the world beyond the nursery. For example, staff take children to the local forest, dentist and doctor to support their learning. Staff go the extra mile by getting the doctor and dentist to talk to the children about their roles.

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

- Managers and staff have a clear vision about what they want children to learn before they leave the setting. They prioritise resilience, independence and encouraging children to become confident communicators. The impact of the curriculum is clear to see in the way children engage in routines independently and use their imaginations when engaging with all the activities.
- Leadership and management are strengths of the pre-school. Managers train and support their staff very well. Staff describe feeling knowledgeable about fulfilling the responsibilities of their role confidently.
- Parents speak very highly of the pre-school and staff. They describe how the staff support not only their children but the whole family. Staff do this by encouraging the parents to get to know each other and become part of the community. They share information about children's development with families

regularly. Managers work hard to support families so that children are best placed to learn. For example, they link with local supermarkets to provide a food bank. Managers also encourage families to bring in unwanted clothes, books and toys and add them to a donation box. This has a positive impact on the outcomes for children.

- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have consistent support to help them to access activities that are adapted to meet their needs. Staff are sensitive to the needs of children who struggle to separate from their parent. They work closely with parents and other professionals to create and implement effective support plans. The impact of the support plans for children with SEND is evident as they are calmly and confidently able to learn and explore.
- Overall, expressive art and design is planned for very well by staff. They understand that children develop their creativity by being able to explore a broad range of paints and materials, using techniques demonstrated by staff. During the first part of the session, children who choose to explore the art table benefit from wonderful opportunities to practise cutting, pouring and mixing paint, and gluing and sticking feathers and similar items. They become fully engrossed as they create many individual pieces of artwork. However, these resources are not consistently replenished throughout the session. This does not encourage other children to enjoy the same good opportunities.
- Staff support children's behaviour very well and children understand the expectations of the setting. Staff also prioritise teaching children the skills to become independent and look after themselves. This has a positive impact on children's personal, social and emotional development and contributes to the pre-school's calm environment.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- provide more consistency in the support for children to explore expressive arts and design opportunities.

Setting details

Unique reference number	507910
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10355205
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 3
Total number of places	23
Number of children on roll	25
Name of registered person	Stone Cross Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP905907
Telephone number	01323 769 053
Date of previous inspection	21 November 2018

Information about this early years setting

Stone Cross Pre-School Playgroup registered in 1952. It is one of two provisions operated by the same committee. The committee employs six members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday during term time. Sessions are from 9.15am to 12.15pm. On Thursdays, the setting is open from 8.45am to 2.15pm. The provider provides funded early education for two- and three-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Astrella Chapman

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the interactions between the staff and children.
- The manager and the inspector carried out joint observations of children taking part in a planned activity.
- Parents shared their views of the pre-school with the inspector.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum.

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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