

# Stowupland Pre-school & The Mighty Oaks

Church Road, Stowupland, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 4BQ



## Inspection date

16 June 2015

Previous inspection date

11 November 2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Good	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Good	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Requires improvement	3
The setting <b>does not meet legal requirements for early years settings</b>			

## Summary of key findings for parents

### This provision requires improvement. It is not yet good because:

- Ofsted has not been informed of all current committee members to ensure the required suitability checks are completed.
- On occasion, staff do not offer children further resources during planned activities, in order to maximise their creative thinking.
- Staff do not always make full use of the available outdoor school areas to support children in reaching their optimum levels of physical development.

### It has the following strengths

- Well-qualified staff display a consistently good quality of teaching as they choose timely moments to join in and extend children's play. They engage them in purposeful dialogue and value their ideas. In addition, staff introduce signs as they speak following recent training on communication. This ensures all children are equally included.
- The key-person system effectively supports children. Parents praise the commitment and caring nature of friendly staff to follow the care routines of home and meet their child's individual needs.
- The provider has established effective links to other childcare settings. Staff arrange visits for children who are moving on and welcome advice from future teachers concerning focus areas of learning. This supports continuous learning for each child and ensures that they acquire the essential skills needed in readiness for school.

## What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- expand further the materials and tools available during planned activities, so that children may fully express their creativity and determine their own end result
- maximise opportunities for children to practise their larger physical skills by, for example, making further use of the available outdoor school facilities.

### To meet the requirements of the Childcare Register the provider must:

- inform Ofsted of the name, date of birth, address and telephone number of any partner, director, senior officer or other member of the governing body where the main purpose is childcare (compulsory part of the Childcare Register).

## Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children's activities indoors, outside, and during the snack and lunch time routines. She talked to children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the provider and held discussions with the provider and some other members of staff.
- The inspector sampled the pre-school documentation, including a self-evaluation form, policies, children's learning journals and staff files.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents through discussions on the day and recently completed questionnaires.
- The inspector saw evidence of the qualifications and suitability of all persons working directly with children and some other documentation in relation to the safeguarding and welfare requirements.

## Inspector

Rachel Pepper

## Inspection findings

### **How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is good**

Staff use their good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements to implement a well-balanced learning programme. Children choose from the stimulating resources available to engage in imaginative games. For example, they dress up with friends to go on a picnic and adapt outdoor trays and bricks to imitate a paddling pool. However, on occasion, during planned activities children are given pre-cut shapes and are not offered further tools or textured materials. This limits their use of creative thinking to achieve their own unique designs. Nevertheless, staff use their knowledge of each child to engage them in structured play. They talk about recent holidays as they explore and compare the different sized pebbles and shells. Parents' involvement is fully encouraged as they receive regular newsletters in their preferred language and view children's learning journals. In addition, staff welcome information on children's current interests from home to supplement the weekly plans. As a result, assessments are precise and children's next steps in learning continuously follow through to promote their all-round good progress.

### **The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children is good**

Children are confident learners and make full use of the immediate environment. They gain support and comfort as needed from affectionate staff. This demonstrates the secure bonds that they have developed. Children behave well and staff use distraction methods to ensure energy is used in a positive manner. Children use their self-help skills to serve themselves at snack time. They learn to keep themselves safe as staff explain the need to wear sunhats and protective cream in the hot weather. Staff talk about the effect exercise has on their bodies as children play outside, so that they take regular drinks of water. Children maintain their balance as they climb the slide steps and pedal bikes around objects, promoting their physical development. However, staff do not always maximise their use of the onsite facilities, such as a large field next door to further support children's outdoor learning.

### **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision requires improvement**

The enthusiastic provider has made many changes to the pre-school and meets almost all of the requirements. Staff are deployed well and take on individual roles to ensure the safe and smooth running of the provision. They benefit from regular supervision and have all received both safeguarding and first-aid training. Therefore, they are aware of their responsibilities to protect children and can effectively deal with any accidents children have. However, the provider has failed to inform Ofsted of changes to the committee members or complete required documentation. Nonetheless, this does not have an impact on children's well-being, as these committee members have no direct involvement in the recruitment of new staff or the day-to-day care of the children. The provider uses self-evaluation and parental feedback to highlight priorities for improvement and review children's overall progress. For example, she is installing an extra area for children to store their belongings to further support their independence.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	251678
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	866567
<b>Type of provision</b>	Full-time provision
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	2 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	26
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	65
<b>Name of provider</b>	Stowupland Pre-school & The Mighty Oaks Committee
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11 November 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01449 678550

Stowupland Pre-School & The Mighty Oaks is managed by a voluntary management committee with charitable status. It was registered in 1999 and operates from purpose-built premises within the grounds of Freeman Community Primary School. The pre-school employs eight members of childcare staff. All of these, hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. Sessions are from 8.45am until 11.45am and 12.45pm until 3.45pm, Monday to Thursday and from 8.45am until 11.45am on a Friday during term-time. A lunch club is available to use from 11.45am until 12.45pm each day. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a small number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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