

Stepping Stones Pre-School (Sundridge)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	127657
Inspection date	10/10/2008
Inspector	Susan Jennifer Scott
Setting address	Sundridge Primary School, Church Road, Sundridge, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN14 6EA
Telephone number	01959 562694
Email	
Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

Stepping Stones Pre-school (Sundridge) is a committee run pre-school. It re-opened in September 2008 having originally opened in 1981 and operates from a self-contained classroom in the grounds of Sundridge and Brasted Primary School. It is situated in the village of Sundridge, in Kent. The pre-school serves the local area.

A maximum of 12 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 09:15 to 2:45; children can attend the morning or afternoon sessions as well as the lunch club from 12:15 until 12:45. The pre-school opens for 38 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play space.

There are currently 16 children from two to five years on roll. Of these seven children receive funding for nursery education. This provision is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the Voluntary and Compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. Children come from a local catchment area. The pre-school welcomes children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language, although none currently attend.

The pre-school employs four staff. The manager holds a level three early years qualification and the deputy holds a level two, she is currently working towards a level three. One staff member is currently on a training course to obtain a level three early years qualification.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The staff offer a welcoming and secure opportunity for children to develop a range of skills and understanding to support their developmental progress. Children receive support and guidance during the sessions but there are occasions when individual needs and understanding is not promoted for every child. The setting has been open for four weeks and the staff team have not had sufficient time to form an effective team who can work together to plan for all children based upon well understood assessments. Staff are beginning to establish a system to identify children's developmental stages which can be used to assist in planning individual support. The manager has successfully identified areas of weakness and strength and is able to identify improvements that can be built into the programme to enable all staff to work consistently and to cater for a wide range of needs successfully.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- ensure activities are differentiated so that they are appropriate to children's individual stages of development and understanding
- ensure all staff contribute to plans which are based upon their assessments of individual needs

- review routines to ensure all children's individual needs are taken into consideration
- identify children's individual starting points in their development with parents and use these to plan and meet their needs

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- ensure at least half of all childcare staff, apart from the manager, will hold a level 2 qualification in childcare (Suitable people)

30/09/2009

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager is using her experience and training to enable staff to become familiar with the framework and assessment process so that they can enable all the children to achieve good progress. As yet, there is not an established system to ensure all staff contribute to plans for individual learning. However, the planning and assessment systems designed by the manager are supporting the effective development and organisation of the pre-school and consequently, the positive outcomes for children.

There are policies and procedures in place to benefit children and their families and to enable staff to gain a secure understanding of these. For example, staff are able to update their knowledge and skills through regular training and one staff member has begun a qualifying course. As a result, many aspects of children's welfare, care and learning are at least satisfactory and in some cases are good, with staff continuing to develop them. The manager has completed a comprehensive self evaluation and identified improvements she wishes to make as well as instituting changes after monitoring the initial delivery of the programme. The setting has been re-organised and many improvements made since it re-opened in September.

Parents confirm that children benefit from the close links with the school and the manager has a good knowledge of the local community. The required documentation is all in place and the manager has prepared plans and informative newsletters which are shared with all parents. This enables parents to contribute information and to encourage children to bring items from home to support their learning. For example, children have brought items for the show and tell routine. Parents have good opportunities to see examples of work their children have done, and receive regular updates on their progress. There are consultations with parents planned to take place during the year and questionnaires will be used to ascertain levels of satisfaction and suggestions for improvement. Parents have shared information about their children although there are no identified starting points recorded when they begin attending. The setting has received support from Local Authority staff, obtaining specialist advice and help in obtaining suitable resources.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children enjoy coming to the pre-school and participating in the programme of activities. They are interested in playing with the toys and resources which they can access with ease. Staff are getting to know the children through the information shared with parents and the observations they make on each child. As the setting has only recently opened with the current staff team they are reviewing the programme and routines as they go. This means that some activities have been revised so that they better suit the needs of the children attending. The amount of time children spend sitting in a group and listening to the adults asking questions and reading to them has been reduced because the children are not able to concentrate for long. Staff deliver a balance of adult and child initiated play, and are gradually becoming familiar with the needs of the children, some of whom are progressing slowly and some who need further challenges.

Staff are beginning to become involved in observing and assessing children although they have not yet used this information to contribute to the plans which enable all children to make progress. They are not yet sufficiently confident as a team to deviate from the thorough plans made by the manager and adapt their support for individual children so that they are fully engaged and stimulated.

Some children show good skills in their physical play using apparatus but lack challenging suggestions. For instance, the children enjoy using the bikes and scooters and do so with expertise, confidently riding down the sloping playground and picking up other toys whilst maintaining their balance. Other children explore the toys with enthusiasm but are sometimes reluctant to break off to join in the whole group activities on the mat. The staff are supportive but have not worked together long enough to adjust the routines for the benefit of individuals.

Staff recognise the progress that children are beginning to make and provide a good selection of options for them to explore, such as paint, dough and cornflour gloop. Children's fine motor skills are refining as they use paintbrushes and glue spreaders. Children are developing their skills using the computer with help from an adult working alongside encouraging them to learning how to move the mouse and click on the screen to see what will happen. Children are happy to count spontaneously and upon request; however when a child remarks on the fact there are more girls than boys present and staff respond by encouraging counting, her thinking is not extended. Children participate in the daily routines which build upon the communication skills, naming the day of the week, discussing the weather and enjoying the story read to them. There is a good selection of attractive books easily available to children in a comfortable area. The children enjoy participating and concentrate well when engaged in self chosen activities. They have also become familiar with the routines and expectations in the short time they have attended, and readily assist in tidying up.

The manager has established a good range of policies and procedures, using documents to support the children, and inform their parents and staff. There are clear procedures for protecting children and promoting their safety and their good health. For example, staff follow good hygiene routines and ensure there is always

someone with a current First Aid certificate present to ensure safe treatment for the children.

Children benefit from a selected range of attractive and safe equipment and toys and staff are developing ways of encouraging them to select these from the low shelf units and storage boxes. Many toys and resources are new so that children are keen to explore and use these although they are not confidently self selecting yet. There is a range of varied outdoor resources such as bikes, scooters, bean bags, soft building blocks, bats and balls which are all popular with children. The staff supervise children's play vigilantly, encouraging them to play safely both indoors and outdoors. The environment is inviting and attractive, though compact, and offers plenty of varied, safe space for play.

Children are developing good relationships and get on well with peers and adults who recognise their achievements and reward them with stickers. There are occasions when it is difficult for children to make positive contributions because their individual needs are not fully recognised and taken into consideration within the programme. Staff are making adjustments to their expectations as they evaluate and discuss the activities. The children benefit from staff who liaise with specialists who help them put in place strategies to identify and support particular needs. Children are keen to join in and make friends, developing a balanced view of society through celebrating varied festivals and access to a range of multicultural toys and images.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	Satisfactory
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	Satisfactory
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	Good

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	Good
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	Good
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	Good
How well are children safeguarded?	Good

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	Satisfactory
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	Satisfactory
How well are children helped to stay safe?	Good
How well are children helped to be healthy?	Good
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	Satisfactory
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	Satisfactory
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	Satisfactory

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website:
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.