

# Stepping Stones Playgroup (Dursley)

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 101730  
**Inspection date** 10/03/2009  
**Inspector** Denise Franklin

**Setting address** Dursley C of E Primary School, School Road, Dursley,  
Gloucestershire, GL11 4NZ

**Telephone number** 01453 544588

**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).

## Description of the setting

Stepping Stones Playgroup has been registered since 1993. It is a committee-run group that operates from a self-contained building in the grounds of Dursley Primary School in Dursley. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register. Playgroup sessions run term-time only, Monday to Thursday 09.30 until 12.30 and there is a pre-school group on Friday from 9.00 to 12.30. A crèche facility is offered daily between 09.00 and 09.30 hours. Children are accepted from the age of two-years-nine months to five years. There are currently 32 children on roll of whom 23 are funded three-year-olds. The group supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The children attending the group are primarily from the local community. The premises is also used by an out-of-school club. The playgroup has disabled access and facilities. They have an enclosed outside area and a new outdoor garden area is under development. The setting has good links with the school and there are good arrangements for the children to make smooth transitions to school. The committee employs seven staff who all have relevant childcare experience. The leader and deputy both hold level 3 qualifications and assistants are also trained in childcare. Parents provide additional support by helping at the playgroup on a rota basis.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding. Stepping Stones Playgroup is very effective and all children make at least good and often very good progress in relation to their starting point and they are developing excellent skills, particularly their independence and social skills. Staff know the children and their families extremely well and very effectively ensure that the needs of all the children are met. All recommendations from the previous report have been addressed and the setting has excellent capacity to continue to improve.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- record clearly the next steps for each child to ensure they are all reaching their full potential

## The leadership and management of the early years provision

The Play Leader is extremely well supported by a committed team and committee, led by a very effective chair-person. All have very high expectations for the quality of care given to the children, which is evident in the ongoing improvements made. The staff and committee have successfully addressed the recommendations from the last inspection and children now understand why they need to wash their hands regularly. There is good evidence that practice is effectively evaluated

through discussions in meetings. An appraisal system has been set up by the chair-person, which identifies staff training needs and enables staff to evaluate their own practice. The play-leader and chair-person have excellent knowledge of the strengths and areas of improvement that the setting are working on, in particular the development of a garden area for the children. This further enhances the already outstanding opportunities for children to make choices whether to be inside or outdoors.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents receive regular newsletters and there is a notice board at the door, which tells the parents what the children do in each session and what is available for snack-time. Parents are beginning to be involved in their children's learning by sharing any significant success at home via a 'wow' voucher. 'Learning Journeys' are available for parents to see their child's progress in learning and development.

All safeguarding procedures are fully in place and rigorously implemented so that children are safe and secure at all times. One parent said this is a particular strength of the setting.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

Children are extremely happy and settle very quickly in this safe and stimulating learning environment. They have excellent opportunities to choose their activities both inside and outdoors, which impacts extremely well on children's learning and development. Children make decisions on what resources are put out for general use. Children are achieving extremely well in this outstanding provision. During news and story times children listen very well to each other and are developing communication skills well. They know how to respond because they all 'put on their listening ears' and concentrate exceptionally well. Inside children enjoy taking on various roles such as making pancakes, dressing up and selecting their own materials for making models. They enjoy looking at books and are competent in using the mouse with the computer. Outside, children demonstrate good physical development skills when using the wheeled vehicles, showing an excellent awareness of each other and space around them. Other children play imaginatively with the small world figures and experiment with mark making using chalks. All children are gaining confidence and developing the necessary skills to be independent learners.

Snack time is an excellent social occasion. Children know why they have to wash their hands before eating food and are developing a range of skills such as spreading, cutting and pouring extremely well. They are beginning to appreciate healthy food and know they must have plenty to drink. Individuals enjoy having the responsibility for giving out the fruit and most are able to pour their own drinks. Children respond exceptionally well to positive behaviour management strategies and as a result behaviour is outstanding. Children are excellent at taking turns and sharing. Welfare requirements and procedures are of very high quality and effectively ensures children are very well cared for at all times.

Children's progress is carefully tracked using observations, samples of children's

work and photographs, making good use of the statements in the development matters section of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff are skilled at challenging and moving children to their next stage of learning on a day-to-day basis because they know the children extremely well. However, this information and details of what each child needs to do to achieve the next stage is not written down in sufficient detail or shared regularly enough with parents. Staff ensure that children have a very good understanding of how to stay safe and visitors such as the Road Safety Officer support this extremely well. Children at Stepping Stones have an excellent start in learning and development and are extremely well prepared for their next stage in learning.

## Annex A: record of inspection judgements

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	1
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	1

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	1
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

## **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.