



**Office for Standards  
in Education**

## **COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT**

**URN** 226466

**DfES Number:** 518819

### **INSPECTION DETAILS**

Inspection Date	13/05/2004
Inspector Name	Fiona Stephenson

### **SETTING DETAILS**

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Sapcote Stepping Stones Pre-School Playgroup
Setting Address	The Methodist Church Hall, Leicester Road Sapcote Leicester Leicestershire LE9 4JE

### **REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS**

Name	Mrs Claire Shields
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## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

### Information about the setting

Sapcote Stepping Stones Pre-School opened in 1993. It operates from a large room in the Methodist church hall in the village of Sapcote. The pre-school serves the local community and surrounding area.

There are currently 36 children on roll. This includes 12 funded three-year-olds and nine funded four-year-olds. The setting supports three children with special educational needs, and no children who have English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 to 12:00 Monday to Friday; and Wednesday 12:30 to 15:00. All sessions are for a mixed age range, except the Wednesday sessions which cater for three-year-olds only in the morning; and children aged four-plus in the afternoon. Children attend a variety of sessions.

Six staff work with children. Currently less than half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3, however one member of staff is working to complete her training for a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Leicestershire Early Years' Development Childcare Partnership.

### How good is the Day Care?

Sapcote Stepping Stones Pre-school provides satisfactory care for children. There are good staff:child ratios and the setting is working to ensure a minimum of 50% of staff have qualifications in early years. The large hall enables a wide variety of resources and activities to be used for children's play. The environment is safe and secure and is welcoming to children. Equipment and toys are in good condition and help to create a stimulating environment for children. Policies and procedures are generally in good order, although some have insufficient detail.

Safety both in the setting and on outings is given good consideration. The health of children is also promoted well through good hygiene practices. Children have easy access to drinks whilst attending the group, however snacks are not normally very

nutritious as they usually comprise of biscuits. The setting has an equal opportunities policy however it is limited, and there are insufficient resources to convey positive images of culture, race and disability. Children with special needs are welcomed and supported in the setting, however the special needs policy does not reflect practice and is inconsistent with the new Code of Practice. There is a detailed child protection policy in place, however staff's understanding of the policy is limited.

Staff at the setting build positive relationships with children. Children are valued, and are encouraged to become confident and independent beings. Resources are readily accessible for children's play, and staff are generally deployed well to support play. There are however some occasions where deployment is less well managed. Children's behaviour is generally managed well, although in large group situations in the three-year-old sessions, and the four-plus session, it is not so well supported.

Staff have good relationships with parents, and communicate daily with parents about the activities undertaken by their child.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

At the last inspection the setting agreed to improve its records on medication and visitors. These are now in place. A fire log is now available detailing the number of fire drills the setting has undertaken. A first aid course has been taken by all staff to ensure there is always a first-aider on the premises. The glass doors have been checked by the owners of the church and the setting has been advised they comply with recommended safety standards.

#### **What is being done well?**

- Staff have a nurturing approach to children in their care, and are very kind and caring to children attending the setting.
- Staff respect children, they listen and value what children say and do.
- The setting has good health and hygiene arrangements and promotes the good health of children at the group well.
- Good resources are available for children's play which are easily accessible to children.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- the equal opportunities policy to ensure it has regard to employment, training, admission procedures, access to resources, and activities
- the written statement about special needs to ensure it has regard to the Code of Practice (2001) for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs
- staff's understanding of the Child Protection policy

- resources to ensure they reflect positive images of race, culture and disability
- behaviour management of large group activities in the Wednesday morning and afternoon sessions.
- snack time with the provision of more nutritious snacks.

### Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

### CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

*All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.*

*As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.*

### WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

#### The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
8	improve the nutritional content of food provided to children at snack time
9	devise an equal opportunities policy that is consistent with current legislation and guidance. Ensure that this is understood and implemented by all staff and shared with parents
9	ensure that children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice
10	devise and make available to parents, a written statement on special needs which is consistent with current legislation and guidance. Ensure that this is understood and implemented by all staff
11	improve behaviour management during circle time and registration times for the Wednesday morning and afternoon sessions
13	develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues

## INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

### How effective is the nursery education?

Children are making generally good progress in all six areas of learning, and are making very good progress in some aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world, communication, language and literacy and in music.

Teaching is generally good. Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and of the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. They utilise this knowledge well in drawing out questions and ideas from children in everyday situations and conversation. There is a planned curriculum, however it does not sufficiently address children's individual learning needs, and although observational notes are good, they are not used to best effect when addressing the next steps for each child. Children's behaviour is managed well in the sessions with combined three and four year-olds, however staff resources and the grouping of children are less well considered in the three year old and four plus sessions, resulting in children being less attentive in larger group situations.

Leadership and management is generally good. Staff are supported in attending both in-house and external training opportunities. The staff team work well together to provide ideas for the pre-school, and all have a willingness to provide good quality care and education for children. The manager has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the setting, and works hard in improving provision for children.

Partnership with parents is generally good. On commencement of funding, their child's key worker meets with parents to inform them of the foundation stage curriculum and to gain information about their child's stage of development. This is then followed up through daily verbal contact, and access to observational notes. The verbal information does not sufficiently inform parents of their child's next steps and how they can support and extend children's learning in the home environment.

### What is being done well?

- Staff make excellent use of small group activities to support children in exploring and investigating why things happen.
- Music is used very effectively throughout the curriculum to support children's enjoyment and understanding of sound.
- Children's conversational skills are well supported by staff who value, listen and respond to what they have to say.

### What needs to be improved?

- partnership with parents to improve opportunities for children's learning in the

home environment.

- the deployment of staff and group composition to ensure the learning needs of all children are fully supported.
- the resources and planning for children's exploration of different cultures and beliefs; for physical play to support large muscle movements, and opportunities for more spontaneous and child-led creativity.
- curriculum planning to ensure the individual learning needs of each child are effectively fed into the planning process, and that the clusters in each area of the curriculum are visited frequently to secure learning.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

Since the last inspection, more festivals from different cultures have been introduced in the planning, however there continues to be limited activities and resources to inform children of the cultures and beliefs of others. Parents now have opportunities to meet with their child's key worker at the start of the Foundation Stage, are provided with verbal feedback on their child's progress, however there is still insufficient information fed-back to parents concerning their child's next steps in learning. There is now a very good range of musical instruments, and music is used well throughout the curriculum to support children's understanding of sound.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children form good relationships with their peers and with staff. They demonstrate good personal independence in self-care activities, and have confidence in self-selecting the resources and activities they wish to play with. Behaviour is good in small group activities and in independent play, however some children are less well behaved in larger group activities. Children enjoy their play, and persist with activities for extended periods of time.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children have good talking skills, with older and more able children demonstrating very good conversational skills. They enjoy reading to themselves, and participating in story time. Children demonstrate good early writing skills with more able children forming recognisable letters and writing their own names. Listening skills in larger group situations are progressing less well, and staff miss opportunities to link sounds and letters in routine activities such as registration.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children can count to 10 and beyond, with older and more mature children demonstrating an early awareness of adding and subtracting. Children have a good awareness of basic shapes, weight and measure, and can sort and match. However shape recognition is not sufficiently extended for more able children, and staff deployment is not best used to support mathematical learning in some planned activities. There are insufficient opportunities for children to recognise numerals on a daily basis.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children have very good opportunities to explore and investigate the world around them through good planned activities and through staff's very good use of questioning. They make good use of the construction resources to design and make things. Children explore cultures through festival celebration, however there are insufficient activities and resources for children to explore culture and beliefs through other play opportunities. There is limited use of intermediate communication technology .

**PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are developing a good awareness of their health and bodies through planned topics. They demonstrate a range of movements including running, skipping, jumping and hopping. They are progressing well in their small muscle movements and use a good range of tools and materials to improve hand-eye co-ordination. There are insufficient activities to support progress in throwing and catching, balancing and climbing, and insufficient opportunities for children to use wheeled toys.

**CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are provided with a good range of planned activities to paint, make collages, and be involved in 3-D modelling. The activities are however, too adult directed with insufficient opportunities for children's own creativity to flourish, and to be displayed in the hall. Children have very good opportunities to explore music, and this is thread through all aspects of the curriculum. Children have good opportunities to use their imaginations through small world play and home corner play.

**Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.**



## **OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION**

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

## **WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES**

- work more closely with parents to enable parents to support their child's progress through the stepping stones in the home environment.
- ensure curriculum planning supports the individual learning needs of each child by making more effective use of observations and assessments to inform the planning process. Planning should also ensure all clusters within each area of learning are visited, and re-visited frequently to secure children's learning.
- make more effective use of staff deployment, and consider the size and composition of groups to ensure all children are learning effectively during registration and circle times.
- ensure there are sufficient resources, activities and opportunities available to children to support their understanding of differing cultures and communities, for physical play to support children's large muscle development and for creativity to be more child-initiated and valued by being put on display.

*The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.*

## **SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS**

### **STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON**

*Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.*

### **STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION**

*The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.*

### **STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY**

*The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.*

### **STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

*The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.*

### **STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT**

*Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.*

### **STANDARD 6 - SAFETY**

*The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.*

### **STANDARD 7 - HEALTH**

*The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.*

### **STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK**

*Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.*

### **STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

*The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.*

### **STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)**

*The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is*

*proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.*

#### **STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR**

*Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.*

#### **STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS**

*The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.*

#### **STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION**

*The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.*

#### **STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION**

*Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.*