



Office for Standards  
in Education

## NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 120124

DfES Number: 512450

### INSPECTION DETAILS

|                 |                        |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| Inspection Date | 01/02/2004             |
| Inspector Name  | Joanne Lindsey Caswell |

### SETTING DETAILS

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Day Care Type   | Full Day Care   |
| Setting Name    | Stepping Stones Nursery School  |
| Setting Address | Milford Baptist Church<br>New Road, Milford<br>Godalming<br>Surrey<br>GU8 5BE |

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

|      |   |
|------|---|
| Name | The Committee of Stepping Stones Nursery School 1081242 |
|------|---|

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| Name    | Stepping Stones Nursery School  |
| Address | Milford Baptist Church<br>New Road, Milford<br>Godalming<br>Surrey<br>GU8 5BE |

## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public 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

Stepping Stones Nursery School has been registered since 1990 and has been established in the village of Milford for many years. It operates from large rooms within the Baptist church hall building, in the centre of Milford and serves the local rural area.

There are currently 12 funded three and four year old children on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery has experience of supporting children with special educational needs. There are currently no children attending, for whom English is an additional language.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday, from 09:00 to 12:00. Children may attend for an extended session until 13:00 from Monday to Thursday only.

A team of qualified early years practitioners work with the children, all of whom hold a recognised childcare qualification. Further training is available for all staff to update knowledge and skills.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at Stepping Stones Nursery School is very good. It enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning of the Foundation Stage.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff plan a variety of practical activities both indoors and outdoors, with clearly focused aims and learning objectives. Staff present activities in an enthusiastic, creative and practical manner and extend them to provide sufficient challenge for older and more able children. Staff form warm, caring relationships with the children. They understand how children learn and act as good role models. They have a clear understanding of the early learning goals and this is reflected in the planning.

The nursery has an effective assessment system in place which enables them to plan for children's progress towards the early learning goals, although limited evidence of children's work is maintained.

The leadership and management of the nursery is very good. The two managers and governing body work well together as a team and understand their individual roles and responsibilities. Staff are actively encouraged to attend further training and update their knowledge and skills. All staff are valued as effective members of the team and are encouraged to contribute towards policy decisions and general management issues. Staff meetings are held regularly.

Partnership with parents is very good and staff ensure parents are provided with clear information about the nursery and its learning programme. Staff greet parents warmly and talk with them about their children and ensure parents are well informed of future events in the nursery. Parents receive information about the early learning goals to help support their children's learning at home.

### What is being done well?

- Children's personal, social and emotional development is given high priority. Children are happy, confident and interested in the activities available. They are developing an awareness of the needs of others and have good self-esteem.
- Relationships between children and staff are strong. Staff question children effectively and give them good support in their chosen activities. Children are motivated and keen to learn.
- Children's speaking and listening skills are given good emphasis. Children are confident speakers and are developing skills in using language to negotiate in their play and converse with one other.
- Staff act as good role models and are consistent in their praise and

encouragement and children are well behaved.

- Staff create a well planned, stimulating environment where children learn through a wide range of practical play and creative activities. All opportunities are utilised to encourage children to learn and gain new skills in a fun, imaginative and stimulating environment.

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

- There are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- the amount of evidence of children's work maintained to demonstrate progress towards the early learning goals.

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

not applicable

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are happy and confident. They easily engage in conversation with adults and other children during daily routines and through planned activities. Children's behaviour is very good and they have positive attitudes to learning, showing interest and curiosity. Their skills for looking after themselves are developing well.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident speakers who use language effectively to communicate their needs and negotiate with one another. They have access to an excellent selection of books, both fiction and non-fiction, and are beginning to understand how books are used and that print and text carry meaning. Children recognise their own names and provision is made for some of the older/more able children to begin to write their names. Opportunities are used during activities for mark-making and pencil control.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children confidently count to 10 and beyond. They recognise shapes and size and use appropriate mathematical language such as big and small. Pattern making and sequencing is incorporated into the planned programme. Staff use practical play situations, such as the children using the large construction bricks, to teach children in an imaginative format about concepts such as size, shape and measure.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children are able to explore an interesting range of activities and topics, allowing them to explore, investigate and find out about the world in which they live. Children are encouraged to talk about and recall past events. Children are developing an awareness of their own and other cultures, as they celebrate a variety of festivals. Children have good opportunities to investigate, observe and handle natural and man-made materials.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children move confidently, using the space available very well. They use a range of small and large equipment and show an awareness of space and negotiate obstacles well. Children have many opportunities to practise large and small movement on a regular basis. They have regular opportunities to use a wide variety and range of tools such as pencils, scissors and glue spreaders, which they are beginning to use with increasing skill.

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT</b>   |           |
| Judgement:  | Very Good |
| Children explore texture, shape and colour as they use a wide variety of materials. They are encouraged to use their senses to respond to what they see and touch, for example children playing with the corn flour mixture were encouraged to describe how it felt and what it looked like. Children explore sounds and rhythm as they sing and enjoy musical activities with the percussion instruments. Role play activities are varied and interesting and supported with relevant resources. |           |
| <b>Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.</b>   |           |

## **OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION**

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very 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**

*There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:*

- develop the format of assessment, to provide more evidence of children's progress towards the early learning goals and stepping stones.

*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.*