

# Stepping Stones Pre-School and Kid's Club

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	200780
<b>Inspection date</b>	16/05/2011
<b>Inspector</b>	Parm Sansoyer
<b>Setting address</b>	Whitestone Infant School, Magyar Crescent, Nuneaton, Warwickshire, CV11 4SQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	02476 387637
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Type of setting</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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## 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 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.

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## Description of the setting

Stepping Stones Pre-School opened in 1997. It operates from four rooms in a mobile building within the grounds of Whitestone Infant School on the outskirts of Nuneaton, Warwickshire. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area. The setting serves the local community and also offers after school care for children attending Whitestone Infant School and Chetwynd Junior School.

The setting is open Monday to Friday from 8.45am to 5.30pm and children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is registered to care for a maximum of 72 children from three years to eight years. Currently there are 102 children on roll in the early years age group for pre-school sessions. There are 112 children on roll for the before and after school sessions, of whom seven are in the early years age group and 60 are aged from five to eight years. Children over the age of eight years may also attend. The provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The setting is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early years education places. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

There are ten members of staff who work with the children. Of these, six hold a qualification at level 3 in early years, one holds a qualification at level two in early years, two are working towards a qualification at level 3 in early years and the other is unqualified. The setting is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

All children are welcomed into an interesting and well equipped environment, which fully reflects the children's backgrounds and the wider community. Planning and teaching methods, which are mostly effective, help children to make good progress in their learning and development. Policies and procedures are thorough and relevant and are implemented effectively to safeguard and promote children's welfare. Relationships with parents and carers and the school and other agencies are strong. The management and staff work very well as a team and show a good commitment to and capacity for ongoing improvement.

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

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

- develop further planning systems to ensure the learning intention of all activities is clear, to help further maximise children's progress and experiences
- extend more fully the role play areas to further extend children's play and

learning.

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

There are clearly written policies, strategies and procedures in place to ensure the safeguarding and welfare of children. All staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children. Children's health and safety is promoted effectively because staff implement all of the required policies and procedures well. Security within the setting is robust and procedures for the employment and vetting of staff ensure all adults working with children are suitable to do so. Annual and ongoing risk assessments ensure hazards in the environment are minimised effectively and the children are supervised well.

Staff plan a well organised educational programme, offering a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Outdoors is especially popular with the children and allows them to freely choose, explore and discover with curiosity. All adults are deployed well to support children's learning and welfare. Systematic observations and assessment of what the children do and like are used effectively to guide planning and extend children's learning. However, on occasions the learning intention of some activities is not always clear and therefore, the learning potential of these experiences is not always fully maximised. Staff offer good support to get all children actively involved, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

Staff promote positive relationships with parents and carers and they are kept up to date through regular discussions, newsletters and a parents' notice board. Parents and carers are encouraged to share what they know about their child when they first start, which helps staff to have a good knowledge of each child's background and needs. Staff liaise well with other professionals to support children whose care is shared to ensure a smooth transition, continuity of care and any additional needs are met well. Effective management systems and good team working ensure that the setting runs smoothly. Staff are enthusiastic about their work and there is a strong commitment to raising skills and qualifications. They clearly recognise the value of quality improvement processes and draw on a full range of quality improvement tools to help secure improvement. Accurate self-evaluation, which includes staff and parents, contributes significantly to the setting's realistic view of its practice and the development of secure plans for future improvement. All previous recommendations have been addressed and outcomes for children have been positively improved.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

Children's personal, social and emotional development is supported well. Children are happy and settled because relationships with staff are warm and positive. All children are involved, busy and occupied with the wide range of opportunities on offer to them within this stimulating environment. They are developing their confidence well as they busily move around their environment both indoors and outdoors. For example, children are familiar with the routine for snacking and can choose to have their fruit and drink when they wish during the session. Children attending before and out of school sessions are welcomed into a relaxed and familiar environment where they have the autonomy to decide how to invest their curiosity through mostly playing spontaneously. This routine complements the school day well. Children freely access all areas and benefit from planned, purposeful play and exploration both indoors and outdoors.

Children's communication and language is supported very well. The routine includes daily opportunities for children to come together in large and small groups, where they develop spoken language through sharing conversations. Creative strategies, such as using 'talking boxes', which record and play back easily what the children have spoken, and puppets, mean children are eager to speak and tell their stories. Children develop a keen interest in books and stories because they are made easily accessible and there are soft, cushioned reading areas both indoors and outdoors, which are enjoyed by many of the children. Books, story aids and musical instruments are used well to encourage children to take part in and retell stories. Areas for children to make marks on a whiteboard and chalk boards are incorporated well.

Children engage in a wide range of experiences in which they encounter creatures, people, plants and objects in their natural environment and in real-life situations. Good first-hand experiences enrich the children's learning. For example, children have been observing the life cycle of frogs and butterflies and have watched chicks hatch in an incubator. Children have good opportunities to explore and investigate a broad range of objects, such as shells, stones, buttons and corks. Children gain a good understanding of diversity and other cultures through themed activities and access a varied range of resources, such as books, dolls, dressing up clothes, pictures and posters.

Children seek patterns, make connections and work with numbers to count, sort and match items. They are introduced to calculation as they sing number rhymes and access visual aids to support their learning. Overall children have good opportunities to be creative and imaginative and develop their imagination as they play in the many role play areas available to them. However, some of these areas do not offer a broad enough range of resources and experiences to further extend children's learning. For example, there are fewer opportunities for children to use writing materials and consider numbers, counting and weighing in the role play areas, to further extend their play and learning.

Children develop good habits due to the routine praise and encouragement they

receive. Staff are consistent in their approach to behaviour management, which helps children learn right from wrong and how to stay safe. Children greatly benefit from having access to fresh air and the outdoor environment throughout the session, which contributes significantly to their health and well-being. Children also benefit from and enjoy a healthy and nutritious snack. They successfully develop skills that contribute to their future well-being and education.

## 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*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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## **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