

Stepping Stones Pre-School (Harrow)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY277182
Inspection date 15/06/2011
Inspector Seema Parmar

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Type of setting 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 is a committee run group and opened in 2004. The group operates from within the scout headquarters in Roxborough Park in the Borough of Harrow. Children have use of two different rooms and access to an outside play area. The setting serves the local community. A maximum of 26 children may attend the group at any one time. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 12.15 during the school term. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

There are currently 26 children aged from two years nine months to four years on roll. Of these, 23 receive funding for nursery education. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also children with English as an additional language.

The committee employ a qualified supervisor to be responsible for the day to day running of the group. In addition, four staff work directly with the children; two staff hold early years qualifications and two are unqualified.

The setting is a member of the Harrow Integrated Early Years and Community Partnership.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are making satisfactory progress in their learning and development. Partnerships with parents are very good, as staff communicate with parents, in order to keep them well informed of their children's welfare, care and learning. Generally, documentation is in place to support children's well being. The setting demonstrates a sound commitment to continue developing systems and organisation, by working in close partnership with the local early year's advisory team, in order to identify priorities for further development, to improve outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure the record of risk assessment so that it includes who conducted it and identifies all potential hazards and action taken to minimise risks for indoors, outdoors and for outings. 06/07/2011
- organise daily routines and systems effectively to ensure that all children are suitably challenged 06/07/2011

according to their individual ages and abilities

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

- improve the range of resources across the six areas of learning and welfare routines, to ensure that every child receives an enjoyable and challenging experience that is tailored to meet their individual needs
- analyse further observations to clearly identify children's next steps in learning and highlight their achievements to enable an effective review with parents of the progress and development of their child
- develop further ways in which parents are supported and encouraged to share, contribute and update information, to become fully involved in their child's continuous learning and assessment records

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a sound understanding of the safeguarding procedures and are aware of the possible signs and symptoms that may be displayed, if a child is being harmed. There are clear policies and procedures in place to support practice. Risk assessments are in place, to cover most areas of the setting. Most hazards are identified and actions taken, in order to reduce the risk to children. Generally, records, policies and procedures are in place for the safe and efficient management of the setting. However, some lack the necessary detail.

The provider has committed an offence by failing to notify Ofsted of a significant event relating to the effect of a contagious illness. This is a specific legal requirement in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Ofsted does not intend to prosecute on this occasion.

The manager and staff are aware of the strengths and areas for improvement, within the nursery and are working closely with the local early year's advisor team, to make improvements for outcomes for children. The provider acknowledges that systems for the organisation and planning, in order to ensure that every child receives an enjoyable challenging learning and development experiences, are not fully effective or in place. For example, organisation of the daily routine dominates the session and results in children missing opportunities, to be fully engaged and suitably challenged with the activities on offer. The setting demonstrates capacity for continuous improvement, as actions and recommendations raised, at the previous inspection, have been addressed. For example, children have mark making opportunities, as they are provided with the use of clipboards with paper and pencils, also black board using chalks, to record things as they play. This contributes to developing skills for the future.

The premises is organised appropriately, in order to meet the needs of the children. Generally, children have access to an adequate range of resources to promote their learning and development. Resources are generally organized, appropriately stored and are accessible to children, in order to promote their independence and self-help skills. Equality and diversity are threaded through many activities; so that children gain an awareness of the needs of others. The setting works effectively in partnership with parents and is proactive in identifying

any additional help required for the children. Staff are proactive and seek support from other professional agencies to ensure children's needs are met. Children's continuity of their care and education is very well promoted, as the setting works effectively with local schools. For example, reception teachers, from the school visit the setting to meet the children and staff from the setting, take children for school assemblies, in order to enable a smooth transition from the pre-school to school life.

Children benefit from effective relationships between their parents, carers and the setting. Parents are invited, to join the committee of the setting, to become actively involved in the decision making for the pre-school. The setting values parent's feedback as they send questionnaires seeking their views and opinions. However, the systems for involving all parents in their children's ongoing learning assessment and learning records are not fully in place. Overall, feedback from parents reveals that they are very pleased with the service offered and that their children are very happy. Parents describe the staff as warm, friendly and approachable, as one of the key strengths of the setting.

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

Children enjoy their time at nursery, arriving happy and eager to start their day. They are secure and comfortable with a stable routine that is familiar to them. Staff have a secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children have a portfolio containing samples of their work, some photos, and observations linked to the six areas of learning. However, staff do not yet consistently use the information gained from observations, to plan for the next steps in learning. In addition, the setting has yet to use this information effectively, in order to plan suitable challenges for individual children. As a result, activities are more general than specific, for each child's developmental needs. Children form strong attachments with staff who are caring, kind, and attentive. Children develop positive relationships with their peers, as they play alongside one another. For example, staff support children as they play hook the duck, sharing and showing respect and consideration for each other, as they take turns very well. Children learn to build and construct, as they explore and investigate how tools work. For example, they play with 'small world' tools, such as a workbench, where they use screwdrivers, spanners, nuts, bolts, and hammers, to join and fix things together. Children have some opportunities to count, as they build Lego towers and begin to develop mathematical terms during play and daily routines. Children enjoy mark making, as they paint and use clipboards, with paper and pencil, and using a blackboard with chalk, developing their early writing skills. They enjoy listening and participating in story-time, supported by props. Although children show interest in looking at books independently and with staff, the range of books on offer, are limited. As a result, children miss opportunities to enjoy a variety of books to broaden their interests and knowledge. Children have some opportunities to promote their understanding of differences and similarities in the world they live in, through the provision of some resources and activities.

Children are provided with snacks that are healthy, nutritious and support their individual dietary needs. For example, they enjoy eating a selection of fresh fruits,

daily. However, simple activities such as snack and meal times, do not take into account children's growing independence, to include them in helping with achievable tasks that contribute in the development of skills for the future. Children have access to fresh drinking water, which they can help themselves to, when they are thirsty. Generally, hygiene procedures are followed. For example, children are developing an understanding of personal hygiene and are encouraged to wash their hands, before eating and after using the toilet. Children enjoy some opportunities for fresh air, when playing outdoors. Indoors, children play football, basketball and have great fun, as they balance on stilts. In addition, children show great enthusiasm as they participate in a group exercise activity, where they stretch, wiggle and balance, using different parts of their body. This promotes healthy lifestyle.

Children learn to keep safe, as staff give gentle reminders, as they play. Children also learn how to keep safe, as they practice emergency evacuation of the premises, in the event of a fire. Staff use effective strategies, according to the children's age and stage of development, to help them learn right from wrong. Children learn about the settings code of behaviour at the beginning of each session. Children's behaviour is very good, they are very happy and settled and their self-esteem is very well fostered, through the praise and encouragement that is continuously given by staff.

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

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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