

Stepping Stones Pre-School Group at Knowle Parish Church

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Setting address

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Type of setting

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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Introduction

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Description of the setting

Stepping Stones Pre-School Group originally opened in 1996 and re-registered in 2011 under the management of Knowle Parochial Church Council. The setting operates from St John's Hall at Knowle Parish Church, in the Solihull area of the West Midlands. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

The group is open during school term time. Morning sessions are held on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9.15am until 12.15pm, with an additional option of lunch provision from 12.15pm until 12.45pm. Afternoon sessions are held on Monday and Friday from 12.30pm until 3pm from January to July.

The pre-school is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 30 children aged between two and five years may attend at any one time. Currently, there are 32 children on roll. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school provides funded early education.

There are six members of staff who work with the children, four of whom have recognised childcare qualifications and one member of staff is a qualified secondary school teacher. A member of staff is working towards a level 3 qualification. The group receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children flourish in an environment where they receive an excellent level of care because experienced practitioners work very closely with individual children and their families. Inclusion is given excellent priority and exceptional partnerships between parents and other agencies ensure that children's individual needs are met and their protection assured. Highly successful steps are taken to evaluate the provision and the setting demonstrates an excellent capacity to make continuous improvement and sustain existing, very high, standards.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- enhancing information sharing with other providers with regard to children's progress and achievements to support continuity of learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Practitioners have a robust approach to keeping children safe. This is because they have an excellent understanding of safeguarding procedures and the action to take in the event of a concern about a child in their care. Children's health and safety is significantly enhanced by the consistent implementation of policies, procedures and practices, that are individual to the setting. This includes rigorous recruitment and vetting procedures, the provision for undertaking Criminal Record Bureau checks and an in-depth induction. Children's safety is a priority and practitioners are highly vigilant, particularly about arrival and collection procedures. Detailed risk assessments are carried out to provide a very safe and secure environment.

All children thrive in this caring and nurturing, child-centred environment. Outcomes for all children are significantly enhanced due to the exceptional organisation of equipment and high quality resources. Space available is used to its fullest effect, to allow children to explore and investigate the wide range of experiences on offer. Practitioners are very successfully deployed, to support children's learning and welfare.

The excellent liaison with parents contributes to improvements in children's achievements, well-being and development. The involvement of parents is highly valued. The management committee, manager and practitioner team, place great value in ensuring that parents develop a sense of belonging to the setting and have a say in the care and well-being of their children. Thoughtful settling in procedures are in place to accommodate individual children and parent's needs or anxieties. Parents are provided with a newsletter each term, daily notices are displayed informing parents about the activities and snack menu. Parents are asked to share their child's achievements at home and contribute information to their child's individual folder. The setting have regular parent consultation meeting's where parents and key workers can spend time discussing their child's progress and achievement. Practitioners are available to talk to parents at arrival and collection time and parents, children and their siblings, are invited to an 'open lunch' each term. Parents' comments are sought through the use of a questionnaire. Their views are given very good consideration and incorporated into practice to benefit children. Parents speak very highly about the practitioner team. They clearly appreciate what the setting achieves for their children and are impressed by the wonderful range of activities, lovely environment that children have plenty of attention and staff are lovely and they really care about the children.

Inclusion underpins every aspect of this setting because information gathered prior to admission helps practitioners gain an excellent knowledge of each child's background and needs. Practitioners are confident in ensuring early intervention is sought for children who need extra support. The setting is highly committed to working with other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage and has excellent partnership arrangements with the local school and nursery. However, there is scope for enhancing this practice in regard to sharing information about children's progress and achievements, to support continuity of learning. Very good

attention is given to making sure children value differences and for children and their families to share celebrations that are important to them. This helps children to develop an understanding of a wider society.

The organisation and management of the pre-school is highly effective in promoting outcomes for children. This is because the manager and practitioners are reflective and intuitive. They take time to plan their work in great detail to promote children's care, learning and development. Practitioners are dedicated and enthusiastic and they all take responsibility for what they do in the setting. They have good opportunities to attend training courses to further enhance their skills and knowledge.

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

Children make excellent progress towards the early learning goals because practitioners have a wealth of experience and an excellent understanding of how children learn and develop. Expectations of children are high and they are given opportunities to develop their independence, imagination and concentration. Practitioners work very well together to promote children's learning. They plan activities and set out resources with excellent attention to detail and consideration of children's play preferences and interests. The key worker leads the assessment and planning processes in close liaison with parents to ensure children's welfare, learning and development needs are met.

From the time they arrive, children are very keen to explore the resources available to them and meet every new challenge with enthusiasm. Practitioners skilfully interact with the children, asking them questions to make them think and sensitively joining in with their play to support and consolidate their learning.

Outstanding emphasis is placed on children's personal, social and emotional development. Children quickly develop excellent social skills, they are confident, courteous and their behaviour is excellent. Practitioners gently remind children about being kind and sharing. Children thoroughly enjoy registration time, where they sing the 'good morning' song, talk about the weather and find their name cards. Problem solving and number activities are excellent. Children use a superb range of resources and take part in activities where they count and sort and match. For example, using dinosaurs, fruit and different vehicles. Children confidently talk about numbers, shape names, colour and size as they play. All children have very good opportunities to practise their mark making skills, for example, they use rollers in the glitter tray and they manipulate dough and enjoy painting. Children are developing a love of books. They sit in the book area and share a book with a friend, lifting the flaps together to see what is hidden underneath. They love to sing and take part in number songs, such as, 'Five mince pies in a bakers shop'. Children show skill and confidence when using the computer, they work out how to use voice recording devices and enjoy constructing with magnetic shapes. Children have excellent opportunities to develop their physical skills. They enjoy playing in the garden and participate with enthusiasm during music and movement sessions indoors. Children listen carefully

to the instructions as they march, walk backwards and jog around the room. Overall, children have excellent opportunities to develop skills for the future.

Children's specific health, dietary needs and allergies, are well documented and understood by practitioners. Detailed systems are in place covering all aspects of children's care including medication and accidents records. Children have very good opportunities to gain an understanding about healthy lifestyles. They wash their hands before cooking activities, snack time and after using the bathroom. Children access drinking water and healthy snacks are provided, such as, bread sticks and fresh fruit, together with a drink of milk at snack time. Children are beginning to take personal responsibility for their safety because they practise regular fire drills and practitioners show children how to use equipment in a safe way, for example, when using scissors. All children show a strong sense of security with the setting. High quality interaction and the exemplary organisation of the session helps young children feel safe, secure and develop confidence.

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

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| How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage? | 1 |
| The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement | 1 |

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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|--|---|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity | 1 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement | 1 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers | 1 |

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|---|
| The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
| The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning | 1 |
| The extent to which children feel safe | 1 |
| The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 |
| The extent to which children make a positive contribution | 1 |
| The extent to which children develop skills for the future | 1 |

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