

Stepping Stones Community Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY429428
Inspection date	23/01/2012
Inspector	Rachael Williams
Setting address	Court de Wyck Primary School, Bishops Road, Claverham, BRISTOL, BS49 4NF
Telephone number	07977808132
Email	
Type of setting	Childcare - Non-Domestic

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

Stepping Stones Community Pre-School was re-registered in 2011. The pre-school operates from dedicated facilities at Court de Wyck Primary School in Claverham, North Somerset. Facilities include a pre-school room, a fully enclosed outdoor area and access to school facilities.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to provide care for no more than 30 children from two to eight years old; of these, no more than 16 may be under three years old. At present, there are 38 children on roll. The pre-school is in receipt of free early education funding for two, three and four year olds. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported. The setting opens during term-time only from 9.15 am until 1.15 pm.

The pre-school is committee run. The manager has completed her Early Years Professional Status training. The manager is supported by four members of staff who work directly with the children; all of whom have level 2 or above early years qualifications. They are supported by a part-time kitchen assistant.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The dedicated team of experienced practitioners are highly effective in meeting children's individual needs. They work seamlessly with parents, other early years providers and key agencies to effectively support children. Welfare, including safeguarding arrangements, is exceptionally well promoted. Planning and assessment arrangements are high. Therefore, children generally make exceptional progress in their learning and development. Rigorous self-evaluation and the commitment of reflective staff secures continuous improvement at an exceptionally high level.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improving further children's literacy and numeracy skills through information, communication and technology

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The safety of children is paramount. Staff are incredibly vigilant and children are supervised at all times. They provide a safe and secure environment which is thoroughly risk assessed for instance, through intensive daily checks. All visitors to the setting are routinely greeted by staff and their attendance consistently recorded. There are rigorous arrangements to promote the safe collection of children by authorised adults for instance, a collections book is readily available, alongside the accurate daily attendance record, which is regularly reviewed by staff. Robust systems have been established to determine the suitability of all adults working or volunteering at the pre-school. There are stringent induction arrangements to promote staff's understanding of the well-written and informative policies and procedures. This includes the engagement of all staff and children in regular evacuation procedures which supports children to become aware of their own safety. All staff have comprehensive knowledge of their role in safeguarding children and are fully aware of the procedure to follow should a child protection issues arise.

Children are actively involved in celebrating festivals such as, Chinese New Year. They are given clear explanations of the purpose of the activity and excellent use is made of specific resources to reinforce children's understanding. Very good use is made of visual stimuli to support all children for instance, visual timelines and choosing boards, so that children are actively involved in making decisions about their play. Partnership working at all levels shows a high commitment to supporting children's individual needs. For example, staff have been proactive at engaging with other early years providers in order to embed continuity in children's care, learning and development. There are excellent links with the local schools to support children's transition arrangements. Staff have been committed to involve members of the mothers union through a volunteer system to increase children's understanding of the importance of local community. Parents are extremely happy with the service provided and comment on the excellent communication. For example, a daily diary is established for those parents who do not collect from the setting so that they are fully informed of children's accomplishments. There is a regular exchange of information for instance, through the daily activity board and newsletters. Parents comment positively on how the setting takes time to get to know the children and their families so that their individual needs are met sensitively.

An exciting and vibrant environment has been established by the staff who consistently evaluate the provision and adapt it to meet the developing needs of the children. For example, there has been a recent focus on providing a stimulating quiet area where children can sit comfortably to share stories. Resources are of exceptionally high quality and readily available to the children in low level, labelled drawers. Through a recent review of resources the staff have identified the need to further develop information, communication and technology equipment in order to promote communication and numeracy skills further. The dedicated team deploy themselves effectively to consistently engage with the children to stimulate their learning therefore; children thrive and make excellent progress in relation to their starting points.

The enthusiastic staff and motivated committee work exceptionally well together to

wholeheartedly monitor and evaluate the provision in order to set realistic and challenging targets. Staff's professional development is effectively supported and training needs are consistently met to embed knowledge of the welfare requirements which are promoted exceptionally well. The committee work collaboratively to enable identified actions to be efficiently completed such as, reviews of risk assessments and policies. Staff are highly reflective of the provision they provide and have a clear focus for sustained improvement with exceptionally high standards being set. For example, to further promote literacy and imagination skills the role-play area is consistently adapted to provide different experiences such as, a library.

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

There are innovative opportunities for children to construct purposefully and to explore materials through the excellent organisation of the provision. Children are inquisitive as they celebrate Chinese New Year. They investigate joining materials well to secure their red packets so that their chocolate money does not fall out. Staff motivate the children exceptionally well and encourage their communication skills. Children clearly explain the process and respond to questions confidently. Children make marks competently as they copy the Chinese writing and attempt to make recognisable shapes as they write their names on the packets. Some children confidently name all the letters in their names. They are exceptionally comfortable in their relationships with the staff and confidently ask for support for instance, to stretch the elastic bands as they are aware of maintaining theirs and others safety. Children explore colour well whilst painting a dragon for the display. They thoroughly enjoy mixing new colours and are supported exceptionally well to experiment with a range of tools such as, paintbrushes, rollers and sponges. Children move rhythmically to the music as they create pathways around the room to imitate the movements of the dragon and enthusiastically wave their scarves in response to the music.

Children thrive as positive and caring relationships have been established with their key person and all staff. Staff have excellent knowledge of children's capabilities through in-depth assessment arrangements. Parents are fully involved in the process from the beginning as they complete questionnaires of children's starting points which are supported by staff's initial observations. Parents regularly contribute to children's learning for instance, adding observations from home to the learning diary. The children are also fully involved as their 'voice' details their interests for staff to develop enriching activities. There are regular, intensive reviews with parents to monitor children's progress which enables accurate learning priorities to be identified.

Children's behaviour is exemplary and they have an excellent sense of belonging. The children are very kind to each other for instance, collecting aprons to share with their friends before painting. In addition, children thrive at the responsibility of helping to prepare their snack and to have specific jobs during the session. Children are continuously involved in a broad range of experiences which capture their interest and challenge their development. There are varied opportunities for children to receive individual attention and be involved in small group and whole

group experiences. For example, at small group time literacy skills are enhanced as activities are differentiated to support children's development. For example, the youngest children really enjoy learning about rhyme and thoroughly enjoy participating in action songs. Through the excellent organisation of the session children are routinely engaged in activities to progress their literacy and numeracy skills. For example, counting the beats in their name and calculating how many more bowls are needed for snack-time.

There are regular opportunities for children to be outside and active in the well-equipped outdoor area. For instance, children thoroughly enjoy chasing the hoops. Children investigate healthy eating as they learn to grow and harvest a range of vegetables such as, beans. Children's independence is fully encouraged. For example, they successfully pour drinks when they are thirsty showing very good understanding of their health needs. Children have excellent understanding of hygiene arrangements. For instance, all children routinely wash their hands before eating and are aware that they may have germs on their hands. Children are provided with an extensive range of healthy fruits which are supplied by the parents; these include banana, blueberry, orange, apple and pear. Children use knives safely and competently as they prepare the fruit. Staff are very clear on children's special dietary requirements and medical needs to maintain their well-being.

Children have excellent awareness of safety and show their understanding in their imaginative play. For example, when driving to the park a child reminds her passengers to put their seatbelts on. Staff are excellent at providing gentle reminders to those children who have just started at the group so that expectations are reinforced. For example, children are reminded not to run inside and are given a clear explanation so that they can understand the possible consequence.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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
--	---

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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