

# Stepping Stones at Northbourne PFSU

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Inspector**

Fiona Robinson

**Setting address**

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**Type of setting**

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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*.

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## **Description of the setting**

Stepping Stones at Northbourne Partnership Foundation Stage Unit was registered in 2006 and is run by a governing body. It operates from a classroom in Northbourne Church of England Primary School, Didcot in Oxfordshire. There is ramped disability access to the building. All children share access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area and have the use of the school hall, foundation classroom, field and outdoor environment. The pre-school provides support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language. It is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register. Stepping Stones may care for no more than 28 children from two years to the end of the early years age range at any one time. There are currently 46 children on roll, of whom 31 receive funding. It is open each weekday from 9am to 11.30am, during term time. A lunch club takes place on Tuesday between 11.30am and 1pm and on Friday between 11.30am and 12.30pm. Afternoon sessions are available on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 12.20pm to 2.50pm. Children come from the local area and attend for a variety of the sessions on offer. There are nine members of staff who work with the children. Of these seven hold a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at level 3 or the equivalent. The pre-school receives support from the local authority.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children achieve extremely well in a stimulating environment and respond very well to the care and support they are given. Partnerships with parents and carers, the host school and outside agencies are outstanding because information and support are shared very effectively. Staff value the children's interests and ideas and ensure they are fully included in an excellent range of activities. They make very effective use of a wide range of resources to meet most of the needs of the children. The manager and staff have a very clear knowledge of the pre-school's strengths and areas for improvement. They demonstrate an excellent capacity for future improvement.

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

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

- develop further the use of information and communication technology resources to support children's learning and development

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

Children's safety is promoted exceptionally well because staff have an excellent awareness of safeguarding and child protection issues. Comprehensive policies and procedures are fully implemented to ensure the safety of the children. There are robust systems in place for the recruitment and vetting of staff and adults who work with or have contact with the children. The premises are very secure and parents and carers are very familiar with the rigorous procedures for the collection of children. Staff are deployed very effectively throughout the pre-school. Fire drills are practised regularly so that children are familiar with the routine for evacuating the building in an emergency. Rigorous daily risk assessments are carried out to ensure that the indoor and outdoor environments are safe for play. Resources are highly accessible for the children and well-maintained. The pre-school is extremely well led and managed. Excellent self-evaluation systems ensure that improvements have a significant impact on the children's experiences. The manager, staff and governing body work purposefully together and there is an excellent, shared commitment to develop the pre-school. The views of parents and children are highly valued and acted on and continuous reflective discussion and evaluation take place. Staff promote equality and diversity to a very high level and ensure children are fully included in activities and the celebration of festivals and other lifestyles. Recently, a parent told the children about life in Spain and read them a story in Spanish. Staff provide excellent support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language, so they make similar progress to their peers. They make very effective use of a wide range of resources to meet most of the needs of the children. Planning indicates that children do not make the fullest use of technology, such as the digital camera, in their activities and learning, which impacts on the development of these skills. Staff regularly monitor the children's progress and set challenging targets for them. Rigorous self-evaluation ensures that leaders have an excellent idea of areas for future development which inform their planning. Partnerships with parents and carers, the host school, children's centre and outside agencies are outstanding. Parents are kept very well-informed of special events and activities, such as the sponsored walk, the family planting day and nativity performance. They receive information through informal discussions, the website, comprehensive newsletters and the parents' notice board. Key staff regularly share the children's learning journals with parents and keep them very well-informed of their children's achievement and progress. Parents consider their children get an excellent start to their education in a wonderful, supportive and nurturing environment. Partnerships with the host school are outstanding and staff ensure children have a very smooth transition into full-time education. Planning and the use of the outdoor area are regularly discussed with Foundation Stage staff. Staff work extremely closely with outside agencies and staff at the children's centre to provide excellent support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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

There is very well-organised, purposeful indoor and outdoor play for the children. Staff value the children's interests and ideas and include these in their activities and experiences. They evaluate their planning carefully and use the information very effectively to help children build on their existing skills. Children achieve exceptionally well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and make excellent progress. Themes such as people who help us, transport and Spain result in colourful displays which make the environment interesting and welcoming. Children's behaviour is exemplary because staff are outstanding role models with high expectations and a consistent approach to managing behaviour. Children have high self-esteem and confidence, because staff encourage them to respect rules and boundaries. They become extremely confident and cooperate very well. For example as they play parachute games. Staff promote their independence extremely well and encourage them to make their own choices as they design models. Children build excellent relationships with staff and take a pride in keeping their environment neat and tidy. Festivals such as Harvest, Hanukkah, Christmas and the Chinese New Year give them an excellent understanding of other lifestyles and customs. Parents tell them about life in France and Spain and they enjoy sampling food from these countries. Children develop an excellent understanding of keeping healthy and safe. They learn about the importance of taking exercise and healthy eating. Children eat a wide range of fruit and vegetables at snack time and enjoy making fruit salads and pizzas with healthy toppings. They readily explain the importance of washing their hands before eating food. They use equipment very carefully as they prepare vegetable soup and make bread. Children's physical skills are developed extremely well as they balance on the climbing frame and ride their pedalled vehicles. They have an excellent understanding of safety and benefit from talks about fire and road safety from staff and the fire service. Children are very keen to learn and respond extremely well to the excellent care and support they are given. They listen very carefully to stories, such as 'The Gingerbread Man' and enjoy re-telling the story through role play. Their creative skills are developed very well through printing colourful patterns using fruit and vegetables. Children are eager to go on insect hunts and build dens to shelter in. They are very skilful at completing programs on the computer and most can count up to 15 and beyond. Children recognise two-dimensional shapes indoors and outdoors and enjoy singing songs, such as 'Ten Fat Sausages' to practise their counting skills. They develop an excellent understanding of their local environment by visiting the post office, shops and local park. Children enjoy mixing colours and painting portraits for their art gallery. Most can write their own names by the time they leave pre-school. They enjoy practising their dragon dance as part of their Chinese New Year celebrations and learn to greet one another in French and Spanish. They are prepared very well for their next stage in learning in this stimulating environment.

## 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>	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

### 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>	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
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

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

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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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