

# Stepping Stones Uppingham

Uppingham C of E School, Belgrave Road, Uppingham, Oakham, RUTLAND, LE15 9RT

## Inspection date

11/04/2013

Previous inspection date

27/11/2008

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

**This inspection:**

2

Previous inspection:

2

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend 2

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children 2

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision 2

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision is good

- The warm and welcoming environment helps children to feel settled, and the effective key person system means children form strong attachments. Consequently, children grow in confidence and their well-being is effectively promoted.
- Children are not fully involved in the preparation of snacks and meals. This means that they are not consistently supported in their rapidly developing self-care skills during these times.
- Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the revised Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The effective implementation of policies successfully promotes children's safety and well-being.
- Leadership and management are strong and there is a clear motivation to develop the setting in order to improve opportunities for children's learning.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- Children are not fully involved in the preparation of snacks and meals. This means that they are not consistently supported in their rapidly developing self-care skills during these times.
- Resources for children to fully develop very good early writing skills within the role play are less available. Therefore, children cannot always explore writing for a purpose. For example, writing a shopping list.

## Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector held a meeting with the manager of the provision and spoke to staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day of inspection.
- The inspector observed activities in all rooms and the outdoor learning environment.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector looked at a selection of children's assessment records and planning, evidence of suitability of staff working within the setting, the provider's self-evaluation and a range of other documentation.

**Inspector**  
Hazel White

## Full Report

### Information about the setting

Stepping Stones, Uppingham re-registered in 2003. It is a committee run organisation, which operates within the Church of England Primary School on the outskirts of Uppingham in Rutland. Early years aged children are based in the main playroom and share cloakroom facilities with the school's reception class. Children attending after school are based in a designated classroom. Most areas of the premises have disabled access. There is an enclosed outdoor play area.

The setting opens term times from 8am to 6pm. It is on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 32 children attending who are in the early years age group. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It also supports children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The setting provides care for school-aged children before and after school, with collection arrangements within the school and from Leighfield School. Between 9am and 3.15pm it offers care for children aged two years and over. The setting employs eight members of childcare staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The setting receives support from the local authority.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

#### To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- extend children's self-care skills by allowing them to pour their own drinks and serve their own food
- strengthen opportunities for children to develop early writing skills during role play, by enhancing the range of resources available to them for making marks.

### Inspection judgements

#### How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Staff are secure in their knowledge and understanding of how children learn through play and the quality of teaching is good. They provide appropriate challenge for children which supports them in being successful and well motivated. As a result, they make steady progress in their learning in readiness for school. Staff complete a journal for each child which includes photographs of the children enjoying a wide variety of activities at the setting. These records show accurate assessments of the children's progress. Staff use this

information skilfully to identify next steps for individual children and create opportunities to enrich learning. The effective planning includes continuous provision which is enhanced by focused and adult-led activities. This means that children are engaged in experiences which have depth and breadth across the areas of learning. Parents are actively involved because staff regularly consult with them, gathering information about their children's starting points and achievements at home. Consequently, parents are helped to continually support and complement children's learning.

Children's communication and language is well promoted. They readily join in conversations and enjoy singing rhymes and sharing their news at circle time. All children are learning basic sign language. They enthusiastically sign 'good morning' and their first names, therefore, learning that we can communicate in different ways. Staff are skilled at identifying and supporting individual needs. They use visual prompts and simple key words in different languages for children who speak English as an additional language. A range of resources are in place to help children gain awareness of the diverse society in which they live. Therefore, they are learning about the world around them.

Children enjoy easy access to a broad range of books, which they choose independently or engage in during group story time, correctly predicting what happens next. This effectively promotes children's interest and love of books. Children begin to recognise their name on their coat pegs and drawers and they self-register at the beginning of the session. These opportunities help children to develop useful skills for their transition to school. Children develop early writing skills in the area for making marks. However, there are fewer opportunities to fully explore writing for a purpose in role play areas. For example, writing shopping lists or taking telephone messages, as resources are not consistently provided for imaginary play.

Creative play is plentiful. Corn flour play enables children to examine textures and make patterns using various tools, such as scrapers and brushes. They describe what they see as 'gooey', 'sticky' and 'cold'. Children have good opportunities to use their skills and explore concepts and ideas through their own representations. For example, they use empty plastic bottles, card, tape and cartons to create models. Children carefully fill the bottles with small pieces of drinking straws, transforming them into 'shakers'. In the sand, children scoop and mould with varied tools. There is good staff interaction and questions about size and capacity, as they estimate how many scoops they need to fill the containers. Children's art is well displayed, enhancing their self-esteem.

Children are provided with a broad range of experiences to effectively develop their physical skills both indoors and outside. They balance blocks on top of one another to build towers and use brushes, rollers and other small tools in their play. Children confidently manoeuvre wheeled toys and climb equipment, such as frames and slides, when they are outdoors.

**The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children**

The key person system is effective in supporting individual needs and building secure bonds. Good settling in procedures help to support children in the transition between home and the setting. Staff get to know the children well because parents share useful information about their personal care and starting points to further support their learning and development. Staff are good role models and use consistent strategies and explanations to provide children with a clear understanding of acceptable behaviour. Children receive gentle reminders to share and take turns. As a result, they play cooperatively together and are responsive to the praise and encouragement they receive for their efforts.

The setting is well organised so that children can choose resources and move freely between indoor and outdoor areas, instigating their own play. Brightly coloured displays, pictures, posters and resources provide a child friendly and welcoming environment. Children are comfortable in their surroundings and show a good awareness of their own and others' safety. They are encouraged to tidy up and take care of resources. When out and about they learn to cross the road safely and know how to keep themselves safe when they visit animals at a nearby farm. This practice supports children in helping to manage their surroundings to minimise accidents.

Children are well nourished because they are provided with a good range of nutritious foods and a choice of fruits and vegetables. Mealtimes are social occasions as the children sit chatting to their friends. They choose when they have their snack and this allows them to continue their activities and enhances the flow of the session. Staff discuss which foods are good for them and which are not, which helps children to make healthy choices. However, children's self-help skills are not fully supported during these times because staff prepare and serve the food, which reduces the children's involvement. All children learn sensible hygiene routines to prevent the spread of germs.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities or who speak English as an additional language are supported well. Staff have good links with other professionals. They actively seek advice and guidance to improve knowledge and skills. As a result, staff are focused on ensuring that all children are valued in the setting and practice is adapted to meet their individual needs effectively. Children celebrate festivals and events throughout the year, such as, Easter, Diwali, Christmas and the Chinese New Year. They see labels around the room, which are written in Chinese and experienced tasting a 'fortune cookie'. Consequently, extending their understanding of the wider world.

Partnerships with other early years settings and local schools are strong. Staff liaise closely, ensuring that there is a good level of communication in order to complement children's learning and provide continuity of care. For example, sending link books to providers and progress summaries. The setting is an integral part of the host school. Teachers share good practice and, as a result, children are well prepared for their transition into school.

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

The manager and staff team have a good understanding of their responsibilities to safeguard children and promote their welfare. This is because they all have regular training in safeguarding. As a result, the staff's knowledge is current and ensures children are effectively protected from harm. The management team follows a robust recruitment procedure to appoint people who are suitable to work with children. In addition, a thorough induction procedure ensures that all adults have a secure knowledge of their roles. As a result, children are cared for effectively. Risk assessments are carried out on a regular basis and staff are well deployed to help keep children safe.

The management team effectively monitor and assess the planning and delivery of the educational programmes. They enlist the support of the early years advisor and use quality audits to support and adapt practice. For example, it was apparent that the outdoor area was not effectively used. This resulted in a re-vamp of the garden, which included adding tubes and pipes for children to roll balls through and a 'mud pit'. This enables children to have fun, explore and experiment in the fresh air, therefore, extending their learning.

The management team has high expectations for the setting, which is evident in their evaluation and action plans. They include opinions from parents and staff who reflect on what they do well and how they can improve. For example, methods of informing parents of their children's progress were reviewed following a parent survey. They now receive progress reports electronically as well as by hard copy. The parent notice board displays a wealth of information regarding the activities children take part in and how parents can support their child at home. This helps to ensure continuity of care and learning. Parents speak highly of the setting and staff, explaining they felt well informed and their children are happy and supported.

Performance management systems are effective, with staff and the management team identifying and attending suitable training. Staff cascade information from training and events to extend team knowledge and skills. In addition, professional development is supported well through regular supervisions and appraisals. The staff team are qualified or working towards qualifications in order to further enhance the service they provide.

Staff work closely with the local authority to ensure that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive the support that they need to make good progress in their learning. Staff share information effectively with other professionals providing care for the children, and valuable transition documents are given to parents and other providers. This shows that staff understand how important it is to communicate with others so that children receive complementary and consistent experiences in this setting and when they move on to school.

### **The Childcare Register**

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

**Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are

**Met**

## What inspection judgements mean

### Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

## Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY271344
<b>Local authority</b>	Rutland
<b>Inspection number</b>	907823
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 17
<b>Total number of places</b>	41
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	32
<b>Name of provider</b>	Stepping Stones Uppingham Committee
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27/11/2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01572 821879

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## Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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