

Stepping Stones Pre-School and Kid's Club

Whitestone Infant School, Magyar Crescent, Nuneaton, Warwickshire, CV11 4SQ

Inspection date	18/09/2013
Previous inspection date	16/05/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	1
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- The pre-school and out of school club provide an inspiring, welcoming and stimulating environment. The enthusiastic and caring staff team ensure that excellent relationships with children are well established. This means that children are exceptionally well supported and demonstrate a strong sense of security and increasing independence.
- The provision of high quality, interesting resources, well presented in a welcoming environment, ensures that children are stimulated and motivated to engage in their surroundings, learning as they play and helping them reach their full potential.
- The exceptional partnership working offers many ways to involve and include parents and the strong key person system enables children to form effective and meaningful attachments and bonds. Support for all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is outstanding, so that all children make excellent progress.
- Frequent and in-depth staff supervision and monitoring ensures consistently high levels of practice throughout the pre-school. Managers delegate well, enabling and encouraging staff to use their talents and interests well, which all helps to make the pre-school vibrant and purposeful.
- Children's behaviour is exemplary because staff are exceptional role models. This ensures that children are highly motivated, eager to join in all activities and clearly demonstrate the characteristics of effective learning.

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 observed activities throughout the pre-school in both indoor and outdoor spaces.
- The inspector spoke with the pre-school owners and staff at appropriate times throughout the day.
- The inspector looked at documentation, including children's records, learning and development information, staff records and a selection of policies and procedures.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents through discussion on the day of the inspection.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a creative activity with the manager.

Inspector

Jennifer Turner

Full Report

Information about the setting

Stepping Stones Pre-School and Kid's Club opened in 1997 and is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from four rooms in a modular mobile building within the grounds of Whitestone Infant School on the outskirts of Nuneaton, Warwickshire. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area. The setting serves the local community and also offers before and after school care for children attending Whitestone Infant School and Chetwynd Junior School. The setting is open Monday to Friday, from 7.50am to 5.30pm and children attend for a variety of sessions. Currently there are 102 children on roll in the early years age group who attend the pre-school. There are 90 children on roll, who attend the before and after school. The pre-school provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. There are 10 members of staff, who work with children. Of these, six hold an early years qualification at level 3. The owner holds an early years degree. The setting is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the already excellent support for children who speak English as an additional language, showing that their linguistic diversity is valued, for example, by increasing opportunities for them to see their language displayed in the pre-school.

Inspection judgements

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

All children thrive and make consistently excellent progress in their learning and development because the pre-school provides an exceptionally stimulating and well thought out educational programme, with some innovative features. The environment is outstanding in terms of carefully selected furniture and resources, all imaginatively organised to encourage children to access and select items and activities, which engage and inspire them. The space is used creatively and to best effect, allowing children free access to the safe indoor and outdoor learning spaces. Within the rooms, areas are designated into specific learning zones. For example, a fully equipped 'builders construction area' provides children with red bricks and tools, such as, hammers, saws and pipes. Children pretend to build houses, wearing their bright hard hats and a child tells the group, 'we can't build a real house because we do not have enough bricks'. Outdoors children spend long periods of time in the gravel pit filling containers and piling the gravel up using shovels and a toy digger.

All children are making excellent progress in their learning. Staff are very skilled at using observations and assessments to plan for children's individual needs. This is supported by good quality resources and staff, who use every opportunity to support learning. Activities for the day are discussed at circle time and staff encourage children to select their own resources. There are rich opportunities for children to learn to recognise words through the use of clear labelling and photographs throughout the pre-school. Children show a real love of books and staff sit with them in small groups to read favourite stories about a zoo, introducing the author and illustrator of the story to children. Children also sit relaxed, crossing their legs as they look at comics and children's magazines. Staff introduce letters and sounds to enable children to pronounce words correctly. Children enjoy and show talent for expressive art and design. They enjoy role play in the garden using real objects in the 'ice cream parlour' or the home corner. They pretend to make tea for staff and the inspector and charge excessive amounts for a cone of ice-cream. They learn to express themselves using their bodies through music and dance as they play the large wooden xylophone, tambourines and shakers. Children concentrate for extended periods on painting and drawing, showing great pride in their work. They make prints of their hands and feet when they first start to put into their special treasure book, in which they gather memories of their time at the pre-school.

Staff share children's achievements enthusiastically with parents and display children's artwork attractively. This enhances children's confidence and self-esteem. Children use numbers and learn mathematical concepts during everyday activities. They learn to count using numbers during daily activities and routines. They count how many children are in the line, how many more boys than girls there are and how many would be left if one child goes. They concentrate very well on complex puzzles of their own choosing, which develops their understanding of shape and sequence. They build using large equipment, such as construction blocks and drain pipes. All children use the computers confidently, manoeuvring the computer mouse to choose which programme they would like and they know when the sand timer finishes they must let someone else have a go. Children learn using their senses, especially when using the pre-school garden. They grow a range of plants and flowers in raised beds and using magnifying glasses they explore hidden spiders and insects on the investigation table containing natural materials, such as, shells, drift wood, conkers and stones. Children show interest in the light box and they place different objects to explore how they change when light is reflected on them. Children are excited as they play in the 'provocation area' where they create collages and models using an extensive range of recycled materials, such as, tubes, paper and cotton reels to create puppets with their parents during a workshop. Great concentration is observed as they gouge the clay, cutting it, making marks and different shapes. Staff introduce new words to children, such as 'gouging' and they talk about the clay being dug from far down in the ground.

Staff embrace every opportunity to support and promote children's communication and language development skills and have lots of conversations with children. They show a genuine interest in what children have to say and respond swiftly to children's non-verbal communication by using Makaton signing and pictures to support them. The pre-school environment offers exceptional visual stimulus in the way of signage and English text to fully support and enhance children's understanding and language development. Staff find

out as much as possible to support children at the beginning and throughout their time at the pre-school. They routinely work with parents and children who speak English as an additional language to find out key words and how to pronounce them correctly to offer reassurance to children. However, there is scope to further enhance the way in which children's linguistic diversity is valued within the setting.

Teaching and learning within the setting is outstanding. Staff facilitate children's enjoyment in the process by offering an interesting, challenging and fun range of activities, so that learning is threaded through continuously within the setting's routine. Staff work extremely well together to plan activities that meet the needs of all children. They make detailed and informative observations of children's play, which enables them to plan very effectively for each child's learning needs. There are comprehensive monitoring and tracking documents in place to ensure children reach their goals. As a result, children make excellent progress across all areas of learning. Staff warmly welcome parents and carers into the setting and partnerships are very strong. Parents share very useful information about their children when they first start, which provides a firm starting point for staff to build on. They are invited to contribute to their children's learning by sharing with staff, observations from home on how their child is progressing. They also attend workshops and events, all of which keeps them well involved and informed about their children's experiences.

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

Children display their confidence and enjoyment as they thrive in this vibrant pre-school and out of school club. They have formed very close bonds and attachments with each other, staff and especially their key person. This is due to the highly skilled staff who have a detailed understanding of the individual needs of each child in their care. Key persons provide a nurturing approach, which reassures children and parents when they first start. This enables children to settle quickly and gain confidence as they eagerly explore and investigate. Prior to starting at the pre-school, staff visit children in their homes, in addition to parents and children having settling-in sessions to meet their allocated key person. This meeting is used effectively to find out all about children and to begin to build positive relationships with children and their families. During the visit children are encouraged to draw a picture of themselves and staff display these in the pre-school. This means that when children start they can see their portraits displayed and can identify staff who visited them at home.

Children's behaviour is exemplary as they have a very good understanding of what is expected of them and are given many opportunities to express their feelings; they know that they are valued and will be listened to. Staff in the pre-school have a natural calm and nurturing manner. They get down to children's level and join in activities and because staff are happy and motivated in their roles, this comes across well and helps children to settle and feel at ease and motivated. Children show an excellent understanding about good hygiene procedures. They know the importance of washing their hands before eating and after using the bathroom and they tell the inspector about the effect germs would have on them. Children enjoy a variety of nutritious and healthy snacks with fruits and regular access to milk or water provided for them throughout the day.

All areas of the pre-school are safe and child-friendly. Security is strong and all visitors are screened before admittance. No child can leave the setting unseen because staff monitor the entrance and the entrance is fitted with a coded locking device. All outings undertaken, whether to local indoor soft play centres or further afield to famous landmarks, are risk assessed to ensure safety and suitability and staff ensure children are supervised well. Any maintenance matters within the setting are swiftly dealt with, so children are never exposed to hazardous equipment or dangers. Fire alarms are tested regularly and drills are carried out very frequently, so children know what to do in the event of an emergency evacuation. Staff take the 'grab bag' containing all emergency contact numbers of parents to ensure they are contacted in an emergency. Resources and play materials are all of high quality and chosen to stimulate and inspire children. A variety of sensory experiences provide children with opportunities to explore different textures, such as, wooden objects, sea shells, pine cones, twigs and pebbles. Children handle and compare these using magnifying glasses. The outdoor environment matches the indoor environment exceptionally well in terms of its rich learning opportunities. Children are able to use their imagination in role play in the outdoor area, access musical instruments and explore water and books.

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

Extremely robust procedures, risk assessments and vigilance protect children. The safeguarding of children is given high priority through effective systems, such as coded locking devices. Three staff have attended the training to lead safeguarding and staff have a superb understanding of child protection because they engage in regular training to widen their knowledge. This means that all staff can identify the signs and symptoms that might cause them concern about children's well-being and the appropriate action they must take. All those who attend the pre-school, including visitors, understand the procedures to prevent risks that the use of technology may pose to children. Mobile telephones are not permitted in the pre-school and staff use photography securely with permission from parents. All staff are clear about their fundamental role to protect children and they take swift action to minimise any potential hazards ensuring children are safe in the pre-school and in the out of school club. This results in children enjoying the freedom to explore, to choose and have fun in a safe environment. At a previous visit, the provider was asked to improve attendance registers for outings. Robust steps have been taken to action this and ensure that staff have the details of all children on the outing.

Highly robust procedures are in place for employing staff and checking their suitability to work with children. All staff have their previous employment history and references checked thoroughly. Staff are regularly observed by the manager and each other to ensure their practice is of the highest quality at all times. This enables the management team to identify the strengths and weaknesses of staff practice. Regular reviews of staff practice, professional development, training and targets for improved performance ensure that managers very effectively monitor staffs continued suitability. Highly effective partnerships between the pre-school, parents, other settings and external agencies ensure that children's needs are quickly identified and especially well met.

Strong partnerships ensure that highly accurate information about individual children is shared, particularly with the host school. This enables all parties to successfully support all children to achieve the very best. The very efficient monitoring of the pre-school's outstanding implementation of the learning and development requirements is constant and consistent. Careful assessment of the depth and breadth of the educational programmes ensure that staff deliver learning exceptionally well. Activities are carefully planned to extend and challenge children; this is achieved through staff's expert understanding of children's individual interests and aptitudes. In addition, they have attended training on how to create 'inspirational learning space' for children. The self-evaluation of the pre-school's practice is continuing to extend. Staff reviews and regular information sharing have enabled managers to identify and action further areas for improvement. Their strong drive for continuing excellence includes plans for expanding the way they assess what children are fascinated by or curious about and how individual children relate to each other and the environment.

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

Unique reference number	200780
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	927791
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	72
Number of children on roll	102
Name of provider	Diane Friswell
Date of previous inspection	16/05/2011
Telephone number	02476 387637

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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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