

# Stepping Stones Children's Nursery School Ltd

Woodton Cp School, Norwich Road, Woodton, BUNGAY, Suffolk, NR35 2LL

<b>Inspection date</b>	30/01/2014
Previous inspection date	04/02/2010

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	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

- Outdoor play and learning is particularly well-established, promoting children's interest in outdoors and ensuring that those children who learn best through being outdoors are able to do so.
- Children behave well. Consistent rules are in place and the effective use of meaningful praise supports children's self-esteem and their developing understanding of right and wrong.
- Children's language and communication skills are given good priority. Staff encourage children in conversation, helping them to develop their vocabulary and become confident communicators.
- Staff effectively engage parents in their children's learning in the nursery and at home. Parents are actively encouraged to share what they know about their child and are kept fully informed about their child's development and progress.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not always maximise opportunities to interact with children as they participate in activities, to extend their learning even further and to the next level.

## **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 in the main classroom, the enclosed garden and the school playing field.
- The inspector spoke with staff at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector looked at activity planning, records of children's learning and a selection of policies and records.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery owner/manager.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with children and the provider's improvement plan.
- The inspector spoke to parents and looked at written testimonials.

## **Inspector**

Jacqueline Mason

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Stepping Stones Children's Nursery School Ltd was registered in 1989 and re-registered in 2009 when it moved to its current premises. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It operates from purpose built premises at Woodton CP School in Norfolk. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor area. The nursery is privately owned and managed. It serves the local area and is accessible to all children.

There are five members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds Early Years Professional Status and one has an early years degree. The other staff are all qualified at level 3. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, during school term times. Sessions are from 9am until 12noon and from 1pm until 3pm, from Monday to Thursday and from 9am to 1pm on Friday. A lunch club operates from 12noon to 1pm everyday. Children attend for a variety of sessions, including full days. An after school club operates during school term time, from 3.15pm to 5.30pm. Occasional sessions are also offered in the school holidays for children aged three to eight years. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 50 children on roll, 37 of whom are in the early years age range.

The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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

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

- enhance staff interaction with children further to maximise the use of all learning opportunities, so that children's achievements are taken to the next level.

## Inspection judgements

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

Staff gather useful information from parents when children first attend the nursery, finding out about their likes, dislikes, interests and abilities. This helps staff get to know children well. They talk confidently about where children are in their learning and development. They have a good awareness of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and understand the characteristics of effective learning. Staff translate this effectively into practice, evaluating their observations of children as they play to identify the next steps in their learning and plan for their continuing progress. Each child has a written 'learning journey' in which staff record their observations, along with photographic evidence. These are shared with parents to keep them informed about their children's developmental progress.

Parents are actively encouraged to remain involved in their children's learning in the nursery and at home. Staff work hard to engage parents, including providing them with activities that they can do at home with their children and inviting parents on regular outings with their children to places of interest. A regular 'literacy evening' is held where parents are invited to come in with their children early in the evening and listen to stories, promoting the importance of sharing books with children. Children's developmental progress is monitored effectively to ensure that they are working comfortably within the expected development band for their age. This helps to ensure that children are prepared for school and any concerns about their development are quickly identified and consistently managed. The 'progress check at age two' is completed with parents and they are given a copy of the report to share with other professionals.

Staff engage well in children's play and the quality of teaching is good, although, on occasions staff do not always maximise opportunities to become involved in children's activities because they are writing their observations of what children are doing. This means that some opportunities to extend children's learning to the highest level are missed. Children chat comfortably with staff and talk confidently about their past experiences and what they are doing. Staff engage children in conversation and model taking turns, asking questions to challenge their thinking and giving them time to process the question before answering. For example, when playing outdoors in the 'mud kitchen' children decide they want to make a river. They use drainage piping confidently to make chutes and are encouraged to think about how to make a dam to stop the water from running down the pipe. Staff extend this activity when children show interest, using computer technology to show children illustrations of dams and reservoirs and talking with them about why they are necessary. Children enjoy stories and listen attentively in small and large groups. They look at books independently, holding them the correct way up and turning pages one at a time. Older children understand that print carries meaning and some children confidently write the letters of their first name. Children have plentiful opportunities to make marks and staff provide a varied range of resources, including paint, soil, diaries, laminated sheets with dry wipe pens and pens and paper.

Children's ability to apply skills appropriate to their age and their enthusiasm to explore and investigate helps to ensure that they are developing skills for the future. This inclusive nursery ensures that all children are able to participate fully in the routines and activities each day. Children enjoy playing outdoors and readily use the resources in the garden. Outdoor play and learning is particularly well-established, promoting children's interest in outdoors and ensuring that those children who learn best through being outdoors are able to do so. Children's listening skills are promoted as they are encouraged to listen to the birds in the environment and are taken on walks around the school playing field to explore the natural world. Children show a good interest in the natural environment and staff skilfully extend this into other areas of learning, such as using the computer to identify birds and encouraging children to make observational drawings of what they see. Children play imaginatively, based on their own and imagined experiences. They seek out others to share their play, pretending to be 'princesses' and inviting adults into their play to 'judge' their dancing.

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

Children's transitions into the nursery are managed well. They are supported well by their key person, who takes responsibility for supporting and developing relationships with children and their families. All staff are responsive to children's needs and the thoughtfully planned playroom and garden creates an enabling environment for all children. This supports children to engage in purposeful play, ensuring that they have a firm base from which to build their growing independence and confidence as they get ready for their transition into school. Children benefit from a wide range of play materials to support their learning and development.

Children are treated with respect and equal regard. They behave exceptionally well and even very young children seek out others to share play experiences. Consistent boundaries are in place to help them know what is expected of them. Staff skilfully support children to solve their own conflicts and recognise the impact that their behaviour has on others. Staff are good role models. They use verbal praise to place a meaningful value on children's individual efforts. As a result, children learn right from wrong and develop self-esteem.

Established routines are in place, promoting a good sense of belonging. They know what happens next at any point during the day. Children are helped to learn to keep themselves safe. For example, staff talk to children about the emergency evacuation procedure, which is practised regularly along with the rest of the primary school. Children's good health is managed well and a good emphasis is placed on playing outdoors and exploring the outdoor environment. Children move freely between indoors and the enclosed garden and are helped to develop self-care skills, such as putting on their coats and wellington boots before going outdoors. Children demonstrate that they manage their own personal hygiene needs relative to their age, such as taking themselves to the toilet and washing their own hands. Their good health is further supported by the provision of healthy snacks, including a variety of fresh fruit. Parents provide packed lunches for those children staying at nursery all day.

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

Staff are deployed effectively and thorough risk assessments are carried out to ensure that children are able to play safely indoors and outside. Good use is made of the outdoor play environment, including the enclosed playground and the enclosed school playing field. Children are supervised when they are playing outdoors to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety. Management and staff are proactive to ensure that the facilities are suitable and inclusive for all children, including replacing the 'bark' area in the playground with purposely designed rubber safety surfacing, to enable children who are not walking to be able to access this area. Staff have a good awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse, to help them recognise when children may be at risk. They are confident to report concerns in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines and there is an effective policy in place to support this. This helps to ensure that children's well-being is prioritised at all times.

Staff are led by an owner/manager, who is committed to the continuous improvement of the nursery. They are motivated, enthusiastic and supported effectively to reflect on their practice and the impact it has on children. They have a good understanding of the requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, to ensure that they are working within the framework and meeting their legal duties. Self-evaluation is used effectively to inform priorities and to set challenging targets for improvement. An effective system of supervision and appraisal is in place to help identify the strengths and areas of weakness of staff and plan for their professional development. Recruitment and selection procedures for new staff are good, to help ensure that those working with children are suitable to do so. All staff have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check in place. Anyone who has not completed checks is supervised at all times and never left alone with children.

Partnerships with parents are strong. Their views are actively sought through daily discussion and regular, written questionnaires. There are effective arrangements to take their concerns seriously and a comprehensive complaints procedure is in place. Parents state that they find staff friendly, kind and welcoming and have 'warmth and compassion'. They value that they can ask questions at any time and staff make themselves available to them. Parents find the nursery a 'lovely, relaxed and stimulating environment' where staff provide 'so many lovely opportunities for their children to make friends and learn new things'. Parents are given good information about the nursery and are kept fully informed about their children's day. They are encouraged to be engaged in their children's learning in the nursery and at home. Partnerships with other professionals are well-established. This ensures that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are effectively supported to make the best progress that they can in their learning and development.

### The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	<b>Met</b>
The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	<b>Met</b>

## 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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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>	EY397045
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	952315
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 8
<b>Total number of places</b>	20
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	50
<b>Name of provider</b>	Stepping Stones Children's Nursery School Ltd
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	04/02/2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01508482756

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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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