

# Stepping Stones Preschool

Avonway Community Centre, 36 Shaftesbury Street, FORDINGBRIDGE, Hampshire, SP6 1JF

<b>Inspection date</b>	08/12/2014
Previous inspection date	17/12/2013

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	3
	Previous inspection:	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		3

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision requires improvement

- Staff show genuine interest in what the children are saying and doing. Consequently, most children are confident to share their ideas and their communication and language are developing well.
- Staff work hard to create a welcoming and well-maintained environment where children can independently make choices in their play and learning.
- Staff demonstrate secure knowledge and understanding of how to keep children safe and the procedures to follow in the event of a concern with children's welfare.

### It is not yet good because

- Although children are supervised, staff are not always deployed effectively to enable them to support and extend children's learning. Staff do not fully encourage parents to share information about their children's progress at home. Parents are not always clear on who their child's key person is to enable a consistent approach to children's learning.
- There are systems in place to monitor and evaluate the provision but the staff and management team are not always successful in identifying areas that require development.

## 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.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector completed a joint observation with the joint supervisor in the outdoor area, and discussed the findings.
- The inspector completed observations in the main playroom, smaller room and the outdoor area.
- The inspector spoke to staff and children at appropriate times and had a meeting with the joint supervisors to discuss leadership and management. The inspector also spoke to the nominated person on the telephone.
- The inspector spoke to parents to gain their views.
- The inspector viewed documentation including children's learning records, accident records and randomly sampled staff files.

## Inspector

Lorraine Sparey

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Stepping Stones Pre-school registered in 1997. It operates from dedicated rooms within the community centre in Fordingbridge, Hampshire. Children use an enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free nursery education for children aged three and four years. There are currently 17 children on roll. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who are learning to speak English as an additional language. The pre-school is open each weekday during school term times: Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9am to 3pm, and Tuesday and Thursday from 9am to 1pm.

There are four members of staff working with the children: one has a relevant qualification at level 5, two hold qualifications at level 4 and one holds qualified teacher status.

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

#### To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- ensure that staff are deployed effectively to enable them to support and extend children's learning

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

- review the systems to monitor and evaluate the provision to enable staff to reflect on their practice and be consistent in their teaching methods
- review the methods of working in partnership with parents to ensure that all parents are aware of their child's key person and how they can be involved in their child's learning.

## Inspection judgements

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

Children are confident to leave their parents, find activities and access play opportunities that interest them. They listen attentively as staff read a story and encourage them to find objects in the pictures and to share their ideas. Staff encourage children to make an imaginary snowman and explain new concepts well to them. For example, events happen in the story as dawn is breaking. Staff explain that dawn means morning time to enable

the children to understand and develop new language. Children enjoy participating in the welcome song and use sign language to say, 'Good morning'. Children are encouraged to choose what activity they would like to do. Several children choose to play with dough, developing their physical skills as they roll and use cutters to make different shapes. They talk about putting eyes and a happy face on their person shapes. Children use different shaped stamps to print trees and snowflakes, concentrating well as they put the ink onto the stamp before pressing it onto the paper. This helps children acquire the skills they need for the move to school.

Staff try to use all areas of the premises to give children different play and learning opportunities. For example, two children help a member of staff prepare the snack in a room, while others play outside and the remaining children are in the playroom. However, some of the children are younger and need help and support with their personal care needs, such as potty training. This results in a change in staff deployment. Consequently, staff are only able to supervise children's movements and not able to interact with them to support their learning and development. Staff complete observations and take photographs of children involved in activities. They use these to record children's progress and to plan the next steps in their learning. Staff complete planning but are not always able to offer sufficient challenge to all children because they are dealing with younger children's needs. Therefore, children are making steady but not good progress at this time. In general, children do not start at the pre-school until they are three years old but staff are aware of how to complete the progress report for two-year-old children if necessary.

Staff gather some information from parents about their child's individual needs and basic information about their starting points in their learning. This enables staff to provide activities linking to children's interests and their stage of development. However, not all parents are clear on how they can be involved in their child's ongoing learning.

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

Children have their own key person who is responsible for making them feel safe and comfortable, and ensuring they are progressing in their learning and development. Most parents are aware of who their child's key person is, although some are not sure. This means that at times, the key person is not working closely with parents to benefit the children. In general, children are confident and move around the environment safely. During circle time, children talk about the simple rules and of how to keep themselves safe. For example, they know they need to use their walking feet when indoors and run only when playing outside.

In general, children behave well given their age and stage of development. Children show consideration to each other and generally share. Staff remind children who forget the rules to 'be kind to our friends' and to share. They use a sand timer, to which most children respond well, knowing that when the sand has gone through it will be their turn. Children carefully watch as the sand moves through saying, 'It's my turn next and then it will be yours.' Staff use praise to support children in learning the boundaries and

expectations.

Staff create a welcoming environment where children can choose from a broad range of toys and resources. Staff provide a particularly well-resourced role-play area, giving children a good opportunity to act out familiar roles. Staff support children as they pretend to have a picnic. They encourage them to think about what they will need and how they can make their pretend sandwiches. They talk about healthy options, supporting children's awareness of healthy lifestyles. In general, children follow appropriate hygiene routines and there are good resources to support their independence in washing their hands at appropriate times. Snack time is well organised and children help themselves to fruit, vegetables and breadsticks. Staff display visual prompts to help children know they can have two scoops of cucumber and three scoops of apple. This promotes children's awareness of minimising cross-infection by using spoons rather than their fingers. In addition, it supports their mathematical development by encouraging recognition of how many scoops they can have of each fruit or vegetable. Children wash their cups and plates, which supports their independence as staff encourage them to keep the environment safe.

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

Management and staff demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements. They are clear about how to implement the pre-school's policies and procedures to create a safe and secure environment, and to respond to any concerns about children's welfare. There are clear recruitment procedures to enable management to employ appropriate staff. Management obtain references to confirm staff suitability before they are able to start. They undergo a comprehensive induction to make sure that they are familiar with their role and responsibilities, which includes all the policies and procedures. There are regular staff supervision sessions to help staff with their practice. They discuss children's progress during these meetings. However, management do not always look at the children's records to make sure that staff are up to date with recording children's progress. Consequently, some children's learning records are not as comprehensive as others, which makes it more difficult for staff taking over from those who have left. Staff complete regular risk assessments and have increased the security following the last inspection. As a result, nobody can enter the premises without staff letting them in. The majority of staff hold a relevant first-aid qualification, which means they can respond quickly in the event of an emergency.

Management and staff demonstrate suitable knowledge of the learning and development requirements. They continue to develop children's records and use various tracking systems to monitor children's progress. For example, they are moving to a computer program in the new year. Through their monitoring, management and staff recognised that there were differences with how boys and girls used the mathematical area. As a result, they have improved the area by using resources that stimulate children's interest. For example, mini dinosaurs and pirate coins have promoted boys using this area to support their mathematical development. There are some appropriate methods to monitor

and evaluate the provision. The supervisor and deputy visit outstanding providers to develop their own practice, for example, encouraging children to use the creative area, mix paints and explore differences. However, management have not identified effective ways to deploy staff to enable them to meet children's learning and development needs consistently. They operate within the required staff-to-child ratios but, due to the layout of the building and the needs of the younger children at this time, staff are missing opportunities to enhance and extend children's learning.

Staff build positive relationships with parents. They provide information about the Early Years Foundation Stage and of how they use the observations and assessments to support children's progress. However, not all parents are aware of how they can contribute to their children's learning. Parents spoken to as part of the inspection state that they feel the staff are 'brilliant at supporting their children', and their children 'enjoy coming to the setting'. Management and staff work well with other agencies and early years settings to support children's health, safety and general well-being. This means that children with additional needs are well supported and encouraged to reach their full potential.

## 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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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>	511673
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	962702
<b>Type of provision</b>	Full-time provision
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	2 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	26
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	17
<b>Name of provider</b>	Stepping Stones Pre School Committee
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	17/12/2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01425653517

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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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