

# Stepping Stones Preschool

35 Sydney Close, ST. LEONARDS-ON-SEA, East Sussex, TN38 9DD



## Inspection date

19 January 2015

Previous inspection date

15 September 2011

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Good	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Good	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Good	2
The setting <b>meets legal requirements for early years settings</b>			

## Summary of key findings for parents

### This provision is good

- All staff benefit from regular supervision meetings giving them the opportunity to discuss their professional development needs.
- Children engage well at activities with staff and are equally happy at playing on their own or with friends.
- Staff have a good understanding of how to safeguard children and what procedures to follow if they have any concerns about children in their care.
- Children show a great interest in books and listen intently to stories.
- Staff promote children's good health by providing very healthy and balanced snacks.

### It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff do not always fully integrate opportunities for children to use writing and mark making resources in different areas of their play inside and outside to encourage early writing skills.
- Staff do not always make best use of discussions with parents about children's learning and achievements at home in the assessment process.

## What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- encourage children to make more effective use of mark making and writing materials in different play and learning experiences indoors and outside
- engage all parents and carers further in contributing to the assessments of children's learning, such as routinely noting how they support children's next steps in their learning at home.

### Inspection activities

- The inspector completed a joint observation and held meetings with the nursery manager.
- The inspector looked at some children's records, including their learning assessments, and spoke to staff.
- The inspector spoke to some parents during the inspection and took note of their views.
- The inspector checked evidence of safeguarding practices, staff recruitment, ongoing professional development and self-evaluation processes.
- The inspector observed activities in the playroom and outside play area.

### Inspector

Sue Taylor

## Inspection findings

### **How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is good**

The staff provide a broad range of activities to promote all children's learning across the seven areas of learning. They effectively assess children's level of development and identify clear next steps in learning for each child. This helps to promote their progress well. Staff inform parents of children's learning needs and encourage them to support this with activities at home. Parents provide information back to staff about children's home achievements. However, it is not always clear how staff use this detail effectively to inform the assessment process. Parents comment positively on the support and advice they receive to help their children make progress. There are good processes to help ensure children are ready for the move to school. For example, children develop independence as they put on their own coats and boots or go to the toilet themselves. Staff develop activities based on children's interests. For example, children earlier had noted the tracks left by the ride-on toys in the frost. A painting activity was provided with toy cars to enable children to make marks on the large sheets of paper.

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

Each child has a named key-person who builds a strong relationship with the child and parents. Staff teach children to take turns, listen to others and play cooperatively. They manage children's behaviour well and work sensitively with children to help them develop self-control. Children choose if they want to play outside or indoors and confidently make choices about their play. The welcoming and child-centred environment is safe and secure. There is a wide variety of good quality toys and resources to support children's learning. However, staff are not actively encouraging children to use mark making materials in different areas, such as outside or in the role play area.

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

The thorough recruitment system helps ensure staff suitability. A clear induction process for new staff ensures they are aware of pre-school practices. The qualifications that staff have enable them to provide children with good quality learning experiences. The manager routinely observes practices in the pre-school and provides valuable feedback to staff. She evaluates children's progress to ensure staff are addressing any learning gaps. There are effective partnership working with parents, other professionals and early years settings. This helps ensure all children receive the support they need to reach their potential. Staff have a confident knowledge of possible child protection concerns and of the processes to follow. The manager and staff meet regularly to reflect on what is working well and agree areas of development. They have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and share clear written detail of policies and procedures with parents.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY427491
<b>Local authority</b>	East Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	823326
<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>	23
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	48
<b>Name of provider</b>	Stepping Stones Playgroup Committee
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	15 September 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01424430959

Stepping Stones Pre-school registered in 2011 and is run by a committee. It operates from a purpose built building in the residential area of Hollington, St Leonards-on-Sea. The children use the main open-plan room and enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and takes children from the age of two. There are currently 48 children on roll in the early years age range. It is open each weekday from 9am to 4pm, school term times only. There are six members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school receives funding for free early education for children aged two, three and four years old. The pre-school supports children who learn English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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