

# Stepping Stones

St Martins School, Ranmore Road, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 1HW



## Inspection date

6 March 2015

Previous inspection date

2 July 2009

<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

- The manager and staff have a good understanding of how to meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements.
- All staff are checked as to their suitability to work with children and give children's welfare a high priority.
- The staff team works very effectively together to provide a warm and friendly place for children to play.
- Children build strong attachments with their key person and other staff, which promotes their emotional well-being.
- Staff have a good understanding of how to meet the learning and development requirements. They have a high regard for children's spontaneous play ideas and play alongside children to extend their ideas.
- Staff make very effective use of their planning and observation methods to meet children's immediate learning needs. As a result, children make good progress in their learning and development.

### It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff do not consistently involve children in the design and planning stages of craft activities. This reduces children's opportunities in expressive arts and design.

## What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the provision for expressive arts and design by involving children in deciding which materials they might use and how they might achieve their design.

### Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children at play indoors and outside.
- The inspector examined documentation and children's records.
- The inspector and manager carried out a joint observation.
- The inspector spoke to parents to gather their views.

### Inspector

Susan McCourt

## Inspection findings

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

Staff get to know children really well by working with parents to share information when children first start. Staff use this to plan interesting activities for children that cover the areas of learning in a balanced and varied way. Children have opportunities to shape activities when they are particularly interested in something. For example, children found a spider and lots of spiders' webs outdoors, and made pictures of webs when they went back to the playroom. Staff are at children's level as they play and enrich activities by using a wide vocabulary and teaching children different skills. This means that children make good progress in their learning as they play. Staff make frequent observations of children's achievements and use an online system to identify children's next steps in learning. Parents have private access to their child's records, which means they can stay up to date with their progress. Parents leave comments on the same site, which promotes a strong partnership between staff and parents.

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

Children benefit from good opportunities to learn about health and well-being. They play outside in the fresh air frequently, and enjoy exploring the natural environment as well as taking part in vigorous activities. Staff provide healthy snacks and involve children in making sandwiches and chopping fruit. Children learn how to handle appropriate knives safely and talk about the different fruits they prepare. This promotes children's physical well-being. Staff encourage children to be independent in their self-care so they quickly learn how to take care of their belongings and manage their coats and shoes, for example. Children enjoy taking responsibility and being helpful by tidying their toys and helping each other. They cooperate really well in play, share resources and wait sensibly for their turn. These strong social skills prepare them for the next stage in their learning when they move on to school.

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

The manager and staff team work closely together in all aspects of the work. As a result, the manager knows staff's skills very well. Staff have different training and professional experience and share skills with each other to promote a good standard of consistency in how they teach. They discuss and evaluate the provision daily as well as in regular team meetings and make adaptations and enhancements that make a difference for children. For example, they note what children have learned each day so that they can extend and enrich children's learning the next day. Parents comment on how they see children progress in their independence and language skills. Parents value the way that staff work in consistent partnership with other day-care settings children attend.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY305214
<b>Local authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	827895
<b>Type of provision</b>	Sessional provision
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	2 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	18
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	27
<b>Name of provider</b>	Pipkins Nurseries Limited
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	2 July 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	0870 446 0585

Stepping Stones Nursery is run by Pipkins Nurseries Limited and registered in 2005. It operates from a mobile classroom within the grounds of St Martin's School in Dorking, Surrey. The nursery is open each weekday from 9am to 12.15pm for 38 weeks of the year. There are four members of staff, three of whom have a childcare qualification at level three. They receive funding for free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

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