

Stepping Stones Pre-School

Upper Church Rooms, Oxford Road, Windsor, Berkshire, SL4 5DU



Inspection date

Previous inspection date

20 March 2015

7 June 2011

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

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is outstanding

- Staff have an exemplary understanding of how to meet the learning and development requirements. They plan a stimulating and interesting curriculum, which covers every area of learning and gives children exceptional choice and independence.
- Children have lots of opportunities to engage in child-initiated play and staff expertly facilitate their ideas, bringing out the learning in everything they do. As a result, children are highly absorbed in their activities and make excellent progress.
- Staff help children to settle into the pre-school extremely well. Parents express that they feel very confident and secure about sending their children to the pre-school.
- Staff have an excellent understanding of how to work with other professionals to support children if any additional needs are identified. This means that children enjoy highly consistent care.
- The manager and staff have built excellent partnerships in the community. They work closely with the local schools to support children and their parents to move on to school.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance further the learning opportunities in the outdoor environment by providing more print for children to see, to encourage their literacy.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children's play and staff interactions.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector sampled a range of documents including observation, assessment and planning records, policies and procedures, children's details and other relevant information.
- The inspector spoke to parents on the day to gather their views on the pre-school.

Inspector

Tanisha Hodge

Inspection findings

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

Staff are excellent teachers. They continually engage children in conversation, expanding their vocabulary as they follow interesting themes in activities. For example, staff plan a wide variety of activities around the topic of Spring. Children have a range of opportunities to use language to consider the colours of spring, such as butterflies and daffodils. They also describe the growing process of observing real chicks and eggs in an incubator in the pre-school. Staff demonstrate an expert knowledge of how children learn, giving them endless opportunities to explore and manipulate toys, equipment and materials. As a result, children have high levels of control and independence, which keeps them curious and excited about their learning. Staff pay close attention to ensuring that children have the skills they need to make their transfer to school as smooth possible. As children's independence and skills have been closely fostered throughout their time in pre-school, children are very much ready for the next stage in their learning.

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

Children are cared for in a well-maintained and attractively-presented environment. Children are cuddled and comforted if upset and spend plenty of time with their key person, engaging in activities. Children are kind to each other and have a good concept of sharing, for example, as staff encourage them to wait their turn. Staff take into account children's dietary needs when they offer healthy snacks. Children are encouraged to pour out their own water and milk. Older children access the bathroom independently. All children greatly enjoy physical activity in a garden that provides a wealth of play opportunities and experiences. Although, overall, children receive good support to develop their literacy, opportunities to see printed letters and words are better indoors than they are outdoors.

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

The manager and staff have an excellent overview of the pre-school. All required policies and procedures are extremely well written and embedded in practice. Staff have a superb understanding of safeguarding and child protection issues, which help them to keep children safe and secure. The manager monitors staff closely and helps them develop their practice and skills through targeted training and support. As a result, planning is robust, linked to children's age and stage of development, and used effectively to identify their next steps in learning. Self-evaluation is very effective and is ongoing as staff continually reflect on their practice. Staff have excellent, effective relationships with parents. Regular parents' meetings mean they are well-informed about their child's development and the flow of information means they always know what is planned in pre-school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	108448
Local authority	Windsor & Maidenhead
Inspection number	839546
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	33
Name of provider	Stepping Stones Pre-School (Windsor) Committee
Date of previous inspection	7 June 2011
Telephone number	01753 865503

Stepping Stones Pre-school registered in 1985. It is located in Windsor, Berkshire. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early education to children aged two, three and four. Opening times are from 9am to 3.30pm Monday to Thursday and from 9am to 12.30pm on Friday. There are four members of staff, all of whom hold early years qualifications at level 3.

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