

Stepping Stones Nursery

Lansdowne CP School, Gladstone Drive, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3BH



Inspection date

24 April 2015

Previous inspection date

26 May 2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	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 meets legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Staff know the children very well. They use this knowledge to plan activities that are interesting, challenging and appropriate to children's age and stage of development. Consequently, children continue to make good progress in their learning.
- Children are active learners and choose where they want to play, which staff effectively support. This encourages children's developing independence and self-confidence.
- Staff are very good role models. They give children clear, positive instructions so that children know what is expected. As a result, children's behaviour is consistently good.
- Children benefit from effective partnerships with parents and other professionals involved in their care and development. As a result, all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, quickly receive the additional support they require.
- Partnership working with the local school is good. Children gain the key skills they need to move confidently on to school.
- The manager is passionate about her role and is committed to the continual improvement of the setting. Therefore, she is striving to provide the best care and education for children.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Children do not regularly have access to a wide range of technology resources. Therefore, they do not develop information and communications technology skills as fully as possible, to support their future learning.
- Staff do not always make the most of opportunities, such as mealtimes, to support children's understanding of healthy eating.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- increase opportunities for children to develop technology skills, by providing a wider range of technology resources
- increase opportunities for children to learn about healthy lifestyles; for example, through discussions at mealtimes.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities indoors, outdoors and in the school hall.
- The inspector spoke to members of staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation, including children's records, planning, policies, and evidence of suitability of the staff working with children.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to during the inspection.

Inspector

Nicola Jones

Inspection findings

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

Staff plan and provide a wide range of activities and experiences that promotes children's development across all seven areas of learning. Children have free access to interesting opportunities in both the indoor and outdoor areas. Staff interact with children skilfully, so their learning is continuously extended. For example, as children create models using magnets, staff ask them questions, to distinguish size and shape. Key persons complete regular observations and assessments, and track children's learning. This enables leaders to closely monitor the progress children make, to ensure gaps in learning are quickly identified and closed. Staff support children's communication, language and literacy, well. Children enjoy making their own marks and they begin to use writing for a purpose, using a range of materials. They enjoy looking at books with staff, which helps to promote children's early reading skills. Staff use daily routines and activities effectively in order to promote children's mathematical skills. For example, children count utensils at snack time, and explore number, shape and size as they construct models. Children's physical skills are developing well through exercise indoors and outdoors. As a result, children develop their large muscle skills as they climb, balance, and crawl over and under.

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

Staff work closely with parents to ensure children's emotional needs are consistently met. As a result, children settle quickly into the warm and welcoming nursery environment and form secure attachments with their key person and staff. They understand the routine of the day through visual timetables and clear communication from staff. Children demonstrate good self-care skills and developing independence. For example, they attend to their personal needs by putting on their coats and shoes, pouring their own drinks, and washing their hands. Staff organise snack time so that children can serve themselves and make their own choices. Consequently, children gain good skills in readiness for starting school.

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

The nursery's processes for safeguarding children are strong because all staff receive ongoing training and understand how to raise any concerns regarding the welfare of a child. Staff carry out daily risk assessments to ensure that the environment is safe and secure for the children. Safer recruitment procedures ensure that staff are suitable to care for children. The manager carries out regular supervision meetings to review and reflect on staff performance. Staff receive ongoing training so that outcomes for children are consistently good. Good self-evaluation takes account of the views of staff, children and parents, which helps to ensure continuous improvement.

Setting details

Unique reference number	127641
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	840688
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 8
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	64
Name of provider	Stepping Stones Nursery, After School and Holiday Club Committee
Date of previous inspection	26 May 2011
Telephone number	01795 410499

Stepping Stones Nursery registered in 1995. The nursery is managed by a committee and operates from a mobile unit in the grounds of Lansdowne Primary School, in Sittingbourne, Kent. The nursery is open each weekday, term time only, from 8.45am to 3.15pm. The setting employs 12 members of staff. The manager and deputy manager hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 4, and nine staff hold qualifications at levels 2 and 3.

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.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2015

