

Stepping Stones

Elberton Village Hall, Elberton Road, Elberton, Olveston, BRISTOL, BS35 4AB



Inspection date

18 June 2015

Previous inspection date

9 January 2012

| 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 meet all children's individual needs through effective partnership working arrangements with parents. Parents are extremely complimentary about the tailored care their children receive and the good progress they make.
- Teaching is good because well-qualified staff understand how to promote children's learning through good-quality observation, assessment and planning methods. As a result, all children make good progress from their starting points, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Highly effective partnerships with schools enable staff to prepare children well for starting school. Good sharing of information and practice offers children continuity, which makes the move seamless and supports their emotional well-being.
- Leadership is strong. Staff have good supervision and regularly reflect on their own and their colleagues' practice to identify areas of expertise and training needs. Teaching continues to improve as a result of good-quality training opportunities. For example, staff teach effective early writing skills which extends children's literacy learning in preparation for school.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- At times, the organisation of daily routines means there is less opportunity for some children to learn in small groups. As a result, staff do not always challenge the more able or offer as much targeted assistance to individuals or the youngest children during these times.
- On occasion, staff do not always help to engage children who are easily distracted or who find it difficult to sit and wait to do something and follow instructions.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop the routine to incorporate more small group learning to extend and challenge more able children and target support for the youngest children aged two to three years
- raise the quality of teaching to a consistently high standard by improving the management of staff expectations of children to keep all children positively engaged.

Inspection activities

- The inspector held discussions with the manager at appropriate times during the inspection and in a scheduled meeting.
- The inspector observed children's activities and staff teaching inside and outside.
- The inspector looked at documentation including a sample of children's records, planning and assessment records, and checked the suitability of staff to work with children.
- The inspector took account of the views of children, staff and parents spoken to on the day of the inspection, and of the provider's self-evaluation.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.

Inspector

Dominique Bird

Inspection findings

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

Staff monitor children's next steps in learning and track their progress well. There is a good balance of both planned activities and free play during the day. Staff interact well with children as they play to encourage and support them to achieve their next stages in learning. Parents receive regular information about their children's progress and are invited to share their thoughts on their children's achievements at home with the staff. Children take part in a wide range of interesting and stimulating play activities inside and outside. Staff are particularly skilled in promoting mathematical development. For example, they encourage children to count the number of people at the table. When outside, staff help them to recognise and comment on the size, shape and colour of things as children explore with pebbles and shells.

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

Children settle quickly into the welcoming pre-school. They form secure, positive relationships with the small team of adults who care for them, promoting their emotional well-being. Consequently, children demonstrate that they are happy, confident and feel secure. Children can decide whether to play inside or outside in the fresh air. Using direct access to a garden, children enjoy a good range of activities such as sand, water and ball games. Staff promote independence very well, and children pour their own drinks and cut their fruit. Most children confidently talk about and follow instructions for keeping themselves safe and healthy. For example, staff encourage them to climb trees and rope ladders skilfully, developing their strength and balance safely. Overall, children's behaviour is good. Staff are good role models and give lots of praise and encouragement to children to build their confidence, which promotes their self-esteem.

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

The enthusiastic and highly qualified staff team has a good understanding of how to keep children safe. Leaders have a good understanding of the requirements and follow robust procedures relating to all aspects of safeguarding, including child protection and safety in the pre-school. Consequently, children are protected. Effective self-evaluation by staff, parents and leaders demonstrates a strong drive for continuous improvement. The manager uses precise action plans to target any areas to further develop. As a result, the pre-school continues to improve, which raises outcomes for children. The manager has a good overview of children's learning and development because she monitors their progress and targets additional help if necessary. Staff work hard to establish and maintain successful partnerships with other professionals to fully support the children.

Setting details

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|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Unique reference number | EY431020 |
| Local authority | South Gloucestershire |
| Inspection number | 823655 |
| Type of provision | Full-time provision |
| Registration category | Childcare - Non-Domestic |
| Age range of children | 2 - 5 |
| Total number of places | 22 |
| Number of children on roll | 22 |
| Name of provider | Gill Powell |
| Date of previous inspection | 9 January 2012 |
| Telephone number | 01454 632828 |

Stepping Stones has been operating since 1997 and re-registered in 2011. The pre-school operates from a village hall in Elberton, South Gloucestershire. It is open on Monday and Friday from 9.15am to 12.15pm, and on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9.15am to 3.15pm, term time only. The pre-school runs a 'Woodland Wednesdays' session in the local woods each week. It employs five members of staff. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. One member of staff holds a relevant level 4 qualification and the manager has a degree in early years and has achieved Early Years Professional Status. The setting is in receipt of government funding for free early education provision for two-, three- and four-year-olds.

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