

Stepping Stones Nursery School

16 Bruce Road, SOUTHSEA, Hampshire, PO4 9RL



Inspection date

17 September 2015

Previous inspection date

26 May 2015

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Children make good progress because staff understand how to motivate and excite them about their learning.
- Following comprehensive training, staff consistently support all children's developing communication skills very well. They skilfully model sentences for babies who are just learning to talk. Staff working with older children introduce new vocabulary to those who are learning to speak English as an additional language.
- The quality of teaching is strong. All staff play collaboratively alongside children, supporting and extending their games. This helps children learn how to share, to take turns and to challenge themselves in a safe and supportive environment.
- Children show high levels of independence because staff expect them to manage simple tasks for themselves. This prepares them very well for their future lives.
- The leadership team is passionate about improving their nursery and have been extremely rigorous in implementing actions from their last inspection. Consequently, the nursery experience for children has greatly improved.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- The play areas used by the very youngest children do not always encourage them to explore and investigate.
- Staff do not use highly successful systems to consistently engage parents in their children's learning.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- improve the learning environment for the youngest children to consistently encourage them to explore and investigate
- extend current systems for working in partnership with parents to promote continuity in children's learning between the setting and home.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities and spoke to staff in all areas of the nursery.
- The inspector met with the manager throughout the inspection to discuss her role and responsibilities.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of practice with the manager.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents, including nursery policies, children's learning journals and staff records.
- The inspector spoke to staff about how they protect children and keep them safe.

Inspector

Rebecca Swindells

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

Safeguarding is effective. The nursery manager fully understands and shows commitment to her role and responsibilities. For example, she uses robust recruitment procedures to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children, which promotes children's welfare. She leads her team confidently and works alongside them acting as their mentor as they develop their skills. This creates a strong team of staff working together to promote children's learning. Managers observe staff regularly and use what they see to plan training for staff development. Therefore, staff feel confident in what they are doing and outcomes for children improve. The management team monitors children's progress very carefully using effective systems for tracking and identifying individual needs. As a result, they promptly identify and access additional support for children as required.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff tailor planning to children's individual needs to help them make good progress. Staff encourage children to make choices about their play and children show great enthusiasm for their learning. Children develop good physical skills, for example as they run, jump and ride bikes outside. Staff celebrate children's emerging literacy skills, for example by helping them to annotate displays throughout the nursery. This boosts children's self-esteem and encourages them to develop early writing skills further. Children enjoy 'cooking' vegetables they have grown in the garden. Staff use such opportunities well, counting out carrots and teaching children about preparing food for eating. This teaches children about using numbers in the real world and helps them learn how to keep healthy.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children enjoy close relationships with the staff that look after them. They smile and laugh as they play. Staff help children to be confident and resilient as they encounter challenges during games. For example, they supported children as they worked out how to get out of a tight space when playing inside a large cardboard box. All staff fully understand their responsibility for keeping children safe and work hard to ensure that children become sociable and valuable members of their community. Staff have high expectations of behaviour and teach children to share, take turns and value opinions. This helps children to play well together and enjoy diverse friendship groups. Staff prepare children for the next stage of their learning by helping them to be confident and excited about moving on. Staff liaise with teachers to help smooth children's move to school.

Outcomes for children are good

Outcomes for children are good. All children make good progress from their starting points. Older children are well prepared for school. All children develop independence in their self-help skills, and are developing good communication and social skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY346747
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	1016680
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	64
Name of provider	Rose Lodge Nurseries Ltd
Date of previous inspection	26 May 2015
Telephone number	02392 421718

Stepping Stones Nursery School registered in 2007. It operates from a house in Southsea, Hampshire. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.45am until 6pm all year except for all public holidays. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years old. The nursery employs 13 members of staff all of whom have appropriate early years qualifications at levels 2, 3 and 4. The nursery also employs a cook.

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