

Stepping Stones Pre-School

Knowle Primary School, Ringmore Way, Plymouth, Devon, PL5 3QG

Inspection date

29 September 2015

Previous inspection date

11 October 2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Outstanding	1
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Outstanding	1
Outcomes for children		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is outstanding

- The manager monitors children's development extremely efficiently to identify any gaps in children's learning. They act promptly to organise extra support, working in highly effective partnership with outside agencies. As a result, children receive outstanding support and make the best possible progress from their starting points.
- Partnerships with local schools are extremely effective. Staff work very hard to ensure that children become highly confident and self-assured about starting school.
- All staff interact extremely positively with children. Consequently, children are intensely involved in all activities and become highly motivated to learn.
- Staff observe and assess children's development extremely well. They very accurately plan for children's individual needs, enabling them to make excellent progress.
- The manager and staff work exceptionally closely with children and their families. Children very quickly become confident to explore and thoroughly enjoy learning.
- The learning environment is inspirational. Staff provide an extremely exciting and rich range of resources and learning experiences which develop children's imaginations and curiosity. For example, children arrange a tea party for the three bears, using real pasta, and re-tell the story.
- Staff expertly encourage children's independence. They give them responsibility for preparing snack, setting the table and clearing away, which gives children a very strong sense of community.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- extend opportunities for children to use equipment to develop their skills in using technology.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching and the impact this had on children's learning both inside and outside.
- The inspector carried out several joint observations with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to members of staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection and held a meeting with the manager.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day of inspection.
- The inspector looked at children's records, planning documentation, evidence of the suitability of staff and a range of other documentation, including policies and procedures.

Inspector

Margaret Baird

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is outstanding

The manager is extremely experienced and passionate about supporting children and families. She has an excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Outstanding working relationships with other agencies, such as the local children's centre, ensure families receive the help they need promptly. Safeguarding is effective. Thorough recruitment procedures ensure staff suitability. Staff have an excellent awareness of how to keep children safe from harm and ensure their welfare. The highly committed staff team works very effectively together and receives excellent support from the manager to improve the quality of their practice. The impact of this is shown in the rapid progress children make in their communication and language skills, following staff training. The manager and staff are extremely reflective and use self-evaluation very effectively to develop their practice even further.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

Staff promote children's development expertly across all areas of learning. For example, as children draw seashells, staff skilfully encourage them to count, compare sizes and notice shapes, developing mathematical concepts and language. Staff very successfully engage children in learning letter sounds and children begin to recognise their names. Children enjoy many opportunities to practise their early writing skills and develop excellent literacy skills. They use notebooks outside in the construction area and make pictures with chalks and paint. Overall, children use mechanical toys, but there are fewer opportunities for them to use equipment to develop their skills in using technology.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

Staff follow very effective and sensitive settling-in procedures, and have an excellent understanding of individual children's needs and interests. This helps children to feel safe and secure in the pre-school. Staff are extremely good role models, helping children to treat each other with respect, meaning they share and cooperate well during play. There is a very strong emphasis on healthy lifestyles, and children understand the importance of eating healthy food. Children develop excellent social skills at snack time when they sit together to talk about their day. Children enjoy regular outdoor play, where they can be physically active and find out about the natural world. They are engrossed in using real tools to construct objects from wood, concentrating well for long periods. Staff ensure that children have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe because they teach them how to play safely.

Outcomes for children are outstanding

All children make excellent progress in relation to their starting points and develop a thirst for learning. They are extremely well prepared for moving on to school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY313863
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	827222
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	44
Name of provider	Amanda Hogden
Date of previous inspection	11 October 2010
Telephone number	07818081192

Stepping Stones Pre-School registered in 2005. It is open each weekday from 8.45am to 11.45am and from 12.15pm to 3.15pm during term time only. There are six members of staff, of whom one has a level 4 qualification in childcare, and five have qualifications at level 3. The pre-school receives funding for children aged two, three and four years.

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