

Stepping Stones Pre School



Stepping Stones Nursery, High Street, Maresfield, Uckfield, East Sussex, TN22 2EG

Inspection date

21 October 2015

Previous inspection date

29 September 2011

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 leadership and management of the provision is outstanding. The committee of parents works in a highly effective partnership with the manager and staff team, to achieve and sustain an extremely high standard of care and education for children.
- The quality of teaching is exceptional. Staff have an excellent understanding of how children learn. They create highly challenging and interesting activities to engage children fully in very enjoyable play and learning.
- Children's personal development, behaviour and welfare are excellent. Their emotional development is extremely strong. Children build very strong attachments to their key person. All staff know and meet children's individual needs exceptionally well.
- Outcomes for children are outstanding. Children make excellent progress in their learning and development.
- The committee and manager make skilful use of additional funding to target well-chosen resources to promote individual children's next steps in learning and to help these children make rapid progress.
- Parents are extremely positive about the quality of the pre-school provision. The manager and staff use a wide variety of methods to communicate with parents to share information about their children's care and learning.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- make full use of information parents share about their children's activities at home to contribute further to the ongoing assessment of children's learning.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children at play indoors and in the outside areas.
- The inspector examined a range of documentation, including children's records and improvement plans.
- The inspector and manager carried out a joint observation.
- The inspector spoke to parents to gather their views.

Inspector

Susan McCourt

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is outstanding

Safeguarding is effective. Staff have a robust understanding of what action to take should they have any concerns about the welfare of a child. The manager and committee use a wide range of highly effective methods to drive improvement. The manager analyses data on children's progress rigorously. She makes full use of all available information to set precisely targeted action plans and sustain an extremely high standard of provision. The manager works alongside staff as a role model and coach, providing clear guidance on how to enhance their excellent teaching skills. Staff benefit from a full range of training and opportunities to build their qualifications. The manager evaluates the impact of training very effectively to identify notable improvements in children's progress, such as in improving further their communication skills.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

Staff have outstanding teaching skills. They judge when to engage with children's play and know when to leave children to find solutions to their own challenges, to promote their independence and thinking skills. Staff give children additional information, teach them new skills and offer fresh ideas to extend their play. For example, during the inspection, staff helped children use an increasing range of vocabulary to describe accurately the tools that they were investigating. Staff work very closely with parents to share information about children's attainments and progress, so parents always have the most up-to-date knowledge. The manager recognises that staff could build even further on the useful information parents share about their children to enhance their ongoing assessment of children's achievements.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

Staff have created an excellent learning environment; for example, making extremely good use of their natural environment. Children are highly independent and are very skilled at creating their own challenges in play, such as blending powder paint on rainy surfaces. Children thrive in having a wealth of opportunities to explore and investigate in play, and are very confident in their skills. Staff are extremely attentive to children's care needs and promote their independence, for instance in managing their coats and shoes, or choosing when to eat. Children have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe and use a wide variety of small tools with increasing skill. The high level of safety and care promotes children's physical care and development extremely well. Children behave exceptionally well. They have mature skills in playing with friends and great skills in persistence when trying to achieve a goal.

Outcomes for children are outstanding

Children achieve a high standard of achievement in all areas of learning and make rapid progress in gaining new skills. Different groups of children, such as boys and girls, achieve equally well. All children are highly engaged in play, extremely motivated to learn and very well prepared for their move to school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY421842
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	822703
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	41
Name of provider	Stepping Stones Pre School (Fairwarp and Maresfield) Committee
Date of previous inspection	29 September 2011
Telephone number	01825765241

Stepping Stones Pre School registered in 2011 in Maresfield Bonners School in Maresfield, East Sussex. It is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 3pm during term time only. The pre-school provides funded early education for children aged two, three and four years old. The pre-school employs eight members of staff, plus two bank staff. Eight staff hold appropriate early years qualifications, including the manager who has achieved Early Years Professional Status.

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