

# Stepping Stones Nursery

Cinque Ports Avenue, Hythe, Kent, CT21 6HS



<b>Inspection date</b>	23 November 2015
Previous inspection date	22 October 2010

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
	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 quality of teaching is superb. Staff know all children exceptionally well and provide an outstanding range of enjoyable activities that stimulate children's imagination, both inside and outdoors.
- All staff are very confident with safeguarding procedures. They have an excellent understanding of the steps to follow should they have any concerns about a child's welfare.
- Highly effective assessment and monitoring procedures mean that staff accurately identify where children are in their learning and development. They plan extremely successfully to introduce interesting activities for children, to ensure they progress exceedingly well in their next steps in learning.
- A strong and dedicated manager leads the nursery. The well-established staff team benefits from regular training and professional development opportunities. This enables all staff to extend their already outstanding knowledge and skills.
- Highly effective and continually developing partnerships between staff and other early years professionals help staff meet children's individual needs exceptionally well. All children make very good progress from their initial starting points.
- Incredibly strong attachments between the children and staff ensure that children are extremely content and thoroughly enjoy their time at nursery.

## What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- strengthen the range of opportunities for children to investigate and explore the wider world around them.

### Inspection activities

- The inspector sampled a range of documentation, which included children's developmental folders, policies and procedures, and action plans.
- The inspector spoke with staff, children and parents throughout the inspection.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The manager gave the inspector a tour of the nursery.
- The inspector observed the children playing independently and taking part in adult-planned activities.

### Inspector

Sara Garrity

## Inspection findings

### **Effectiveness of the leadership and management is outstanding**

Safeguarding is effective. Dynamic risk assessments and comprehensive documentation successfully assist the safe and efficient management of the nursery. Staff are extremely conscientious and deploy themselves very well throughout the day to provide excellent supervision. They have tremendously effective partnerships with parents. The manager undertakes a regular self-evaluation process, which includes the views of staff, parents and children. This helps her know that she and her team consistently meet the changing needs of families. Management and staff meticulously monitor the progress of individual children and use the information very well to narrow any gaps in children's achievements and learning. Staff establish extremely effective links with local schools, which enables them to support fully children's move on to school.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding**

Staff interact exceptionally well with the children. They provide an ideal balance of activities that children chose and those that staff plan. This helps introduce children to new skills; for example, as they practise using a variety of tools with the modelling dough. Staff are highly skilled at knowing when to participate to enrich children's play and when to stand back and let them lead their own activities. Staff encourage children to develop excellent communication skills and give them confidence. For instance, they take time to listen to children and appreciate their imaginative descriptions of their experiences at home. From this, children learn that what they say is valued. Staff chatter away with the children, providing them with opportunities to hear new words and expand their vocabulary. Occasionally during some activities, older children do not have as many opportunities to extend further their interest in the world around them.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding**

Staff are excellent role models. For example, they establish clear rules and boundaries for behaviour and encourage children to play cooperatively, share and take turns. They skilfully use praise and encouragement to motivate children to learn and promote extremely positive behaviour. Staff provide the children with a wealth of opportunities to investigate and explore. For instance, children use real vegetables in their play to learn about the importance of a healthy diet. Staff engage children in activities that promote their physical well-being extremely well. For example, they go on local outings to parks and local attractions or exercise in the highly stimulating nursery playground.

### **Outcomes for children are outstanding**

All children, including disabled children and those with special educational needs, make remarkable progress in relation to their initial starting points. Children are confident and extremely well prepared for their next stage in learning and eventual move to school.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY333206
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	824615
<b>Type of provision</b>	Full-time provision
<b>Day care type</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	2 - 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	20
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	34
<b>Name of provider</b>	Claire Taylor
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	22 October 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01303 230951

Stepping Stones Nursery registered in 2006 and is situated in Hythe, Kent. The nursery is open each weekday from 8.45am to 3pm during term time only. It is accredited to receive government funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The nursery employs four members of staff and all hold early years level 3 qualifications.

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