

# Stepping Stones Pre-School



West Smethwick Methodist Church, St. Pauls Road, Smethwick, West Midlands, B66 1EX

<b>Inspection date</b>	26 January 2016
Previous inspection date	9 February 2011

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
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

- Teaching is consistently outstanding. Staff are highly responsive to children during activities. They skilfully provide children with opportunities to develop and use their home language, as well as English, during their play.
- The partnership with parents is outstanding. Staff use highly effective ways to involve parents in all aspects of their children's learning. For example, they provide workshops and training opportunities, and actively encourage parents to share details of their children's achievements at home.
- Well-qualified staff make regular, accurate assessments of what children know and can do, and activities are carefully planned to reflect this. These focus precisely on children's interests and next steps in learning, in order to rapidly build their skills and knowledge.
- The inspiring management team reflects constantly on practice and is very successful at driving improvements forward. They set extremely high standards and children receive exemplary care and outstanding learning opportunities. Rigorous, ongoing training ensures that staff's knowledge is kept up to date and individual professional development benefits children.

## What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the already excellent strategies to engage local schools, in order to further support children with the eventual move on to school.

### Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the pre-school manager.
- The inspector held meetings with the pre-school manager and other significant people within the group. She looked at relevant documentation, such as the pre-school's self-evaluation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.
- The inspector spoke to a small selection of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

### Inspector

Julie Preston

## Inspection findings

### Effectiveness of the leadership and management is outstanding

The management and staff teams have an excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements. A high priority is placed on staff training and exceptional support is provided for staff's professional development. Staff have regular meetings with the management team to identify aspects of their practice and the provision to develop further. One aspect identified is that they would like to extend the already excellent links with all the schools that the children move on to, facilitating an even more smooth transition between pre-school and school. This significantly contributes to the outstanding quality of teaching, learning and the continuous improvements made. The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Senior staff have an exemplary understanding of how to safeguard children and they manage any concerns they may have about their welfare and protection exceptionally well. Procedures for staff recruitment, induction and performance management are diligently recorded and exemplary. The management and staff teams place children at the centre of their practice and are extremely proactive in ensuring that their needs are given the utmost priority.

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

Capable, well-qualified staff plan and provide children with wonderful, rich and purposeful learning experiences, both indoors and outdoors. Staff know the children extremely well and are able to tailor learning experiences so they are fully engaged and motivated in their play. Staff continually observe and assess children's abilities and use this information to enhance all aspects of their learning. Children who speak English as an additional language are exceptionally well supported. Staff learn key words in the child's home language and use these to expertly help children to communicate and to develop their use of English. Staff consistently extend children's language and skilfully ask questions that encourage them to think and work things out. For example, while sharing snack time, staff challenge children to identify and describe different types of healthy and unhealthy food.

### Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

Children settle extremely well within the pre-school. They are happy and confident, and have developed secure attachments with their key person and the staff team. Staff encourage children to adopt a healthy lifestyle and teach them how to keep themselves safe. For example, children have training sessions that teach them how to contact the emergency services and enhance their awareness of other safety issues. Children are well behaved and quickly become independent in their self-care, communicate with confidence and have very good social skills. Staff capitalise on the diversity of children's backgrounds and home languages to expand every child's understanding of the richness of different communities.

### Outcomes for children are outstanding

All children, including those who speak English as an additional language and those who receive funding, make rapid progress from their starting points. Children are extremely well prepared for the next stage in their learning and for their eventual move on to school.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	255211
<b>Local authority</b>	Sandwell
<b>Inspection number</b>	864558
<b>Type of provision</b>	Full-time provision
<b>Day care type</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Age range of children</b>	2 - 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	30
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	66
<b>Name of provider</b>	West Smethwick Enterprise Committee
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	9 February 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 565 3209

Stepping Stones Pre-school was registered in 1999. The pre-school employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications; three at level 6, five at level 3 and one at level 2. This includes the manager who also holds Early Years Professional status. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 8.30am until 3.00pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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