

Stepping Stones nursery

Chilton Fields, Chilton way, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 1SZ



Inspection date

Previous inspection date

3 February 2016

25 May 2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
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

- The committee, manager and staff team are committed to providing children with high-quality care and education. They have high expectations of what the setting can achieve. They monitor and evaluate the setting, identifying strengths and areas for further development.
- Staff know the children well and are very responsive to their individual needs. They accurately assess what children know and can do. This helps them to plan interesting activities which present challenge and help children to achieve their next steps in learning.
- Children are happy and enjoy their time at the setting. Staff provide a warm and welcoming environment that is well resourced. Children make friends, build relationships and learn how to share and take turns.
- Partnerships with parents and carers are good. Staff effectively engage with parents to support children's learning in the setting and at home.
- Staff support disabled children and those with special educational needs well. They work closely with other professionals to put consistent approaches in place. This supports children to make good progress in their learning given their starting points.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- The manager does not yet use assessment information to check on the progress of different groups of children.
- New systems for monitoring staff's performance are not yet fully embedded to ensure high-quality supervision.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- use assessment information more effectively to assess and monitor the learning and progress of the different groups of children
- strengthen the performance management and monitoring systems further to support staff to raise the quality of teaching to the highest level.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the nursery manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery manager. She looked at relevant documentation, such as, records of children's learning and development, a selection of policies and procedures and risk assessments.
- The inspector checked the evidence of the suitability and qualifications of staff working with children.
- The inspector spoke to a small number of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Karen Harris

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The well-qualified staff are deployed effectively and work particularly well together. They keep accurate records of children's achievements and progress. Parents' comments, received during the inspection, are very positive. The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff understand their role in protecting children from harm. They are aware of what to do should they have any concerns about children's welfare. The management committee follows rigorous recruitment procedures to ensure all staff are suitable for their role. Staff have a thorough set of policies and procedures to support their good practice. These are updated regularly and shared with parents. Staff conduct robust risk assessments of the premises. They check the indoor and outdoor environment daily. This helps to effectively promote children's safety and welfare.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

The staff have a good understanding of how children learn and develop. They provide children with a balanced range of activities to promote all areas of learning. Children become confident and independent learners as they select what they want to play with. They are strongly motivated by staff who are encouraging and supportive. Staff routinely monitor children's progress. They then effectively use this information to plan activities that are tailored to children's individual interests and needs. This contributes to the good progress children make. Staff support children's communication and language skills well. They join children in their play, interacting purposefully to support their development effectively. They use every opportunity to model language and extend children's vocabulary. Staff support children who speak English as an additional language. They work closely with parents to promote language development in the nursery and at home.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Staff work closely with parents to help children to settle. They build good relationships with children so that they feel confident and secure. Children's artwork is creatively displayed around the setting. This promotes a strong sense of belonging and helps to promote their self-esteem. Children's behaviour is generally good. Staff are good role models. They are calm and provide clear guidance for children about what is acceptable behaviour. Staff value and praise children's good behaviour and individual efforts. Children are familiar with the daily routines, which helps to support their emotional well-being. For example, staff tell children, 'The timer is on', which means they have five more minutes to play before tidying away. This helps children prepare for change in a calm manner. Children have daily opportunities for exercise and fresh air, which helps to promote their good health and supports their physical well-being. Children follow good hygiene routines. They experience sociable mealtimes where they sit alongside their peers and staff.

Outcomes for children are good

Children develop key skills in readiness for when they start school. They have plentiful opportunities to develop their early writing skills and learn to listen and respond to instructions. Children enjoy group story and singing sessions. All children make good progress in their learning given their starting points and capabilities.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY281815
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	872818
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	23
Number of children on roll	30
Name of provider	Stepping Stones - Stowmarket and Area Opportunity Group
Date of previous inspection	25 May 2011
Telephone number	01449 770645

Stepping Stones nursery was registered in 2003. The nursery employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The nursery opens during term time on Monday and Tuesday from 12.30pm until 3.30pm. On Wednesday and Thursday, sessions are from 9.30am until 3.30pm and Saturdays from 10am until 1.30pm. During school holidays, the nursery offers out-of-school provision on Wednesday and Thursday from 9.30am until 3.30pm. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The nursery supports disabled children and those with special educational needs, and children who speak English as an additional language.

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