

Stepping Stones Nursery Committee

Lansdowne CP School, Gladstone Drive, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3BH



Inspection date

25 May 2017

Previous inspection date

24 April 2015

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 manager works closely with the nursery committee to establish and reinforce her high expectations for the setting. She works well with other professionals to evaluate nursery practice and implements effective changes, which enhance the quality of care and early education offered.
- Children benefit from the strong and secure bonds they develop with staff. Children feel safe and they welcome the interactions and attention they get from the caring staff team. For example, one child described their favourite part of nursery as 'my teachers'.
- Staff know how children learn and have a good understanding of their individual abilities. They are skilled at recognising children's interests and consider when to offer tailored support to help them develop their imaginations and ideas. Children develop good skills to support their future learning.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- On occasions, staff do not support younger children to understand the importance of good hygiene practice. For example, they do not remind them to wash their hands before eating food.
- Staff do not organise all group activities to ensure they support the care and learning needs of all children participating.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- increase children's awareness of good hygiene practice to further support their good health and well-being
- review daily routines to ensure all children's care and learning is effectively supported during group activities.

Inspection activities

- The inspector viewed interactions between the staff and children in the inside space and outdoor environment.
- The inspector discussed, with the setting's special educational needs coordinator, how they support individual children's development.
- The inspector viewed a range of documentation, including children's development records and staff information.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager to focus on staff and child interactions.
- The inspector spoke to parents and children about aspects of the nursery and considered their views.

Inspector

Amanda Vidler

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

Safeguarding is effective. The committee and manager ensure staff are knowledgeable of their role to protect children's welfare. They know the children well and quickly recognise any areas of concern, such as a change in a child's behaviour. The manager uses thorough procedures and acts on concerns, which help to ensure she supports children and their families well. The manager continually monitors staff and encourages them to update their skills. For example, staff recently attended training that has helped them plan experiences to focus boys' attention and further support their learning.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff record accurate observations of children in their play. They work closely with parents to gather and exchange information regarding children's achievements. This helps staff to plan exciting and purposeful experiences to extend children's learning. Staff support children's early literacy skills in different ways. For example, they provide a language-rich environment for older children to see meaningful and familiar words around the nursery and positively help children recognise words during their play. Staff skilfully help younger children develop communication and language skills. For example, they consistently repeat and introduce simple words and sentences. Staff use simple strategies to support children's learning well. For example, they actively participated in children's interest in metal detectors and asked simple questions to extend their understanding of different materials.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children benefit from accessing a range of challenging activities in the well-considered and stimulating environment. For example, a playhouse creatively designed by staff as a science laboratory is continually used by children as part of their role play, where they create potions from a range of imaginative resources. Children behave well. Staff support them to develop a good understanding of how to manage their behaviour. For example, they help children to consider their actions and the effect they have on others. Staff support children to recognise, value and celebrate diversity. For example, children talked to each other about their different features when drawing their faces.

Outcomes for children are good

Children make good progress from their starting points. They practise a range of skills that prepares them well for their next stage in learning. For example, children use simple tools, such as tongs to serve their snacks and knives to butter toast. They wash up their own plates and cups. Children play cooperatively together and persevere with simple challenges. They are proud of their achievements and enjoy sharing these with staff.

Setting details

Unique reference number	127641
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	1089370
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	32
Number of children on roll	63
Name of registered person	Stepping Stones Nursery
Registered person unique reference number	RP517946
Date of previous inspection	24 April 2015
Telephone number	01795 410499

Stepping Stones Nursery registered in 1995. The nursery is located in Sittingbourne, Kent. The nursery is open each weekday during term time only, from 8.45am to 3.15pm. The setting employs 12 members of staff. The manager and deputy manager hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 4 and one staff member holds a relevant qualification at level 5. All other staff hold a qualification at level 2 or 3. The nursery is in receipt of funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

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