

Stepping Stones Pre-School



Bedford Road Lower School, Hillgrounds Road, Kempston, Bedford, MK42 8QH

Inspection date	4 October 2017
Previous inspection date	25 February 2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Inadequate	4
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is inadequate

- The provider has not informed Ofsted of changes to members of the committee or supplied the necessary information to be able to assess the suitability of these persons.
- The organisation of water play is not well considered. Some children become wet and cold and this affects their enjoyment of the activity.
- Children do not have enough opportunities to extend their imaginative and role-play activities in order to gain as much as possible from them.

It has the following strengths

- Staff know the children they care for well. They observe children from the beginning and form an accurate picture of their development. Staff know the next steps in children's learning and how to support their good progress.
- Staff act quickly on any concerns about children's development. They take immediate action to seek extra guidance and focus teaching on areas where children need extra support.
- Children settle well and they form close relationships with staff. Children enjoy cuddling with their key person when they want affection and comfort.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage the provider must:

- | | Due Date |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| ■ ensure that information is given to Ofsted in a timely manner so that all required suitability checks can be carried out for committee members. | 05/11/2017 |

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

- review the organisation of water play activities to increase children's enjoyment further
- provide children with more opportunities to be expressive and use their imaginations.

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 completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager. She looked at relevant documentation, such as evidence of the suitability of staff and committee members working in the pre-school.
- The inspector spoke to parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Hayley Marshall-Gowen

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is inadequate

Arrangements for safeguarding children are not effective. The provider has failed to notify Ofsted of changes to the committee so that all checks can be carried out to assess their suitability. The committee members are responsible for decision making and have access to sensitive information about children. As their suitability has not been assured, this poses a risk to children's safety and welfare. However, Disclosure and Barring Services checks have been obtained for all committee members and staff. The manager carries out regular supervision meetings with staff. Along with regular meetings, staff are able to identify ways to improve their knowledge. Staff are well qualified and undertake training to update their skills. Staff engage well with parents. They invite them to come into the pre-school to discuss their children's development and they provide parents with information to support children's learning at home. The manager reviews the quality of the pre-school and the quality of teaching remains good. Equally, children make good progress in their learning. However, the significant weakness in safeguarding leads to a sharp decline in the overall quality of the provision.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff place a high emphasis on supporting children's communication and language skills. Support for children who speak English as additional language is particularly strong. The staff speak in children's home language and then repeat their words in English to help children to understand. This encourages children to feel secure and settled at the pre-school. Staff are patient, caring and playful in their interactions. The quality of teaching is consistently good. Children use dough to make pretend food, talking about their ideas as they play. They complete puzzles, concentrating for long periods. Outdoors there is a wealth of opportunities for children to develop their physical skills. Children enjoy a range of ways to increase their literacy skills. In the garden they use paintbrushes and water to draw and write on the fence, developing good control when using tools and making marks.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are inadequate

The weakness in leadership and management has a significant impact on children's safety and well-being. Nevertheless, staff are caring and kind. They understand about children's diverse needs and identities and celebrate their individuality. This contributes towards the diverse and welcoming environment where children settle quickly. Children talk about things they like and do not like to eat. At lunchtime staff sit with them and they talk about foods and healthy eating. Children play outdoors and have regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise.

Outcomes for children are good

Children make consistently good progress in their learning and development. Undoubtedly, timely intervention by staff helps all children, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, to reach their full potential. They gain essential skills in readiness for moving on to school. Even the youngest children demonstrate impressive mathematical skills. They name shapes and colours and can complete simple subtraction. Children know

that if they have four pieces of playdough pizza and give two to another child, they will have two each. Children behave well. They know what staff expect and play well together, taking turns and sharing resources.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY356433
Local authority	Bedford Borough
Inspection number	1064995
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	35
Name of registered person	Stepping Stones Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP518986
Date of previous inspection	25 February 2013
Telephone number	01234 400114

Stepping Stones Pre-School registered in 2007. It is managed by a voluntary management committee. The pre-school employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 9am until midday and from midday to 3pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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