

Stepping Stones Nursery School

Oakhill Farm, Upper Oakhill, Froxfield, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 3JT



Inspection date

12 March 2018

Previous inspection date

3 October 2017

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
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

- Leaders and staff have made good improvements since the last inspection. They have used the support from other professionals and developed detailed improvement plans. Leaders and staff have successfully used their evaluations to plan quality learning experiences to enable children to make good progress in their learning.
- Staff use effective systems to observe, plan and assess children's progress to build on their knowledge. Leaders monitor these systems successfully to enable consistent practices throughout the setting.
- Partnerships with parents are effective. Leaders and staff use various strategies to keep parents well informed about their children's learning and how to extend learning at home. Parents comment that they value the support that they and their families receive.
- Children behave well. For example, children help determine the rules in the setting and how they expect their friends to behave. Babies and young children develop close, affectionate relationships with staff and feel secure.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Younger children have few opportunities to explore natural objects and materials, to support their developing sensory skills and further enhance their learning and development.
- Staff miss some opportunities to effectively engage older children to develop their early writing skills further.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance opportunities for younger children's exploration and sensory experiences to help them develop their skills and understanding
- make the most of opportunities that arise for children to develop their early writing skills.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities and the quality of teaching throughout the nursery.
- The inspector held discussions with the leadership team. She spoke with children and staff at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector looked at a sample of documentation, including staff suitability checks and self-evaluation documents. She viewed observations, assessments and documentation linked to checking children's progress.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day of the inspection.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation of staff practice and discussed this with the manager.

Inspector

June Robinson

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

Staff are well qualified. Leaders provide good ongoing support and professional development opportunities that help to enhance staff skills further and enrich the learning outcomes for children. For example, following training, staff used their new knowledge to reflect on how they can support opportunities for children to explore and make discoveries in their learning. Leaders regularly observe staff and hold individual meetings that help to improve practice and teaching skills. Safeguarding is effective. Leaders and staff have updated their knowledge through accessing further training. They have an effective understanding of child protection issues and the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child. Leaders follow safe recruitment guidelines to ensure new staff are suitable and existing staff remain so.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff place a clear focus on supporting children's mathematical skills. For example, they engage children in interesting activities to estimate how many dinosaurs could be hidden in soft dough eggs. Staff encourage children to use their counting skills to find out if their estimations are correct. Staff support children well to develop their good communication and language skills. For example, they explain the meaning of new words they introduce to children, such as 'extinct'. Staff support children well to express their creativity. For instance, children relish being imaginative and moving to music like an 'elegant butterfly'.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Staff are good role models for children. They support children to learn how to share and take turns with their toys. Staff support children to develop very good independence skills. For example, younger children are encouraged to help dress themselves ready for outdoor play. Older children confidently serve themselves at mealtimes. Staff teach children about the importance of living a healthy lifestyle. For instance, they encourage children to follow thorough handwashing routines before eating. All children have good opportunities to be outdoors on a daily basis and to be physically active.

Outcomes for children are good

Children develop the skills they need for their future learning and the eventual move to school. They show great curiosity and inquisitiveness. For instance, children are keen to discover what will happen to dry ingredients they add to liquids in their play dinosaur swamp. Children develop confidence in their communication skills. They enjoy learning new words and songs in other languages, such as French. Children are very articulate communicators and discuss with staff the meaning of words, such as 'herbivore' and 'carnivore'. Babies develop an early interest in literacy, for example, listening to stories and turning the pages of books.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY488986
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	1115874
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Age range of children	0 - 4
Total number of places	63
Number of children on roll	69
Name of registered person	Stepping Stones Nursery School (froxfield) Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP534565
Date of previous inspection	3 October 2017
Telephone number	01488 681067

Stepping Stones Nursery School re-registered in 2015. It is based in the village of Froxfield. The nursery operates from 7.45am to 6pm from Monday to Friday all year round. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two, three and four years. There are 12 members of staff working with the children. Of these, one holds qualified teacher status, one holds a relevant qualification at level 5, eight hold qualifications at level 3 and a further two hold qualifications at level 2.

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