

Stepping Stones Nursery School

16 Bruce Road, Southsea, Hampshire, PO4 9RL



Inspection date

4 May 2018

Previous inspection date

17 September 2015

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement	3
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Requires improvement	3
Outcomes for children		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision requires improvement. It is not yet good because:

- Not all staff have a good knowledge and understanding of wider safeguarding issues and the 'Prevent' duty.
- The manager does not consistently support and coach staff effectively to evaluate and develop their teaching practice. Staff miss opportunities to tailor learning to meet children's individual needs. Not all children, particularly the oldest and most able, are challenged in their learning and development.
- Information gained from parents when children first start is not consistently used to assess children's starting points, or to plan for their learning from the very beginning. This hinders the progress that some children make, including those who speak English as an additional language.

It has the following strengths

- The manager implements effective, robust recruitment procedures and ongoing suitability checks to help ensure staff remain suitable to work with children.
- Staff form good relationships with children. They provide babies and toddlers with lots of cuddles, comfort and reassurance to help them settle and feel secure.
- The nursery environment is spacious and organised well, indoors and outside. Staff are deployed effectively to ensure children are supervised appropriately at all times.
- Staff promote children's independence well. Parents comment positively about how this has helped older children to develop the skills they need for their move to school.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

	Due Date
■ ensure that all staff have a good knowledge and understanding of all safeguarding procedures, with particular regard to the 'Prevent' duty and wider safeguarding issues	18/05/2018
■ provide staff with the monitoring, support and supervision they need to improve their teaching practice, to tailor learning to children's individual needs, and to provide appropriate challenge for the older and most able children	18/06/2018
■ gather more detailed information about what children know and can do on entry to the setting, in order to plan swiftly and precisely for their learning from the very beginning.	18/06/2018

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching indoors and outside, and the impact this had on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to the manager, staff and children, at convenient times during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke to some parents during the day and took account of their views.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability of the staff, confirmation of staff training and recruitment procedures. She looked at a selection of policies and children's records and discussed safeguarding procedures and the self-evaluation process.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.

Inspector

Tara Naylor

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management requires improvement

The staff and nursery manager ensure the nursery is safe and that there is plenty of space for children to play, to meet their individual needs. Required staff ratios and qualifications are met. However, staff do not receive sufficient coaching or supervision to address their development or training needs. For instance, the provider has not ensured that all staff are fully informed about the most recent changes to safeguarding guidance, including the 'Prevent' duty and wider safeguarding issues. Overall, this does not have a significant impact on children's welfare as staff have a secure knowledge of how to keep children safe. They know the procedures to follow and whom to contact in the event of a concern about a child in their care. Safeguarding is effective. The manager has identified some weaknesses in the nursery's provision and has begun to take action to address these.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

Staff develop good relationships with children and their parents. They share information about children's progress regularly. However, staff do not use these relationships effectively, to gain a full range of information about what children know and can do when they first start. This means that some children, including those who speak English as an additional language, do not benefit from tailored learning opportunities from the very beginning. Staff help babies to explore different sensory materials in their play. For instance, they teach them how to open boxes and post bottle tops. This helps to promote children's small-muscle skills. However, the quality of teaching is variable throughout the nursery and older children are not consistently challenged to help them learn more.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare require improvement

Due to weaknesses in leadership and management, children's well-being is not effectively supported. Nevertheless, children are cared for in a welcoming environment. They develop warm, trusting relationships with staff, who meet their individual care needs well. For instance, staff working with babies have recently improved how they organise children's sleep times, to help promote a calmer environment. Staff supervise children well and follow good hygiene practices. They teach older children how to manage some age-appropriate physical care needs well, to help prepare them for their move to school.

Outcomes for children require improvement

Overall, children develop the skills they need for starting school. They concentrate well, are motivated in their play and are confident learners. Babies develop good physical skills, such as learning to take some steps with support. Toddlers enjoy using building blocks to support their small-muscle skills. However, not all children are fully challenged in their learning, and some children, including those who speak English as an additional language, do not make the progress of which they are capable.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY346747
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	1129759
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	0 - 4
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	74
Name of registered person	Rose Lodge Nurseries Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP526738
Date of previous inspection	17 September 2015
Telephone number	02392 421718

Stepping Stones Nursery School registered in 2007. It operates from a house in Southsea, Hampshire. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am until 6pm all year, except for public holidays. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years old. The nursery employs 13 members of staff, seven of whom have appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above.

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