

Stepping Stones Playgroup (Dursley)

Dursley C of E Primary School, School Road, Dursley, Gloucestershire, GL11 4NZ



Inspection date

18 May 2018

Previous inspection date

28 September 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

- Children have a strong sense of belonging and are emotionally secure. They form very close bonds with the staff, who help them to feel valued members of the group.
- Children's behaviour is very good. Staff place a strong focus on teaching children to play well together, and to understand and respect the needs of others.
- Staff work closely with parents and other settings that children attend, to keep them well informed of children's progress. They provide helpful advice and activities, for example, in an area for parents on their website, to help them support their children's learning.
- The manager accurately monitors children's development. Staff tailor activities so each child makes good progress, including those at risk of falling behind and the most able.
- Managers are passionate and ambitious. They have developed a well-informed culture that drives improvement forward. For example, they regularly monitor the quality of teaching, and ensure staff receive appropriate support and training.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- On occasion, staff miss opportunities to support and encourage the involvement of younger children in large-group activities.
- At times, staff do not make the most of opportunities to support children's skills and understanding of using technology.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- support staff in identifying ways to encourage younger children to join in fully and make the most of group activities
- extend the use of technology to increase further opportunities for children's understanding of the world.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed staff interactions with the children in play activities indoors and outdoors, looked at available resources and carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager and deputy manager about leadership and management, safeguarding and how they evaluate practice.
- The inspector held a discussion with the chairperson, and parents, and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at children's information, attendance records and developmental records, and talked to staff and children at appropriate times.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability of the committee and staff, and reviewed staff qualifications.

Inspector

Jan Harvey

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The committee has a sound understanding of its key responsibilities and ensures the playgroup is well organised. The staff work well together and are skilled at evaluating the quality of the provision. For example, they have reflected on the quality of the playgroup and introduced resources that engage children outside, such as a large climbing structure. This has improved children's physical coordination skills and encouraged younger children's imaginations. Safeguarding is effective. Leaders and staff have a very good understanding of safeguarding procedures and child protection issues.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Well-qualified and experienced staff provide imaginative ways to help children learn through their own interests. They offer very good support for children's language and communication skills. For example, staff engage children in a discussion about diggers, and comment about the tracks they make and heavy loads they carry. Staff use this interest to encourage children to make marks, and use model diggers in sand to practise making letters and shapes. Additionally, staff use children's fascination with shapes to help them explore counting, compare sizes, make patterns and act out favourite stories. They provide props and teach them songs and rhymes about shapes. Children ask staff to share their favourite song with their parents and staff provide a song sheet for them. This helps parents to share in their children's learning at home.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children have lots of fun at this very welcoming and friendly playgroup. They settle quickly and greet friends and staff cheerfully. Staff praise children's positive behaviour and achievements, and reinforce boundaries consistently. Children understand what is expected of them, are confident and feel good about themselves. Staff give children clear messages about the importance of healthy lifestyles and they learn through daily activities, such as preparing vegetables and energetic exercise. Children play outdoors every day. This provides excellent opportunities for children to manage risks, for example, as they balance on plastic bucket stilts. Children show a keen interest in the natural world. Staff teach them how to care for living things and provide, for example, tadpoles and butterfly eggs for children to look after to increase their understanding.

Outcomes for children are good

Children develop good skills that prepare them well for their next stages of learning and school. During routines and activities, they count, identify shapes and solve simple sums and puzzles. Children develop their early writing skills as they make marks on whiteboards and paper to represent their names. Children of all ages have good access to books. Older children begin to hear sounds in words and link them to letters.

Setting details

Unique reference number	101730
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	1126435
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	34
Name of registered person	Stepping Stones Playgroup (Dursley) Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP519849
Date of previous inspection	28 September 2015
Telephone number	01453 544588

Stepping Stones Playgroup (Dursley) registered in 1993. It is a committee-run group and operates from a building in the grounds of Dursley Primary School in Dursley, Gloucestershire. Playgroup sessions run term time only, from 9am until 2pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and from 9am until midday on Wednesday. The playgroup receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The committee employs six members of staff who work directly with the children. Of these, the manager and deputy hold an early years qualification at level 6 and four staff hold qualifications at level 3.

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