

Stepping Stones Playgroup (Wells)

Stoberry Park School, North Road, Wells, Somerset, BA5 2TJ



Inspection date

14 June 2018

Previous inspection date

2 October 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

- Staff closely observe children's development and work with parents to promptly outline children's starting points and their ongoing development. They identify the next steps in children's learning, build on what children already know and ensure they all make good progress.
- Staff are friendly and attentive. They get to know children well and spend good-quality time supporting them in their activities. Children develop a real sense of belonging. They are confident to explore and they really enjoy their time at the playgroup.
- Partnerships with parents and other professionals are very good and ensure staff fully meet children's individual needs. Regular newsletters and messages, daily chats and the sharing of children's achievements and progress help keep parents very well informed.
- Children benefit from the partnership between the playgroup and the school. They are being prepared well for their move on to school. For example, they become familiar with school routines and staff and enjoy joining school mealtimes and sports sessions.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff do not plan whole-group activities well enough to fully encourage children's attention and listening skills.
- The management team's self-evaluation processes do not precisely drive ongoing improvements across both the playgroup and committee practice, to further strengthen the quality of the provision.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- review the planning for group activities to further support children's involvement and the development of their attention and listening skills
- enhance procedures for self-evaluation so that both playgroup and committee improvement planning is tightly focused on further strengthening the quality of practice.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the main playroom, the outside learning environment and conducted a joint observation with the playgroup leader.
- The inspector held a meeting with members of the playgroup committee and the playgroup leader. She spoke to staff and children throughout the inspection when appropriate.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment and planning documentation, the setting's risk assessment and safety records.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working within the setting, the provider's evidence of self-evaluation and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day and by reading a number of their comments on messages and questionnaires.

Inspector

Rachel Howell

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

Safeguarding is effective. Staff are vigilant about children's safety and they understand the procedures to follow if they are concerned about a child's welfare. Vetting procedures for staff, main committee members and those who regularly volunteer at the playgroup are thorough. The playgroup leader attends local meetings with other providers to keep up to date with good practice and abreast of recent changes to legislation. She scrutinises assessments of individual children's progress to identify any gaps in learning and the effectiveness of practice. Overall, she evaluates the service provided, to outline areas for improvement. She undertakes supervisory meetings and focuses closely on developing staff skills. Staff undertake a range of additional training, such as to gain ideas of further ways to develop children's mathematical skills.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Children are motivated and keen to learn, due to the stimulating play environment and responsive interactions from staff. Staff follow children's lead well. They use probing questions to extend children's ideas and their descriptive language. For example, children draw pictures of themselves. They are encouraged to look in the mirror, describe their eye and hair colour and draw appropriate shapes for their features. Children concentrate intently as they play with dough. They learn new words, such as 'sticky' and 'squidgy', to describe how it feels. Children persevere when they encounter difficulties, such as attaching a tyre onto a toy car. Staff develop children's knowledge further as they introduce phrases such as 'breakdown truck' as children explore the idea of fixing cars.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Staff are responsive to children's needs and quickly give lots of reassurance and support when children are struggling to understand expectations. Children learn to behave well and to appreciate the needs of others. They enjoy social mealtimes and playing games with their friends. Children have good opportunities to be physically active. Staff make good use of different areas to offer children interesting spaces and different experiences. For example, children enjoy the large open space of the school playground to use wheeled bicycles and develop their ball skills. They learn about nature during focused sessions in the wooded areas nearby. They explore sensory play, such as sand and water, and have great fun in the playgroup's mud garden.

Outcomes for children are good

Children's communication, literacy and mathematical skills develop well. For example, they copy the role modelled speech of staff, learning new words and taking turns in conversation. This includes children who require some extra support. Children distinguish colours and shapes. They recognise letters and numbers and count with confidence. They draw pictures and older children confidently write their names. Children are motivated to learn and enjoy testing and developing their ideas. They effectively gain the skills they will need for their move on to school. This includes those children for whom the setting receives additional funding.

Setting details

Unique reference number	143013
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	1127144
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	18
Number of children on roll	29
Name of registered person	Stepping Stones Playgroup (Wells) Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP907255
Date of previous inspection	2 October 2015
Telephone number	01749 677 011

Stepping Stones Playgroup (Wells) registered in 1992. The playgroup employs four members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and one holds a qualification at level 5. The playgroup opens from Monday to Friday from 9am until 3pm, during school term time only. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120354.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our website for news, information and updates at www.ofsted.gov.uk/user.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2018

