

Stepping Stones Preschool



35 Sydney Close, ST. LEONARDS-ON-SEA, East Sussex TN38 9DD

Inspection date	6 June 2019
Previous inspection date	19 January 2015

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

- Partnerships with parents are strong. Parents are grateful for the regular opportunities they have to discuss their child's learning and progress. They appreciate the advice and help they receive to support learning at home. Parents make regular contributions to their child's learning records.
- There are strong links between the nursery and other settings where care is shared, including school. Nursery staff discuss children's learning, progress and social care with other professionals and this helps to support a consistency of care.
- When children start at the nursery, key persons work with parents to establish children's starting points. From these, appropriate activities are provided to help children make good progress.
- Relationships between all staff and children are warm and trusting. This helps to support children's self-confidence and emotional well-being. Children feel safe and behave well.
- Staff do not always make the most of all opportunities to help children learn about cultures beyond their own immediate experiences.
- Staff do not consistently evaluate their assessments of children's development to ensure they have an accurate knowledge of children's next steps in learning.
- The manager provides effective support for staff. She holds regular one-to-one meetings to discuss their practice and training needs.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- consistently evaluate assessment of children's development to ensure they have an accurate knowledge of their next steps in learning
- make the most of all opportunities to help children learn about people and communities beyond their own experience.

Inspection activities

- The inspector toured the premises, examined risk assessments, accident records and the records of children's learning and progress.
- The inspector and the manager observed staff interacting with children and discussed their practice.
- The inspector held discussions with the nominated individual, the manager and other members of staff.
- The inspector viewed the policies and procedures relating to the safeguarding of children and the suitability of staff.
- The inspector spoke to parents and to children, taking their views into consideration.

Inspector

Jill Thewlis

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

Safeguarding is effective. Staff recognise the signs and symptoms that may indicate a child is at risk of harm. They know the procedures to follow and the people to contact should they have a concern about a child's safety or welfare. Staff check the premises and equipment on a daily basis to ensure that they are safe for children to use. The manager tracks the progress of children at regular intervals and ensures that appropriate activities are planned to address identified gaps in learning. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. Staff actively seek additional support from external professionals for these children. The manager and her staff are constantly trying to improve the provision to support children's learning. For instance, they have reorganised the outdoor area to provide a larger sandpit and this helps to support children's physical and imaginative development.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Children have plenty of opportunities to develop their early writing skills. For example, all children, but boys in particular, love to write with the lightboards. Others write tickets for the adults to tell them how long they must spend in jail! The reading area is attractive and inviting. Children enjoy sitting and looking at books and this helps to support their early reading skills. Staff support the development of early mathematical skills. For example, they help children to count and to understand mathematical language relating to size. Children build on this learning. For instance, they voluntarily, and accurately, count the legs of an octopus. Children develop problem-solving skills. For instance, a child works out that the train won't go through the tunnel when the people are upright, so he lies them down. Staff provide effective support for children's communication and language development. They speak clearly and use simple sign language, to help children's understanding.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children lead their own learning effectively and have great fun inventing their own games. For instance, two children create a game where one makes a sandcastle and the other sits on it and squashes it! Younger children count to three and splash their hands in the water, giggling delightedly. Children's physical development is well supported. For instance, children balance on the beams and skilfully ride a selection of age-appropriate bicycles and tricycles outside. Adults engage the children in parachute games and this helps support their understanding of turn taking. Children are encouraged to eat healthily and to understand the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. They benefit from the nutritious snacks provided at the nursery.

Outcomes for children are good

Children are well prepared for the next stage of their education, including school. They develop the key skills required for school. Children learn to manage their personal care routines. Children are encouraged to open their own packets of sandwiches and yogurts. Children who are supported by additional funding make good progress and there are no gaps in their learning. Children for whom English is an additional language are well supported and this is helping them to make good progress.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY427491
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10060514
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	23
Number of children on roll	37
Name of registered person	Stepping Stones Preschool
Registered person unique reference number	RP523167
Date of previous inspection	19 January 2015
Telephone number	01424430959

Stepping Stones Preschool registered in 2011 and is run by a committee in St. Leonards-on-Sea. It is open each weekday from 9am to 4pm, school term times only. There are seven members of staff, of whom six hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school receives funding for free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The pre-school supports children who learn English as an additional language and children with SEND.

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