

# Stepping Stones Pre-School

Upper Church Rooms, Oxford Road, Windsor, Berkshire SL4 5DU



<b>Inspection date</b>	8 July 2019
Previous inspection date	20 March 2015

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Outstanding	1
Outcomes for children		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents

### This provision is good

- The highly experienced manager is adept at developing the skills of her staff to higher levels. Improvements in appraisals link staff training and specific 'pockets' of funding directly with raising outcomes for individual children. This is evident in the exceptional rate of progress made by children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Staff demonstrate high levels of responsibility for developing the quality of their practice even further. They make excellent use of recent training, in areas such as emotional well-being, to promote the welfare and social skills of all children. There is a very happy atmosphere at the pre-school and children develop very secure foundations for all future learning.
- The quality of teaching is not yet consistently outstanding or inspirational for some of the older and most able children. Staff lack a little confidence and experience in sustaining their focus on challenging children's thinking to the highest levels, for example, when children are planning how to do things, solving problems and reviewing how well an approach worked.
- Staff skilfully develop children's fascination with diversity in the world. Children examine pictures of people from different countries, playing instruments in different ways, in different costumes, on their own or in groups. They think how to make and play their own instruments to create different sounds. Children sing heartily, listen carefully and adapt to keep time with each other.
- Children are extremely well prepared socially and emotionally for change. Sensitive and responsive staff successfully nurture young children through changes in family life. Older children take great delight in dressing themselves in different school uniforms and have a very positive attitude to starting school.

## What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- take even more advantage of opportunities in everyday activities to extend children's skills in planning, solving problems and evaluation to further challenge high achievers.

### Inspection activities

- The inspector talked to parents and carers to gather their views on the pre-school and their children's progress.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching and the impact this has on children's learning and development, both inside and outside.
- The inspector listened to and talked with children as they played and reviewed how well staff monitor and extend children's achievements.
- The inspector sampled policies and spoke to staff to gauge their understanding of safeguarding arrangements and how they promote children's welfare.
- The inspector undertook a joint observation with the manager and asked how staff training improved outcomes for children.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation, including information on staff recruitment, suitability checks and training, and discussed plans for further improvement with the leadership team.

#### Inspector

Helen Robinshaw

## Inspection findings

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

The manager's unwavering focus on the care and well-being of the children, their parents and the staff underpins effective partnerships. Children receive help promptly when they need it and parents are confident that staff do the best they possibly can for their children. The manager checks that staff have an extensive knowledge and awareness of current child protection procedures, which they can implement at all times. Safeguarding is effective. The manager continues to monitor and evaluate what children learn, how well staff teach them and where improvements can be made. This is evident in the exciting play areas that capture children's curiosity to explore, discover and create. It forms the basis of planning additional support for different groups of children, such as those who join the pre-school without some basic skills.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff make accurate observations of children's achievements. They share a good range of ideas with parents about how to help children reach the next stage in their development. All the staff know the children well and use their individual interests to extend children's learning further. For example, when children show an interest in small creatures, staff devise a theme around insects and minibeasts. Children confidently handle snails and spiders and know that insects have six legs and wings. They examine and agree the differences between a slug and a snail with their friends and turn to conveniently placed reference books to search for more information.

### Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

The parent committee provides superb support for additional rich and awe-inspiring activities for children. For example, children learn about life cycles as they watch chicks hatch and caterpillars turn into butterflies. Children recycle water to feed the plants they grow and measure. They are highly responsible in caring for their environment, their own possessions and each other. For instance, children are quick to go to the fridge for a cool pack when friends bump into each other. Staff make excellent use of mealtimes to model and nurture children's social skills. Children take an interest in each other. They hear and learn to ask politely about different interests, family lives and cultural dress. Children display high levels of self-control as they wait for each other and have excellent table manners. They learn to make healthy choices about what they eat and know that fruit and vegetables contain vitamins and minerals.

### Outcomes for children are good

Children make expected levels of progress by the time they leave the pre-school. In some instances, this means they have made rapid progress from when they started. Children who are learning to speak more than one language are monitored closely by staff, parents and sometimes other professionals. They make good rates of progress in both languages and soon catch up with their age group. Older children are emotionally very well prepared for school and other activities in the community. All children are very happy at the pre-school. This was evident as they played throughout the day and from the many exceptionally positive comments and discussions with parents.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	108448
<b>Local authority</b>	Windsor and Maidenhead
<b>Inspection number</b>	10108396
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children</b>	2 - 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	20
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	26
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Stepping Stones Pre-School Group (Windsor) Committee
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP518123
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20 March 2015
<b>Telephone number</b>	01753 865503

Stepping Stones Pre-School first registered in 1985 and reregistered in 1992. It is located in Windsor, Berkshire. Opening times are from 9am to 3.30pm Monday to Thursday and from 9am to 1pm on Friday. There is also a summer holiday club for children who are on roll. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early education to children aged two, three and four. There are five members of staff, three of whom hold early years qualifications at level 3 and two are qualified at level 2. One member of staff also holds a degree in psychology.

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