

# Inspection of Stepping Stones Preschool

Teachers Way, Hardley, Southampton SO45 2QG

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Inspection date: 11 November 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education

**Good**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous  
inspection

Outstanding

## What is it like to attend this early years setting?

### The provision is good

Children enjoy being with the practitioners and in the pre-school environment. Practitioners foster an approach of respect and kindness to one another, and they have high expectations for all children. They role model kind behaviours to children and demonstrate this further, through their intent listening and valuing of children's contributions. This supports children's positive self-esteem well. Practitioners support children to be healthy and encourage them to have a positive mindset, and are passionate about delivering mindfulness to children. For example, after recently attended a mental health awareness course for children, staff now support children effectively to learn how to express and manage their emotions.

Children show they are happy and feel safe in the pre-school. They confidently move around the environment, both inside and outside, to select the resources they want to use and lead their own play. Children are keen learners and show enjoyment as they take part in a range of activities, such as hunting for minibeasts. They use their imaginations and express their home experiences in the role-play corner as they play, such as role playing being at the doctor's surgery. Children learn to take turns and share with each other as they play.

### What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The leaders design an ambitious learning environment for all children. For instance, during an adult-led activity, children look at different shapes on the computer. They are then eager to go and find the shapes in the environment. This supports children's mathematical understanding well. Some planned adult-led activities are not consistently focused to enable practitioners to fully build on what children already know. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well through individual targeted plans. However, on occasion, practitioners do not effectively share these children's overall development with the other settings they attend. Practitioners do, however, work closely with parents to share details about their children's learning and to promote consistency between home and pre-school.
- Practitioners see huge benefits in singing and rhyming with children. They include this in many aspects of their daily routine to promote communication and language. For example, before lunch children enthusiastically join in with a healthy eating song.
- Practitioners have high expectations of children's behaviour. They role model positive interactions and spend quality time teaching children to understand emotions. They use technology well to assist with this. For instance, children use an emotions app where they can look at facial expressions, create expressions and match words to those feelings. This helps children understand their emotions well.

- Practitioners support children well to live a healthy lifestyle. Children have free-flow access to outdoors where they can be physically active and also connect with the natural world around them. Children are encouraged to brush their teeth daily. This is part of the setting's promotion of hygiene practices. Practitioners also work with parents to ensure children are registered with a local dentist.
- Children have formed close attachments with their key person and show enjoyment in taking part in activities together. For example, children are motivated when playing a matching card game. They develop a good understanding of following rules and taking turns. This helps develop their social interactions and their communication and language skills. Occasionally, practitioners do not encourage children to do things for themselves. This does not help encourage children's developing independence. For example, practitioners dress children in aprons, ready for painting.
- Leaders support the professional development of practitioners through supervisions and training. Recently, a practitioner attended a course on supporting children's mental health and ways to support their overall emotional well-being. Since this training the pre-school has developed trips to the forest that now include mindfulness, which is to encourage children to have a few minutes to listen to the noises around them. This is having a positive impact on children's behaviour and their concentration levels.
- Parents speak positively about the pre-school. They feel their children's behaviour has improved from being at the pre-school and they have developed good mathematical skills.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and deputy work closely with the staff to develop their awareness and understanding of safeguarding. The deputy manager is the designated safeguarding lead and shows confidence in her role and responsibilities. She has experience of making referrals to outside agencies. She explains the pre-schools procedure which she would follow in relation to an allegation against a member of staff. The pre-school keeps robust documentation of concerns and referrals. Practitioners know the signs and indicators of abuse in children, including how to report welfare concerns.

## What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen planning systems and adult-led activities to more purposefully focus on meeting children's interests and identified next steps in learning
- develop further systems for working with other settings that children with SEND

attend, to more effectively share their learning and development

- support children to do things for themselves more to help fully develop their independence skills.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY297420
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10108589
<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 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	24
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	43
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Stepping Stones Pre-School (Hardley) Committee
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP519762
<b>Telephone number</b>	02380897025
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18 March 2015

## Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stones Preschool registered in 2005. It operates from rooms in Manor Church of England Infant School, Holbury. The pre-school opens each weekday during school term times from 8.30am until 4pm. It receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. There are seven members of staff, including the manager who holds a qualification in early years at level 3.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Hayley Doncom

## Inspection activities

- The inspector and manager carried out a learning walk across all areas of the pre-school to understand how the early years provision and the curriculum are organised.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation to observe the quality of teaching.
- The inspector held discussions with children, staff and parents at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector looked at a sample of documentation. This included staff suitability checks.
- The manager, deputy manager and the inspector held a leadership meeting.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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