

# Inspection of Stepping Stones Pre-School

Long Ditton Cricket Club, Stokes Field, Betts Way, Long Ditton, Surbiton, Surrey  
KT6 5HT

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Inspection date: 3 December 2019

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## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Outstanding**

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The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Overall effectiveness at previous  
inspection

Not applicable

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

### **The provision is outstanding**

Children have a wonderful time at this vibrant pre-school. The experienced and enthusiastic staff highly value the uniqueness of each child. Children eagerly and independently help themselves to the broad range of rich, varied and imaginative resources that are readily available to them. For example, children become engrossed in their play when they build a pirate ship and a pretend car using real tools. They confidently discuss their roles, what they need, and the purpose of each item selected.

The inspirational manager and her staff create a highly stimulating and welcoming indoor and outdoor environment for children. They nurture children's interests and provide them with extensive opportunities to develop their skills. Younger children explore a range of textures, such as oats, and discover the impact of painting onto blocks of ice. Older children explain to visitors how they are making messy soup using sensory items, such as herbs and leaves. Children persevere at their chosen tasks for a sustained length of time, demonstrating high levels of confidence.

Children listen attentively to staff. They eagerly join in during the small-group sessions, such as music and story sessions. Children have great fun recreating popular stories, which are expertly used to help children gain an understanding of kindness and respect. In addition, purposeful activities help older children extend their excellent knowledge and prepare them extremely well for their ongoing learning.

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

- The well-qualified manager, committee members and staff are highly focused and dedicated to providing the highest levels of care and learning. They have developed a culture of self-evaluation and continually strive for and make meaningful ongoing improvement.
- Targeted professional development means that staff's knowledge and skills consistently improve. For instance, following comprehensive training related to a specific medical need, staff expertly attend to children's needs. Staff complete detailed health care plans which are continually reviewed with parents and other professionals. This means that there is excellent continuity of care for children.
- Children are at the heart of the pre-school. They are extremely well behaved and highly motivated. Children of all ages eagerly choose which toys to play with, and invite staff to join them and discuss what they are doing. For example, very young children explain to staff how to care for the baby dolls. This shows that they feel safe and secure with the staff.
- The experienced manager and staff give highly effective support to children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There is a strong partnership with

other professionals to help support the early identification of children's needs. This contributes to children making exceptional progress given their starting points.

- Staff are excellent role models. They are extremely sensitive to children's individual needs, such as supporting transition times. The manager uses funding effectively to purchase resources to help children express how they feel. Parents routinely borrow these, which contributes to supporting their children's emotional well-being.
- The manager and staff successfully deliver a curriculum that is rich and varied. They promote children's understanding about the wider world and the local community effectively. For instance, they buy items at the nearby shops for cooking, promoting an early understanding about mathematics. In addition, they travel by bus to nature parks and love taking part in the regular outings to their nature club.
- Children have ample opportunities to practise their physical skills. For example, they use crates and planks to make roadways for their cars and go on to use these for practising their balancing skills.
- Partnerships with parents and other providers where children attend is excellent. Parents are extremely complimentary about the pre-school. They say that staff go above and beyond to support them and their children, who adore attending.
- All children's needs are exceedingly well met, including those of children who receive additional funding. The manager and staff have forged highly effective partnerships with external agencies. This has contributed to children making exceptional progress in their learning.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff have an excellent understanding of the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about children's welfare. The robust recruitment and induction procedures, along with ongoing supervision meetings, help to ensure the suitability of staff and committee members. The manager continually researches new information about protecting children's welfare. She shares this with parents, such as how to keep children safe online. Staff are always highly vigilant of children and help children to identify risks. For example, children know how to keep safe when they melt marshmallows on the fire pit in their woodland den.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY548528
<b>Local authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	10130553
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Sessional day care
<b>Age range of children</b>	2 to 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	32
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	19
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Stepping Stones Playgroup (Surbiton) Committee
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP905400
<b>Telephone number</b>	07970296438
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable

## Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stones Pre-School is committee-run and registered in 2017. It operates from Long Ditton Cricket Club in Surbiton, Surrey. The pre-school opens term time only, Monday to Friday from 9.15am to 12.15pm. Afternoon sessions are held Monday to Thursday from 12.45pm to 3.45pm. A lunch club is also provided. There are six members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The manager holds early years teacher status. The pre-school provides free funded education for children aged two, three and four years.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Maura Pigram

## Inspection activities

- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk. They discussed the activities provided to the children and the reasons for these. The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors. She assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke with the manager, some committee members, staff, children and parents at appropriate times.
- The manager provided children's records, relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school. The inspector looked at these, along with policies and procedures, such as the safeguarding policy.
- The inspector had discussions with several parents and took account of their views.

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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