

Inspection of Stepping Stones Nursery

Milford Baptist Church, New Road, Milford, Godalming, Surrey GU8 5BE

Inspection date: 16 January 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
------------------------------	-------------

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 are secure, confident and content in this caring and welcoming nursery. Staff provide a good range of stimulating activities based on what children need to learn next. They have high expectations of what children can achieve. Children have good skills with technology. For example, they press buttons to enable different functions on electronic toys and complete age-appropriate games on the computer. Staff help children to broaden their experiences and prepare them for the next stages in their learning, for example through woodland walks, trips to the park and visits to local schools. All children make good progress.

Children bring healthy packed lunches that are complemented by nutritious options provided by staff at snack time. They choose when they want to eat their lunch and independently get themselves organised. This helps support their growing confidence and self-esteem as staff trust them to make good decisions. Staff engage children in lively discussions about foods that are good for them. Children also enjoy a wide range of physically active play, both inside and outside, which supports their understanding of healthy lifestyles.

Children have a good understanding and respect for others from different cultural and religious backgrounds. Staff do not consistently manage children's behaviour in regards to respecting resources and equipment. However, they do use praise well to support positive behaviour.

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

- Children's communication and literacy skills are particularly well promoted. Staff have thought of enjoyable ways for children to practise early writing skills, such as through writing 'messages' for each other. They have access to mark-making equipment in every area of the setting, including the garden and role-play area where they write shopping lists and recipes for 'pizza' making.
- Staff build strong and caring relationships with the children. They get to know children's family backgrounds and find out about their prior experiences. Staff use this information to help them to provide interesting play opportunities and support their learning at home.
- The manager supports her staff in their professional development. She observes their practice and offers constructive feedback on what they do well. Advice is given on where they can improve their teaching further. Staff attend training to improve their performance. For example, they have attended a course linked to 'loose parts' and 'in the moment planning'. This has resulted in staff reflecting on their provision and making positive changes to their environment and their planning and assessment.
- The special educational needs coordinator is committed and passionate to

ensuring that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language receive the best possible support at the earliest opportunity. She works closely with the manager, staff and external agencies to implement accurate and effective plans. Highly effective monitoring systems and regular meetings with staff, to discuss children and inclusion support, help to close any gaps in children's learning. Staff have high expectations for all children.

- Generally, children behave well. They learn to take turns and are kind to each other. However, on occasions, some children show little respect towards equipment, such as books and toys. This contributes to an environment that is at times messy, as children are not all consistently encouraged to look after their resources, put things away or tidy up after themselves.
- Children learn about the world around them. They talk about each other's differences, develop respect for other people and have empathy towards their friends and other living things. Children learn to care for the nursery guinea pigs. They excitedly explain to staff that they 'speak guinea pig' so they know when they want more food. Children demonstrate to visitors how they look after them.
- Staff work hard to ensure even the youngest children understand how to safely move around the setting. For example, they teach them about road safety when accessing the setting's garden and how to use the stairs with care and caution.
- Children have plenty of fun as they take part in physical play opportunities. They enthusiastically play musical instruments, helping to develop greater control over their movements. Mathematics is promoted well. Children are supported to recognise numerals and are keen to sing favourite number songs, demonstrating how they count backwards from five.
- Outdoors, children learn new skills and enjoy exploring using all their senses. They spend time collecting natural materials, adding them to water and sand. Staff skilfully engage themselves in children's play and enhance their learning. For instance, they find utensils and engage children in discussions about the 'potions' they make in the mud kitchen.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager places a high priority on making sure that children are safe, and this is well managed throughout the building. All staff understand their responsibilities to safeguard children. Staff know the signs to look for and the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a child's welfare. Staff all receive up-to-date safeguarding training and they regularly discuss wider safeguarding issues. The manager implements secure recruitment procedures and ensures the ongoing suitability of adults working with children. Staff are vigilant about keeping the premises secure. They supervise children carefully at all times.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- make the most of every opportunity to encourage all children to value and respect the resources within the nursery.

Setting details

Unique reference number	120124
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10128668
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children	2 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	31
Name of registered person	Stepping Stones Nursery School, Milford Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP905654
Telephone number	01483 427325
Date of previous inspection	17 September 2015

Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stones Nursery registered in 1990 and is located in Milford, Surrey. It opens Monday to Friday, from 9am to 3pm during term time only. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are seven staff employed to work in the nursery, six of whom hold relevant childcare qualifications. The manager holds a qualification at level 6, four staff hold qualifications at level 3 and one holds qualified teacher status.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Nina Lambkin

Inspection activities

- During a learning walk, a discussion was had about how the early years provision is organised and how the manager plans the curriculum and experiences for children.
- A joint observation of an activity was carried out by the inspector and manager. Discussions were had with children and staff throughout the inspection.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outside and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- Parents were keen to provide verbal feedback during the inspection. The inspector took account of their views.
- The inspector viewed documents, such as evidence of suitability checks for staff. She looked at the safeguarding policy, qualification certificates and the first-aid certificates for all staff, including regular bank staff.

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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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 and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, 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 1231, 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 <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2020