

Inspection of Stepping Stones Playschool

Gossops Green Community Primary, Kidborough Road, Crawley, West Sussex RH11
8HW

Inspection date: 30 January 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Staff are caring and nurturing in this welcoming nursery. They get to know children and their families well. As a result, children develop good relationships with adults and each other. This contributes positively to children's overall well-being and their desire to learn. The manager and staff have high expectations for all children. Staff have a good understanding of the age range that they are working with. Children play with toys that interest them because staff know them well and extend their learning 'in the moment'. This supports them to make good progress. Children enjoy exploring indoors and outside. They use their imaginations as they fix the 'car wash' by using real tools and 'cook' with real food in the mud kitchen and role-play corner. Children are creative and make structures with magnetic shapes and a range of 'junk'. They think critically as they work out what they need to finish their designs.

Children have developed strong bonds with their key person and demonstrate that they feel emotionally secure. When children arrive at the nursery, even the youngest children separate from parents confidently. Overall, children behave well as staff use effective strategies and tools, such as different-sized egg timers, to help them learn to negotiate and take turns.

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

- The manager enthusiastically works alongside staff, supporting practice. She knows her staff well and spends time each day sharing information with them. However, the manager does not always use the supervision process to consistently focus on raising staff's knowledge and skills.
- Parents talk highly of the nursery. They are kept well informed through an electronic communication system, regular discussions and newsletters. Staff have introduced the 'home challenge' which supports parents to extend their child's learning at home. For example, the current mathematics challenge has encouraged children to measure their family members to see who is the tallest.
- Staff help children learn how to be responsible for others. Children help to care for the setting's pet ducks, feeding them and collecting their eggs. This teaches children empathy and how to care for living things.
- During home visits, staff collect valuable information from parents about children before they start. This helps them to establish starting points. Staff regularly review children's development, including completing the progress check for two- to three-year-old children. However, there are differences in the quality of some of these checks as not all staff follow the setting's procedures to ensure the consistency and detail of information shared with parents.
- All children have good opportunities to explore age-appropriate technology. They learn about cause and effect as they play with the light board, pressing buttons

as they light up in a random sequence. Children engage in friendly competitions and practise their emerging literacy skills as they record how many lights they have pressed. They are supportive of each other's efforts as they work together, demonstrating kindness as they take turns and compare their scores. Children behave well.

- Children benefit from lots of activities to support their physical development. They enjoy healthy foods during sociable snack times and choose when they play outside in the fresh air. They take manageable risks as they work together moving long branches and sticks to make a den.
- Children are encouraged to develop their own independence through a range of opportunities and tasks. The environment is well organised and enables children to freely select toys and resources. Routines are well planned to support independence. For example, even the youngest children are encouraged to get changed into their outdoor clothing and shoes by themselves. All children help themselves to snacks and pour their own drinks. They clean away their plates and cups, ensuring they leave their space tidy for the next person.
- Children demonstrate positive attitudes to learning through good levels of curiosity, concentration and enjoyment. Artwork and creations are displayed with pride. Children find their name and photograph to place with their work, so everyone knows who made it. This promotes self-esteem and confidence as staff celebrate children's achievements.
- Staff focus on ways to help children acquire new language. They provide ongoing commentary as children play, engage in conversations and give them time to think before responding. Staff read stories on request and use props effectively to capture children's interest. Children are learning to listen. They join in with familiar refrains, speculating about what happens next.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and the staff team understand how to identify the signs and symptoms that could indicate a child is at risk. They clearly understand how to report any concerns about children's welfare or the behaviour of another adult. They have a broad understanding of wider safeguarding issues and how to identify and report any concerns. Robust recruitment procedures ensure that all staff are suitable. Thorough induction and ongoing support from the manager ensure staff remain alert to their responsibility to keep children safe. Staff are vigilant in their supervision of children. Continual risk assessment of the play areas, inside and outside, promotes children's safety.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen the consistency of progress checks for children aged between two and three years, including the short written summary of the prime areas of learning
- develop the supervision process even further to raise staff's knowledge and skills to the highest level.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY302404
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10060532
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children	2 to 4
Total number of places	52
Number of children on roll	74
Name of registered person	Tubb, Jacqueline Suzanne
Registered person unique reference number	RP908505
Telephone number	01293 542999
Date of previous inspection	15 December 2015

Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stones Playschool registered in 2007. It operates from Gossops Green Community Primary School in Crawley, West Sussex. The setting is open during term time between 8.45am and 3.15pm on Monday to Thursday, and between 8.45am and 11.45am on Friday. There are 12 staff; of these, 11 staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives funding to provide free early years education for children age two, three and four years.

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 was carried out by the inspector and the manager, and the inspector spoke to the 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 provided verbal and written 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 online and the first-aid certificates for all 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.

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