

Inspection of Steeple Aston Pre-School

Fir Lane, Steeple Aston, Bicester OX25 4SF

Inspection date:

22 November 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Children are happy and enjoy their time at pre-school. They form positive relationships with their key person and seek them out to engage them in their play. Children are confident and learn to manage their behaviour. Staff sensitively encourage and support incidents that arise. They provide children with clear boundaries. This ensures that children know what is expected of them.

Children who speak English as an additional language are, generally, supported well. Staff use key words obtained from parents and pictures of routine times to help children to understand what will happen next.

Improvements to the outdoor learning environment successfully support children's love for playing in the fresh air, in all weathers. Children are able to take part in a broad range of activities based on their interests. However, the curriculum is not sufficiently ambitious or well planned to ensure children engage consistently in high-quality learning.

Children have a range of opportunities to develop and challenge their physical skills. For example, they explore different ways to move with confidence, they fill the wheelbarrows with leaves and tell their friends when it is safe to cross the 'pre-school road'. Children develop good hand-to-eye coordination. For instance, they engage in activities as they roll and manipulate the malleable dough, using a range of tools, such as scissors and rolling pins.

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

- Children become increasingly independent. Staff place a strong emphasis on supporting this aspect of children's development. They successfully teach children how to put on their shoes and coats and manage their own toileting.
- Staff promote children's good health and encourage them to be physically active. They enjoy lots of outdoor play in the fresh air. Children follow sensible hygiene routines and understand the importance of washing their hands before eating.
- The manager has identified and made some improvements to the quality of the provision. Staff have completed some training to help update their knowledge and skills. However, the manager has not clearly identified the weaknesses in the quality of the curriculum and teaching. She recognises it would be beneficial to observe staff practice more closely. Although staff have regular opportunities to discuss their practice, they do not receive enough clear guidance to help them develop their teaching skills further.
- Staff do not plan a curriculum that focuses precisely enough on helping children work towards their next steps in learning. Additionally, staff do not always present information clearly in a sequence that helps children make links with

what they already know, so that children can build on their prior learning. Although staff use children's interests as a basis for the activities they provide, at times, activities lack a clear intention. For example, staff capture children's love for a popular story and the characters. However, despite staff's good intentions, the aim of the activity is not well thought out or resourced effectively by staff.

- There are times when groups of children can come together to sing, talk, count and recite letters. However, at these times, not all children engage well. Sometimes, younger children become distracted during group activities, when the learning is not fully tailored to their needs. For example, when older, most-able children are asked questions or are asked to recite numbers or recognise familiar letters.
- Staff use additional funding well to address gaps in children's learning. Such as, by providing one-to-one support for children, tailoring staff training and purchasing further resources.
- Parents speak very highly of the setting and the staff. They especially comment on the support given to them by the pre-school staff during the COVID-19 pandemic. Parents access information about their child's day through an online application and comment positively on the good exchange of information. The setting works well in partnership with the local school and external agencies to seek advice and access further training, as necessary.
- Staff enjoy working at the pre-school. They say they have opportunities to discuss their well-being and workload, and find the manager approachable. The manager feels valued and appreciated by the committee.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand their responsibilities to keep children safe. They undertake regular training as do members of the committee. The manager discusses safeguarding with staff regularly and keeps them updated about wider safeguarding issues. Staff have an accurate understanding of the signs that a child may be at risk of harm or neglect. They know how to share these concerns and understand the importance of doing so promptly. The manager and the committee follow thorough recruitment and vetting procedures to ensure those employed to work with children are suitable to do so. Staff deploy themselves effectively to ensure that children are supervised appropriately.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due date
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<p>monitor staff practice more closely so that support and guidance for staff can focus more precisely on raising the quality of the curriculum and teaching</p>	<p>25/01/2022</p>
<p>plan and deliver an ambitious curriculum that clearly identifies what children need to learn next, building on their existing skills and knowledge, to broaden and deepen what children know and can do.</p>	<p>25/01/2022</p>

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

- consider more fully the needs of the youngest children when planning activities and resources.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY555200
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10194102
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	25
Number of children on roll	39
Name of registered person	Steeple Aston Pre-School CIO
Registered person unique reference number	RP555199
Telephone number	01869 340863
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Steeple Aston Pre-School re-registered in 2018, as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. The pre-school operates from a former Victorian school building in the village of Steeple Aston, in Oxfordshire. It is open on weekdays from 8.50am until 2.50pm during school term times. It offers morning and afternoon sessions and a lunch club. Sessions for children moving up to school are available on Monday and Wednesday afternoons. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two-, three- and four-years-old, and is in receipt of early years pupil premium funding. The pre-school employs seven staff who work directly with children, of whom six hold relevant qualifications at level 3 or above.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Amanda Perkin

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the provider.
- The inspector had a learning walk with the manager through all areas of the premises used by the children.
- Parents shared their views through written and verbal feedback. The inspector took these views into account.
- The inspector spoke with the manager and the chair of the committee, about the leadership of the setting.
- The inspector looked at a sample of the documentation. This included evidence about suitability and training records.

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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