

# Inspection of Stepping Stones Pre-School

Newlyn School, Carne Road, Newlyn, Penzance, Cornwall TR18 5QA

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Inspection date: 21 March 2022

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education

**Good**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

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 quickly settle on arrival and are eager to explore and engage in the exciting activities. For example, they are motivated by the inviting creative materials to take part in an activity that supports their cutting skills. Children are willing to have a go, and staff demonstrate the correct way to hold and use scissors. By helping children to have time to practise these skills and reinforcing how well they are doing, children are extremely pleased with their achievements. Staff provide strong support for children's language and communication skills. They are good role models, so children hear correct pronunciations and extend their vocabulary as they play. They help children to link sounds and letters, demonstrating effectively how to position their tongue to form sounds correctly. Children count and recognise shapes, and staff challenge older children with finding totals of numbers. Children become independent in their daily routines, and staff support them successfully in managing as much as they can for themselves. For example, at snack, they use knives for spreading and cutting and pouring their own drinks. Children find and put on their boots and are encouraged to take off and hang up their jumpers as it gets hotter. Parents confirm how well their children are progressing, how they sing songs and have favourite books, as well as wanting to do things for themselves.

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

- Staff work closely with parents to get to know children and their families, to meet children's individual needs successfully. Staff continually observe children, so that they know what they can achieve independently or with support and what they need to learn next. They use children's interests well to plan activities to support their development. However, on occasions they do not use all opportunities in children's free play to support their next stages of learning.
- Staff successfully help children to remember their learning. For example, during a story, staff use the word blue to describe how someone is feeling. They help children to recall hearing this before, children then say it means sad. Children focus well during story time and engage effectively in circle time. For example, they learn when it is their turn to speak and when they need to listen to others. However, the organisation of large group activities sometimes means older children spend a lot of time sitting, and some eventually become restless.
- Children develop a positive awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Staff teach them good techniques for brushing their teeth and ensure children drink plenty of water. Children have daily opportunities to be active indoors and outdoors. For example, young children laugh and follow instructions as they copy staff in music and movement. Older children climb, run across the netted rope bridge and slide back down, with confidence and enthusiasm.
- Staff work extremely hard to improve children's attitudes to learning, and

children clearly want to achieve. They behave extremely well and listen to staff. Children work together highly successfully to achieve a task. For example, they eagerly roll up the floor mat and help to tidy up. Children are very thoughtful towards each other. For example, when a child sneezes, another spontaneously gets them a tissue. Children enthusiastically express their own ideas and display a great sense of humour, finding ways to make noises with their body, for example. Staff sensitively help children to believe in themselves. This underpins children's sense of security and willingness to have a go at new experiences.

- The manager and deputy provide strong support for staff, and effective monitoring ensures targeted training and professional development. Managers seek staff's and parents' feedback to evaluate their provision, which they use in their improvement plans. For example, they work hard to keep refreshing the outdoor area, especially after severe winters. They have introduced an online system to further enhance their communication with parents. This is in its early stages, and the deputy is currently reviewing its effectiveness.
- Parents comment very positively on the provision. They confirm that they exchange good information with staff, and they know how to support their children's learning at home. Parents are appreciative of the support staff give them, such as working together to potty train children. Parents confirm how staff identify special educational needs and support them every step of the way, from seeking outside help to preparing them all for school.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Managers and staff all attend safeguarding training. They have a good understanding of their responsibilities and what to do if they have any concerns that children may be at risk of harm. This includes the wider aspects, such as radicalisation and online safety. All staff carry contact details for the local safeguarding agency, which they can use or pass onto parents. Staff deploy themselves well to supervise children and reinforce safety with them. For example, they talk to children to help them understand why they shouldn't throw sand or toys, as they can hurt themselves or others.

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

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

- help staff to use their knowledge of children's next steps in development to extend and deepen children's learning in their free play
- review the organisation of large group activities to enable children to engage fully and maintain concentration.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	102756
<b>Local authority</b>	Cornwall
<b>Inspection number</b>	10126055
<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 at time of inspection</b>	2 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	30
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	30
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Stepping Stones Pre-School Group Newlyn
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP904307
<b>Telephone number</b>	01736 363050
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	17 June 2016

## Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stones Pre-school registered in 1991 and is run by a committee. It operates from premises in the grounds of Newlyn School, in Newlyn, Cornwall. They operate Monday to Friday from 8.50am to 2.50pm, term time only. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are seven members of staff. Of these, one holds early years teacher status. Four staff hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 3 and two at level 2.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Elaine Douglas

## Inspection activities

- The deputy manager led the inspector on a learning walk around the pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector observed activities and the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's development.
- The manager and inspector carried out a joint observation on planned activities and assessed the quality of teaching.
- The inspector spoke with parents and children and took account of their views.
- The inspector held a leadership meeting with the manager and deputy, and sampled documentation. They spoke with staff at convenient times and assessed their safeguarding knowledge.
- 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 their evaluation of the provider.

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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