

# Inspection of Stepping Stones Nursery School

Granchester House, 5 Hinchley Way, Esher KT10 0BD

---

Inspection date: 22 April 2022

---

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Outstanding**

The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

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

### **The provision is outstanding**

Children thrive in this exceptionally supportive and inclusive environment. They demonstrate that they feel extremely safe and cared for by fully engaging with all activities, adults and their peers. Huge smiles, squeals of glee and shouts of wonder can be seen and heard from children throughout the day. Staff support children to develop an excellent understanding of rules and boundaries. Children show extremely high levels of self-regulation and build strong relationships. For example, all children share resources, have excellent manners and behave exceptionally well.

Children learn new vocabulary through sharply focused interactions planned by staff. For example, as children explore worms in the soil, staff introduce words such as 'segment,' 'saddle' and 'minerals'. Children develop a love of reading through staff's inspiring and engaging storytelling and skilled use of props. Children rub their hands together in excitement of another story. Children have high levels of self-esteem and confidence. Staff offer praise and encourage children skilfully. Children show extremely high levels of concentration and mathematical knowledge. For example, during a group activity, all children are engaged and measure pretend spaghetti worms with rulers. Children excitedly order worms from shortest to longest and read and write numbers.

Children receive superb support to develop their balance and coordination skills. They explore the garden on trikes and build obstacle courses. They enjoy moving in new ways through exciting dance and action sessions. All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and children who speak English as an additional language, make rapid progress from their starting points. They are extremely well prepared for their next stage in learning, such as school.

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

- The leadership and management are exceptional. Staff receive incredible support. Leaders expertly tailor training to meet the needs of children. Staff speak passionately about training they have undertaken and how they have used this to improve their practice. This ensures children receive the best possible teaching and learning.
- Staff provide an ambitious curriculum that keeps children wonderfully engaged and enthusiastic in their play. Interactions with children are of a consistently high quality. As a result, children make exemplary progress in all areas.
- Children with SEND are incredibly well supported. The special educational needs coordinator works closely with children's parents, staff and external agencies to ensure children get the support they need. Funding is sharply focused to meet

the needs of the most disadvantaged children and ensure they are exceedingly well prepared for school.

- The setting has exceptionally strong partnerships for sharing information with parents. Parents say that staff are 'incredible' and that they treat children as though they 'are part of their family'. Staff communicate with parents in a range of ways, including through parents' evenings, newsletters, video calls and reports. They provide information for parents to extend children's learning at home.
- Robust systems are in place to help staff get to know children when they join the setting. There is a highly effective key-person system. Therefore, staff identify children's starting points extremely well and any gaps in learning are swiftly noted and acted upon.
- Staff work exceptionally hard to actively encourage and embed rules, such as 'kindness' and 'sharing', in practice. Staff are remarkably focused on supporting children to recognise and communicate their feelings. As a result, children demonstrate very high levels of respect for others and can manage their own behaviour extremely well.
- Children flourish in their communication and language skills and they are constantly introduced to new vocabulary. For example, children understand and use the word 'germination' in their play. Older children practise their language skills during imaginative play, where they act out and narrate made-up stories during their own puppet shows.
- Children learn all about eating healthy and nutritious food. They tell visitors about the vegetables they have grown at the nursery. Children have the opportunity to help chop vegetables up ready for their snack.
- Children display high levels of involvement in exploring outdoors. They move confidently in the outdoor area, exploring a vast range of opportunities. Children manage risks exceptionally well. They help each other to move the slide, explaining that they need to look on the ground before placing it down so they do not 'squash their toes'.
- Children have wonderful opportunities to learn about the diverse world they live in. Staff help children to learn about festivals and events that are important to them and their friends. Staff learn key words in children's home language as they play games and sing songs together. Parents come in to speak with the children about different cultures and festivals, including weddings and Eid. Children gain an excellent understanding of the differences and similarities in people's ideas and beliefs.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff have a detailed knowledge of safeguarding. All staff complete safeguarding training regularly throughout the year to ensure their knowledge is kept updated. The manager regularly asks staff safeguarding questions as part of everyday practice to check their knowledge and identify any gaps in their understanding. Staff have a clear understanding of the signs and

symptoms of abuse. They know who to report their concerns to and would have no hesitation in doing so. Robust recruitment practices ensure staff are suitable to work with children. Risk assessments are detailed and thorough. Children are given plenty of opportunities to learn about their own personal safety and to risk assess activities for themselves.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY475647
<b>Local authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	10128753
<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>	Sessional day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	2 to 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	65
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	120
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Sellers, Alison Jane
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP513969
<b>Telephone number</b>	0208 398 1955
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11 July 2016

## Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stones Nursery School at Granchester House in Esher, Surrey, registered in 2014. The nursery is open Monday to Friday, from 7.45am to 5.45pm, during term time only. The provider employs 22 members of staff, 18 of whom hold appropriate qualifications. The nursery school receives funding to provide free early years education for children aged two, three and four years.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Bev Boyd

## 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 their evaluation of the provider.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working on the premises.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk. She talked to the inspector about the curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- Children spoke to the inspector about their time at the nursery.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching, during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they and other designated staff support children with SEND.

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](mailto: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/](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2022