

# Inspection of Stepping Stones Pre-School

West Smethwick Methodist Church, St Pauls Road, Smethwick, Staffordshire B66 1EX

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Inspection date: 5 August 2022

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

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

### **The provision is good**

Children are warmly welcomed into a well organised and safe space. They respond extremely well to staff and clearly enjoy learning. During circle time, children are eager to share how they are feeling and keen to draw their faces on the whiteboards. Older children show high levels of engagement during activities. For example, they are given the time and direction they need to plant their seeds and recall what they have previously learned about planting and caring for plants. Others delight in making their own play dough and understand they need to add more flour when it gets too sticky. Children are keen to repeat any new words introduced and enjoy their interactions with staff.

Children behave well, enjoy the routine and are happy and confident in this nurturing environment. For example, children delight in singing the 'tidy-up' and 'hand-washing song'. They are often enthused by what is on offer. For example, children look for the pretend insects hidden in the compost and match them correctly to the photos of insects. Later, outdoors, children are inspired as they look for insects and talk about the cobwebs and spiders they find. Children enjoy making marks in a variety of ways, learn to recognise their names and enjoy linking sounds to the letters of the alphabet.

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

- The senior leadership team and manager work extremely well together to ensure the educational programme provides a rich range of experiences to help meet children's individual needs. They know about the health and education issues within the local community and focus on the essential knowledge children need to help them succeed. The manager provides effective staff supervision, coaching and training to help develop and extend their teaching skills to ensure teaching is consistently good.
- The success of the nursery is clearly attributed to the strong relationships built with parents from the very start. Staff constantly consult with parents about their children's experiences at home, achievements and interests and incorporate them in their daily planning to inspire children to learn. Parents report that they value the advice and support they receive about any parenting issues they experience. In addition, parents report the home-learning packs are very useful in helping them continue their children's learning at home.
- Staff place a strong focus on supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. As a result, these children are fully included and make good progress from their starting points. Many of the children benefit from staff who are bilingual and communicate in their home languages. This helps to close gaps in children's, learning swiftly.

- Staff incorporate books and singing successfully into the routine to help ignite children's imagination and develop their language development. They engage them well in conversation. However, staff do not always engage the youngest children well enough during some activities and whole-group sessions, and on occasion, they lose interest.
- Promoting children's health is a clear priority. For example, parents benefit from attending workshops about good oral hygiene and healthy eating. In addition, staff plan and sequence activities for children over time to reinforce the importance of keeping their teeth and bodies healthy. Children enjoy caring for and eating the fresh produce they have planted and learn about the importance of recycling and caring for the planet.
- Staff know children and their families well, and the programme for understanding of the world is strong. They plan a rich range of meaningful experiences for children to learn about the natural and wider world as well as their local community. For example, children visit the local church, Sikh temple and various shops to learn about their differences.
- Staff provide a varied range of mathematical activities for children. For example, many children enjoy counting and recognising numbers. However, some mathematical activities are not as popular with all children, particularly with the boys, and their attainment is not as high as the girls.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The leaders and manager ensure all staff have a good understanding of child protection and the procedures to follow if they have a concern about a child. Staff carry out an initial home visit with each family and this helps identify any need for early help. They share information with any professionals working with families to help promote children's welfare. There are robust recruitment, vetting and induction procedures in place to ensure all staff are suitable. Staff carry out daily checks to ensure the areas used by children are safe. They have organised a visit from the police to teach children about keeping safe and educate parents about the risks of the internet.

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

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

- place a better focus on meeting the needs of the youngest children during activities and whole-group sessions to help fully engage their interests
- support staff to gain a deeper understanding of how to enhance the educational programme for mathematics, in particular, to raise the attainment of boys'.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	2571061
<b>Local authority</b>	Sandwell
<b>Inspection number</b>	10239173
<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 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	30
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	29
<b>Name of registered person</b>	West Smethwick Enterprise
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	2571060
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 565 3209
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable

## Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stones Pre-school registered in 2020. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 8.45am until 3pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The nursery employs six members of childcare staff who all hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Parm Sansoyer

## Inspection activities

- This is the first inspection the nursery received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the manager and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the setting.
- The inspector and the manager completed a learning walk together to check the safety of the premises and to gather information about the experiences provided.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and nominated person. She looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector spoke to staff, children and parents at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents.

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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