

Inspection of Stepping Stones Pre School

Catholic Hall Parish Church, Norwich Road, Wymondham, Norfolk NR18 0QE

Inspection date: 22 September 2022

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

Children mostly come into the pre-school readily and are welcomed by friendly and caring staff. Those children who are upset are sensitively supported by familiar and consistent staff. Children demonstrate that they feel safe and secure. They readily go off and choose what they want to do. Staff provide an interesting and varied range of activities in order to inspire children's natural curiosity to discover and explore. Children behave well. For example, when they want a resource that another child is using, they know to ask politely if they may have a turn with it. Children show kindness to each other when they are upset.

Children are becoming confident communicators. Overall, staff promote children's speech and language skills effectively, including those who speak English as an additional language. They engage children in conversation, challenge their thinking and give them time to consider questions before answering. Children have a positive attitude to learning and develop the key skills needed to be ready for school. Children enjoy staff's interactions with them and actively seek them out to share their play and learning experiences. Staff help children to learn about the importance of good health and hygiene. Children are developing independence in managing their own self-care needs. They have daily opportunities to play outdoors.

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

- Staff use what they know about the children to plan interesting and stimulating activities that are rooted in their interests. They plan activities to support children's progress across the areas of learning and build on what children already know and can do.
- Children enjoy chatting with staff as they play. However, staff do not always pay sufficient attention to using the correct pronunciation of words to help support children's developing vocabulary and speaking skills. Staff learn and use key words in the children's home language to help meet the needs of children and families. This includes translating written information for parents into their home language.
- Staff provide activities indoors to promote all areas of learning. They consider where children are not using resources and make changes to the physical environment to encourage children to want to access them. For example, staff noted that children were not using the role-play area, so moved it to another part of the room. Children now access it readily. However, staff do not make the best use of the outdoor play area to help promote children's early mathematical and reading skills.
- Staff are actively engaged in the children's play and are led by what children want to do. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)

are supported well. Their individual needs are identified and met, ensuring that they are fully included in the routines and activities of the day and make the best possible progress that they can.

- Children are helped to learn about the wider world beyond their own experiences. For example, throughout the year they learn about the festivals and customs of their own and other cultures. Staff have been guided by children's own interest and comments relating to the recent death of Queen Elizabeth II to decide how best to manage the subject. Staff have a positive approach to diversity and support children to develop a positive sense of themselves.
- Staff are good role models. Each child has a named person to take responsibility for ensuring that their care and learning needs are met. Key persons build friendly and trusting relationships with parents and children. Parents speak highly of the staff, describing them as 'friendly and caring'. They are encouraged to share what they know about their child and to remain involved in their children's learning, both in the pre-school and at home.
- The provider implements an effective programme of supervision and appraisal for all staff, to foster a culture of mutual support and build on the already good practice. Staff wellbeing is given priority. They work well together as part of a caring team, and they are enthusiastic and motivated. Staff are encouraged in their professional development and maintain mandatory qualifications, such as paediatric first aid.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are vigilant to ensure that hazards in the playroom are identified and reduced so that children can play safely. They have a good awareness of the indicators of abuse and know how to report concerns. Staff understand how to identify and support vulnerable families who may be at risk of harm from extreme behaviours and views. They are confident about the process to follow if they were concerned about a colleague. The provider demonstrates effective recruitment and selection procedures, ensuring that those working with children are suitable for their role.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support staff to develop consistency when modelling language, to help young children to hear and use the correct pronunciation of words
- focus more closely on supporting the early literacy and mathematical skills of children who prefer to learn in the outdoor environment.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY382637
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10235256
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	27
Name of registered person	Standley, Samantha Ann
Registered person unique reference number	RP515261
Telephone number	07787550462
Date of previous inspection	21 October 2016

Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stones Pre-School registered in 2008. The pre-school employs six members of childcare staff. All hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, during term time. Sessions are from 9.15am until 12.15pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Jacqui Mason

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 provider joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this had on children's learning.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the provider.
- Staff talked to the inspector at appropriate times during the inspection and the inspector took account of their views.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector held a meeting with the provider and also discussed self-evaluation.
- The inspector spoke to a small number of parents during the inspection.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.

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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