

Inspection of Steeple Aston Pre-School

Fir Lane, Steeple Aston, Bicester OX25 4SF

Inspection date: 9 November 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children develop warm, caring and nurturing relationships with staff, who promptly recognise when extra support is required. For example, staff adapt the environment and activities available on arrival to ease children's transition into pre-school. They consider how individual children will need support from them to get the most enjoyment out of the activities on offer. Younger children thoroughly enjoy water play and concentrate for long periods of time in relation to their age. They use equipment, such as cups and pipettes, which they use to squeeze and pour water from container to container, once shown how to use them by staff.

Children respond to staff's high expectations for their behaviour. For example, they stop and listen promptly at routine times, for example when the tambourine is used to indicate the need to tidy up. Children are receptive to gentle support and explanation to help them learn the importance of sharing toys and equipment with others.

Children have well developed independence skills. They are keen to serve themselves their snack and are eager to show visitors the 'magic trick' they have learned to put their coats on themselves. Staff provide an appropriate amount of support and guidance for younger children to be successful, for example by allowing them opportunities to pull up zips on clothing.

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

- Managers have worked with the committee effectively to address the weaknesses identified at the last inspection. For example, they have created an action plan for staff monitoring and support, which is helping to ensure a regular cycle of staff supervision. They have sought help from advisors, such as the local authority, to map the curriculum aims the staff team have then used as a basis for planning.
- Staff ensure that their planned activities are appropriate for children's next steps in learning. They use the information that they gather from parents to build a picture of what children know and can do. They use this, alongside their own observations, to plan exciting and motivating learning opportunities. Staff inform parents regularly of the progress that their children make, such as through an online programme. Parents also welcome opportunities to share information through this about their children's achievements at home.
- Staff provide good opportunities for children to develop their understanding of mathematical concepts, such as size. Children compare length during their play with spaghetti. They talk with confidence about the different length of spaghetti as they hold it up. Children use vocabulary, such as 'long', 'short' and 'tiny' to describe their observations.

- On the whole, staff capture opportunities to teach children new skills well. For instance, when children use ride-on toys, staff ask them how quickly they can complete a circuit. Staff model counting aloud to show children how to use non-standard measure to time themselves. However, at other times, such as during free outdoor play, staff could be deployed more effectively to ensure that all children benefit from consistently high-quality interactions.
- Children have positive attitudes to their learning. They learn to play alongside others harmoniously. They show good levels of concentration and engagement in activities of interest. For instance, during sand play, children share resources with their friends. They take turns to dig to find treasure, to serve each other 'meals' and to fill containers to the top.
- Staff develop positive partnerships with parents. For instance, they have face-to-face meetings with them to discuss how children have settled in and talk about the progress they have made. Staff offer suggestions to parents of how they can support their children's learning at home, such as through the weekly newsletter. Children also delight in borrowing books from the lending library to take home and share with their families.
- The whole pre-school team are incredibly positive about working together to drive their continual improvement. The recently appointed manager has organised appropriate opportunities to support this. For example, staff have welcomed time during staff meetings to share their ideas for their long and short term aims for children. Staff feel that their contributions are valued and included. This is helping them to embed the joined-up approach to implementing the curriculum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Children develop a secure understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, they learn to put on helmets before riding bicycles and they are familiar with rules for road safety on outings. All staff have a secure understanding of their responsibilities to keep children safe from harm. They are able to describe signs and symptoms of abuse, such as domestic abuse, emotional abuse and radicalisation. They can describe times when they may need to refer concerns in line with local safeguarding partnership procedures.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- deploy staff more effectively during outdoor play and share best practice to help ensure all children benefit from high-quality interactions and levels of challenge during this time.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY555200
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10217122
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	22 November 2021

Information about this early years setting

Steeple Aston Pre-School re-registered in 2018 as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. The pre-school is located in Steeple Aston, Oxfordshire. It is open on weekdays, from 8.50am to 2.50pm, during school term times. There are options for morning, afternoon, lunch and all-day sessions. The pre-school accepts funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four. The pre-school employs seven staff who work directly with children. Of these, six hold qualifications at level 3 and the manager holds a qualification at level 5.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Lisa Dailey

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The inspector met with the committee chair to discuss improvements that taken place since the last inspection.
- The manager and inspector discussed the curriculum and how it is implemented.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate points about the support they receive in their role and how they plan the curriculum.
- Parents spoke to the inspector and their views were considered. The inspector also looked at the written views of parents provided on the day of the inspection.
- The inspector observed the children engaged in activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact this has on their learning.

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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