

Inspection of Stepping Stones Childcare (Cornwall)

Scol Kensa, Carclaze Road, ST AUSTELL, Cornwall PL25 3AG

Inspection date: 12 April 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children happily arrive and enjoy their time at this nurturing nursery. Staff are warm and caring towards children and adults. They welcome children and parents as they arrive and give children their full attention. Children settle quickly in the nursery and immediately become engrossed in their play. Staff use their knowledge of children's interests to provide stimulating activities which children clearly enjoy. Children develop positive attitudes to learning. They show high levels of engagement and motivation in their play. Children of all ages are independent and confident in their choices. They choose activities by themselves and ask adults to help them if needed. For example, children take books to staff and ask them to read to them.

Leaders and staff strive for children to build positive relationships with others. They support young children's understanding of turn taking and sharing. For example, they play 'catch' with children, saying whose turn it is next. They play alongside children talking to them and model good social skills and manners. Children behave well and show respect for adults and other children. For example, they ask other children and staff if they want to join them when playing, and offer toys for them to play with.

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

- Staff provide a well-planned curriculum based on children's next steps in their learning and development. They use regular observations of children to plan for their specific needs and to identify children who require additional help. They seek advice from outside agencies and ensure that funding to support children is used effectively. This helps children achieve the best possible outcomes, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- Staff promote children's communication and language development well. They skilfully encourage children to talk by asking questions and leaving children time to respond. They focus on developing children's speech and vocabulary. For example, staff plan activities and identify words they want to share with children during their play. Children use new words they have learned independently. For instance, they discuss if they should 'weigh' toys using the 'scales' and predict which will be 'lighter' and 'heavier'.
- Partnerships with parents are good. Children benefit from this relationship that provides a consistent approach and continuity of care. Staff offer additional support for the parents of children with SEND. They meet with them regularly to share children's progress and provide information about how they can help their children. For instance, parents are taught simple signs to promote children's speech and language skills at home.
- Leaders are passionate about providing high-quality care and learning for

children. They have introduced changes, such as providing a deputy key person for each child, and holding regular meetings with staff to discuss children's learning and development. Leaders use these meetings to check staff's understanding and moderate the quality of their assessments of children. Staff feel more supported and this helps the quality of teaching to continue to improve.

- Staff teach children how to assess risks and keep themselves safe. For example, children learn how to hold knives safely when cutting fruit for their snack. However, staff do not teach children about the potential dangers that online technology may pose.
- Staff teach children useful skills, such as following instructions, recognising their names and how to count accurately. They have good links with Reception class teachers and local schools. Children are well prepared for the next stage in their learning, including starting school.
- Staff build children's understanding of the wider world around them and to appreciate people's similarities and differences. They learn about important festivals celebrated by families who live in the local town, which supports their awareness of other cultures.
- Staff support children's physical health. They provide daily opportunities for children to be active and play outside in the fresh air. However, they do not always explain to children the benefits of eating healthy foods to further support their understanding of the importance of healthy food choices.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders follow safe recruitment procedures to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. They use regular supervisions to check the ongoing suitability of staff. They provide robust inductions and training to develop staff's understanding of how to safeguard children. Staff know the signs and symptoms that may indicate a child is at risk of abuse. They know who to go to in the event of a child protection concern, including if they have a concern about another member of staff. There are good systems in place for assessing risks in the nursery and managing the safe administration of children's medication.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- help children to learn about the benefits of eating healthy foods to further promote their ability to make healthy food choices
- develop children's understanding of how they can keep themselves safe when using technology online.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY489461
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10280331
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	50
Number of children on roll	54
Name of registered person	Stepping Stones Childcare (Cornwall) CIO
Registered person unique reference number	RP534601
Telephone number	01726 71294
Date of previous inspection	16 August 2017

Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stones Childcare (Cornwall) is located in St Austell, Cornwall and registered in 2015. It is one of two settings run by Stepping Stones Childcare (Cornwall), and is a charitable incorporated organisation run by trustees. The setting is open on weekdays, all year round, from 8am to 6pm. There are 14 members of staff, two of whom hold early years teacher status. Of the remaining staff, one holds a qualification at level 6, one has a qualification at level 4, eight members of staff have a level 3 qualification and two members of staff are unqualified. The setting receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Rebecca Martin

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 setting.
- The inspector observed the staff's interactions with the children, indoors and outdoors, and the impact of these on children's learning.
- The deputy manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The deputy manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of an activity.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation, including checking evidence of the suitability of the staff.
- The inspector held discussions with staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector held a short meeting with the manager and deputy manager to discuss aspects of leadership and management.

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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