

Inspection of Stepping Stones Pre-School (Harrow)

17 Harrow Scout Group Roxborough Park, Headquarters Rear of Catholic Church,
Roxborough Park, Harrow-on-Hill, Middlesex HA1 3BA

Inspection date: 5 October 2023

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

Staff know children's individual needs and interests very well. They respond positively to children's interests by providing them with a range of age-appropriate toys and activities. Staff have a warm, friendly and welcoming approach. Children are happy and settled in their care. Staff tailor settling-in sessions to children's individual emotional needs. This process contributes significantly to how new children settle in quickly and build secure attachments to their key person and other children. Children have positive attitudes towards their learning and behave well. With the gentle guidance from their key person, younger children learn new routines and explore the setting with confidence. Older children are kind and caring. They happily share toys and resources with younger children.

Staff promote children's communication, language and literacy skills well. Children eagerly join in with listening to and acting out stories. They sing songs and rhymes several times during the day. Children demonstrate a positive attitude to learning new words, such as when they explore natural objects like dry leaves. They confidently use new words as they use scissors to cut down leaves because the 'stems are too long'. Staff build children's thinking skills and concentration span as they play memory games. Children have fun as they attempt to remember the hidden animal mother and baby pairs. This also helps to build on children's persistence.

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

- Children make good progress across all areas of the curriculum. This includes children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those children in receipt of additional funding. This is because staff have effective systems in place to monitor children's learning and development. Staff make thorough assessments, particularly in regard to children with communication and language development delays. This helps staff to identify and address any gaps in children's learning.
- Staff are experienced and teach enthusiastically. However, during some group activities, they attempt to move children on too quickly from one idea to the next. For instance, during an adult-led activity, some children do not engage or focus on grouping animals into their habitats. Therefore, some activities do not entirely promote children's engagement at the highest level. However, children enjoy following their interests in exploring paint. They become immersed in printing with their hands and the feet of toy animals.
- Children develop good independence skills. For instance, they help themselves to toys and resources that meet their interests. During routine times of the day, children serve themselves healthy snacks and pour out their own drinks independently. They follow consistently good hygiene practices. This further

supports younger children to learn how to manage their personal needs, such as washing their hands before eating and after messy play.

- Staff plan weekly outings to help children to learn about their local community. Children also take part in learning about different festivals and faiths throughout the year. They learn to respect other people and their own unique way of life. Staff develop children's early literacy skills very well. For instance, staff model drawing and writing as children make marks with coloured pens and chalk. Children confidently ask staff for help to spell their names.
- Children make good progress in their problem-solving skills. They identify numbers and shapes, match and compare and complete puzzles during their play. In the garden, children explore water and sand play and musical instruments. Staff provide safe areas where children can practise their balancing skills, enjoy riding wheeled toys and climb small apparatus. Children develop many of the skills required for their future learning.
- The manager and staff have strong partnerships with parents, which supports their active involvement in their children's learning. Parents state that they feel fully involved and informed about their children's daily experiences, next steps in learning and achievements.
- The manager is proactive, hard working and has high expectations of her staff. Staff are well supported, and their professional development is actively encouraged. There are basic processes in place for self-evaluation, and some areas for development have been identified. However, leaders have not developed this practice even further to ensure that staff, parents and committee members work together to offer even better experiences for children.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff and committee members understand their roles and responsibilities in protecting children from the risk of abuse and harm. They are alert to the possible indicators when a child needs help. Leaders know the relevant authority to contact for guidance or for making a referral. Staff ensure that the setting, both inside and outside, including the garden, is a safe environment for children and that any risks are minimised. Staff closely supervise children and teach them how to keep themselves safe. For instance, at the start of the play session, children recall the golden rules. They remember to put toys away after playing, how to walk safely and not to run inside.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- plan group activities to ensure that all children fully engage and benefit from the learning opportunities

- build on the current self-evaluation process and include parents' and staff's views and ideas to help to shape future developments.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY277182
Local authority	Harrow
Inspection number	10304818
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	26
Number of children on roll	18
Name of registered person	Stepping Stones Pre-School (Harrow) Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP522705
Telephone number	07952 204022
Date of previous inspection	1 February 2018

Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stones Pre-School (Harrow) registered in 2004. It is located in the London Borough of Harrow. The setting is open during term time, from 8.55am to 1pm, Monday to Friday. It receives funding to provide early education for children aged two, three and four years. The setting employs five members of staff, including the manager. Of these, three staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 4, one at level 3 and one at level 2.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Rubina Nijabat

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the manager.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector and the manager discussed how the setting plans the curriculum and monitors the learning experiences for children.

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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