

# Inspection of Stepping Stones Nursery and Woodland Adventures

Manor Farm, Upper Slaughter, CHELTENHAM, Gloucestershire GL54 2JJ

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Inspection date: 2 February 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
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Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
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Personal development	<b>Good</b>
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Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
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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 arrive happy and eager to learn. Friendly staff greet children warmly and settle them into the nursery with a choice of eating breakfast or making a start on the variety of activities. The manager and staff know the children and families well. They make sure they share plenty of information with parents about what children are doing and learning, through chats at drop-off and pick-up times, photos, posts online or parents' evenings. Parents value the support from staff and feel that their children receive terrific support and learn well.

Children get to enjoy experiences playing and learning in the nearby forest daily. Older children readily recall the rules. They know 'no licking or picking' in case they give themselves 'a poorly tummy', 'stay inside the blue rope' because this is the safe area, and that when staff call 'one, two, three base camp', they must return to them. Older children hold the hands of younger ones as they walk to the base camp among the trees. Children explore, experiment and manage risks under the close supervision of the staff. They develop their curiosity about the natural world and build their muscles and physical skills.

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

- Staff create language-rich environments that encourage children to develop their speech and broaden their vocabulary. They encourage younger children to repeat words or use signs as they interact with them. As older children play, staff pose challenges and ask questions. Occasionally, staff ask questions or talk too quickly so that children do not have sufficient time to think and respond.
- Younger children listen to stories with adults, pointing out and naming what they can see in the pictures. Older children recall the stories of 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt' and 'The Gruffalo' on the walk to the forest area. They recall the different characters, owl, fox, snake and mouse, and phrases from the books, such as 'swishy swashy grass' and 'stumble trip' in the forest. Children are gaining a love of stories and starting to make connections.
- Staff are good role models for children. They say 'please' and 'thank you' when asking children to do things. They remind younger children to put tissues in the bin and wash their hands after wiping runny noses. Older children work out ways to share toys and receive warm praise from staff when they share well. Children are learning to respect others and manage their feelings.
- Partnership with parents is good. Parents love that their children get to play and learn in the forest daily. They say that children get plenty of healthy food choices with a varied menu during the week, prepared by the nursery chef. All staff build good relationships with parents and children, so they feel welcome and contented at nursery.
- Children behave well. They listen to staff and know the different routines of the

day. All children readily help when it is time to put the toys away for mealtimes. They clear up plates and cups after eating. Staff offer reminders about changes in the routine, so children are prepared for them. However, at times, staff do not communicate with each other as well as they could. For example, when it is time for all the children to go to the forest, younger children are not ready at the same time as older ones. Staff are still giving children snack or comforting them as they wake up from naps. Older children must wait around until all children are ready to leave.

- Staff introduce suitable challenges for children to help them extend their skills. For example, younger children have tray puzzles of different animals. Staff encourage children to count the legs on the different animals, identify the colours they can see and give instructions for how to move the pieces so they can fit. Other children concentrate for periods of time connecting the plastic gear wheels onto the base boards until they can make them turn as they push them. Older children take part in activities discovering letters and sounds. Children repeat the sounds of the letters and recognise the initial letters of words such as animals, objects or their own names. Staff prepare children well for their future learning.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

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

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

- make sure that when staff interact with children they give them time to listen, think and respond
- ensure staff communicate better with each other when arranging whole-setting outings to the forest to make sure that older children are not left waiting for periods of time with little to do.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY301590
<b>Local authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10326271
<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>	0 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	75
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	32
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Wilson, Claire Louise
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP512714
<b>Telephone number</b>	01451 821015
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6 October 2022

## Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stones Nursery and Woodland Adventures registered in 2005. The setting is based in Gloucestershire. The nursery is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year. There are six members of staff working with the children. These include the owner/manager, who holds an appropriate childcare qualification at level 4, one member of staff who holds qualified teacher status, two staff who hold appropriate childcare qualifications at level 3 and two who are unqualified. The provider receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years old.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Anita McKelvey

## Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager, deputy manager and the inspector discussed how they organise their early years provision, including the aims and rationale for their early years curriculum.
- The inspector spoke to children to find out about their time at the setting.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The manager and the inspector discussed how the curriculum had been implemented and the impact that this had on children's learning.
- Parents shared their views on the setting with the inspector.

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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