

Inspection of Stepping Stones Playgroup (Dursley)

Dursley C of E Primary School, School Road, DURSLEY, Gloucestershire GL11 4NZ

Inspection date: 13 March 2024

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| 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 are happy and excited to arrive at this pre-school and staff warmly welcome them and their families, helping children settle into their routines. These warm and nurturing interactions from staff help children to feel safe and secure and support their emotional well-being. When children need a little longer to settle, staff sit with them to read stories and talk about books.

The curriculum caters to children's developing needs and interests. Leaders and staff place a particularly strong focus on supporting children's speech and language, emotional needs and personal skills. For example, staff skilfully engage children using their interests to support their imaginary play. Staff know children extremely well and demonstrate a strong understanding of their likes and dislikes. They purposefully prepare resources and activities that they know children will enjoy. This helps children to engage in learning opportunities for extended periods of time. Children's behaviour is good. They follow the pre-school routines, understand expectations and help each other when needed. For example, at tidy up time, staff play special music and children busy themselves putting toys away and playful staff support those that need help to join in.

Staff work in partnership with parents to ensure they receive up to date information regarding their child's routines and development. Parents report that their children have made quick progress from their starting points due to the calm and skilful support from staff.

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

- Staff support children's communication and language skills well. For example, they take many opportunities to interact and talk with children in their play. They introduce new vocabulary and repeat words back to children, enabling them to hear the correct pronunciation. Staff use songs, rhymes, repetitive speech, questioning and discussion to prompt children's emerging speech, recall and thinking.
- Staff place a high focus on supporting children's early literacy skills. For example, they frequently share books with children in all areas of the pre-school. This encourages children's interest and fascination with fiction and non-fiction books. Children often look at books themselves, talking with each other and adults about what they see.
- Staff support children well through consistent routines and guidance to help children learn what is expected of them, providing them with a sense of security and comfort. For example, staff help children to gain a good understanding of the routines and what to expect next. Staff use a sand timer and a bell so that children understand how long they have left to play, before they need to tidy up

the toys.

- Staff use their knowledge of children's individual needs and the information that they receive from other professionals to provide the support that children need to make the progress that they are capable of. Staff celebrate and praise all the children's achievements. This motivates children and raises their self-confidence.
- Children have positive attitudes to learning and engage in adult-led and child-initiated activities for extended periods of time. They benefit from a well planned and resourced environment and staff support children's engagement well. For example, staff introduce counting to children during music play, share books in a cosy outside space and children write their own labels with the mark-making equipment.
- Staff encourage children to make choices to develop their independent thinking. However, they do not always deliver clear messages to children to help them learn about staying healthy. For instance, staff do not remind children to wear coats when they go outside on a cold day and staff do not consider how they can model this to children.
- The manager has a clear oversight of the pre-school. She clearly understands the strengths and areas for development within their practice. The manager works closely with staff to monitor children's progress. Staff receive good support from her and she regularly checks in with them to monitor and remove their workload pressures. However, the committee does not provide the manager and staff with the support they need to enable them to focus even more on meeting the learning and development needs of the children.

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:

- ensure that staff act as good role models and help children to learn about being healthy
- improve the committee members' understanding of their role to support the manager and staff to enable them to focus more on the delivery of the curriculum.

Setting details

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| Unique reference number | 101730 |
| Local authority | Gloucestershire |
| Inspection number | 10317401 |
| 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 | 30 |
| Number of children on roll | 30 |
| Name of registered person | Stepping Stones Playgroup (Dursley) Committee |
| Registered person unique reference number | RP519849 |
| Telephone number | 01453 544588 |
| Date of previous inspection | 18 May 2018 |

Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stones Playgroup (Dursley) registered in 1993 and operates from a building in the grounds of Dursley Primary School in Dursley, Gloucestershire. Playgroup sessions run term time only, from 9am until 2pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and from 9am until midday on Wednesday. The playgroup receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The committee employs four members of staff who work directly with the children. Of these, the manager holds a level 5 qualification and three staff hold qualifications at level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Ruth Glover

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 manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation during snack time.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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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