

Stepping Stones Pre-School



Lee Chapel South Community Hall, Kibcaps, The Knares,, BASILDON, Essex, SS16 5RX

Inspection date	28 September 2015
Previous inspection date	14 October 2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Inadequate	4
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Inadequate	4
Outcomes for children		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is inadequate

- Safeguarding of children is not robust. Ofsted has not been notified of changes to the pre-school committee and Disclosure and Barring Service checks have not been carried out to confirm their suitability.
- Recruitment procedures are not always secure enough to ensure all staff members are suitable to work with children.
- The safeguarding policy is outdated as it does not have regard to current statutory guidance and it does not cover the use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting.
- The system for tracking children's progress is inadequate. Observations and assessments are not always carried out frequently. The information gained from these is not always precise enough to ensure that all children make good progress.
- At times, staff solve children's problems too readily, without giving them time to think of solutions for themselves.

It has the following strengths

- Children are happy and enjoy their time at the pre-school. The staff support some aspects of their learning as they give them many opportunities to count and practise their early writing skills.
- Children who speak English as an additional language are skilfully supported. The pre-school staff work closely with parents to find out key words in children's languages. They use visual prompts to help children understand what activities are on offer.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ review the safeguarding policy to ensure that it reflects all current statutory requirements and ensure that all staff implement it effectively 	12/10/2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ improve the procedure for assessing and tracking children's development to ensure that all staff have an accurate understanding of children's skills and abilities and are able to swiftly identify and close any gaps in children's learning 	12/10/2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ensure that all vetting procedures and checks are carried out for all staff and committee members; this includes an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check, and ensure records are kept 	12/10/2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ensure systems are in place to notify Ofsted of any changes to the members of the management committee of the childcare provision. 	12/10/2015

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

- allow children to have more opportunities to do things for themselves and to think of solutions to problems they encounter.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities both indoors and in the outside play area and talked to the staff and children at appropriate times.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation and held a meeting with the pre-school leader.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documents and a range of other documents, including the safeguarding policy and procedure.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of staff working with children and of the committee.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and of the pre-school's self-evaluation form.

Inspector
Jill Hardaker

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is inadequate

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective. The provider has not notified Ofsted of changes in committee members and there are gaps in records to demonstrate the suitability of some adults involved with the pre-school. Furthermore, Disclosure and Barring Service checks for committee members have not been carried out. The safeguarding policy has not been updated for many years. Therefore, children are not fully safeguarded because there is no policy relating to the safe use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting and no policy on e-safety. However, all staff are fully aware of their responsibility to report any concerns about children's well-being and are confident in their ability to recognise child protection issues. Staff have many opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding through attending relevant training courses and through undertaking appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school leader carries out annual appraisals each year. However, these opportunities for staff development do not always have a positive impact on the safety, well-being and good development of the children. Staff recognise some gaps in children's learning and development. However, the tracking of children's progress is ineffective as the leaders do not challenge staff about their infrequent assessments and planning for next steps in children's learning.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate

The staff carefully plan the environment to entice and engage children in their learning. Children enjoy water play and the staff model mathematical language and introduce concepts, such as full and empty and heavy and light. Children demonstrate a good understanding of writing as they accurately spell out their name and tell the staff they will write their name themselves. However, on occasions, the staff do not fully promote chances for children to do things for themselves as they engage in drawing and craft activities. The staff collect information about children's starting points from parents. This helps them to have an understanding of children's individual needs. They share children's development records with parents and with any other settings children attend.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are inadequate

The provider has failed to meet some of the safeguarding and welfare requirements, which compromises children's safety and well-being. The well-established staff team create a calm and happy environment. Children enjoy daily fresh air in the large garden. They have opportunities to be active as they ride on bikes and play football. Children are excited to find a spider and carefully look at it through a magnifying pot. They encourage each other to be careful not to hurt it. Children show good levels of independence as they use the bathroom and find their belongings at snack time. Staff encourage all parents to provide a healthy snack and they use snack times to have conversations with children about healthy food.

Outcomes for children are inadequate

Information gained from assessments of children's learning is not always used often enough or well enough to ensure all children make good progress. As a result, the staff do not have an accurate understanding of all children's development to ensure they are well

prepared for their next stage of learning, such as at school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	402243
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	855420
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	35
Name of provider	Stepping Stones Pre-School Committee
Date of previous inspection	14 October 2011
Telephone number	07711 637159

Stepping Stones Pre-School was registered in 1964. The pre-school employs six members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school opens during school term time only. The sessions are from 8.45am until 11.45am, Monday to Friday and 11.45pm until 2.45pm on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The pre-school supports children who speak English as an additional language.

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