

Inspection of Stepping Stones Pre-School and Kid's Club

Whitestone Infant School, Magyar Crescent, Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV11 4SQ

Inspection date:

23 September 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
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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

Staff greet children and help them to settle well. Children find where to hang up their coat as staff help them to search for their name and photo. Children form secure relationships with kind and caring staff. The golden rules that staff develop help children to learn and understand what is expected of them. Staff offer lots of praise when children follow these rules. For instance, staff tell children that they have 'lovely listening ears'. They provide gentle reminders when needed and model positive behaviours.

Leaders are clear about what they want children to learn. Staff think carefully about children's next steps and interests during their planning. There is a focus on activities that support familiar stories and children's communication and language development. Staff sign and use visual clues to help all children to understand and learn how to communicate effectively.

Children enjoy plenty of sensory play. They explore clay and autumnal objects, such as pine cones and conkers. Staff encourage children to push, squeeze and roll the clay. This helps children to strengthen their finger and hand muscles in preparation for early writing. Staff model vocabulary, including new words, such as squeeze, sticky, push, and pull. Children then confidently use this new vocabulary in their play. They demonstrate their perseverance as they make clay structures and bring their ideas to life.

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

- Leaders are inclusive in their approach to the pre-school provision. Staff develop detailed support plans for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They build strong partnerships with parents and other professionals. This helps to ensure that children receive the support they need to make good progress. Leaders use additional funding to provide extra staff to support children with SEND. Consequently, children make good progress in their learning from their individual starting points.
- Parents speak highly of the pre-school. They especially praise the communication and involvement they have from leaders and staff. Parents enjoy regular stay-and-play sessions, where they observe children's play and discuss their progress with staff. Parents comment on these sessions as 'a time to create wonderful memories'. This helps to strengthen partnerships with parents.
- Leaders have systems in place to support staff's professional development. They provide training for staff, such as around teaching forest school sessions. This helps to develop staff's confidence in their roles and helps to develop new areas of the curriculum. Although leaders monitor the quality of teaching, this does not always inform improvements in the areas where it is most needed. For example,

some staff interactions with younger children do not help them to engage in their play effectively.

- Staff support children to develop their physical skills through a range of experiences. Children shovel and rake sand using appropriate tools and push wheelbarrows to strengthen their core muscles. They have fun jumping from climbing structures with support from staff, and balancing on beams to help develop their coordination and large muscles.
- Staff incorporate stories and rhymes into daily routines. They read a variety of fiction and non-fiction books with children. Staff build on children's knowledge of familiar books as they revisit them. For example, children retell favourite stories with puppets. Staff encourage parents to support their children's learning. They share books from a lending library for families to enjoy at home. This helps children to develop a love of books.
- Staff plan interesting activities to support children's understanding of early mathematics. Children arrange pumpkins and marrows by size and group them by colour and shape, for instance. Staff use vocabulary such as longer or shorter, heavier and lighter, as children learn about growing vegetables. Staff model the language and support children's confidence in using the new words. For example, staff praise children when they comment that their marrow is 'really heavy'.
- Staff help children to understand expectations and to follow instructions. For example, children know they help tidy up before snack time and then wash their hands in preparation for eating their snack. This helps to develop their independence skills. However, some routines are less clear. For instance, during lunchtime some children require more support to understand what happens next.

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:

- strengthen staff's interactions with younger children to extend their learning even further during play
- strengthen the organisation of routines to support children to understand what happens next in their day more consistently.

Setting details

Unique reference number	200780
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10409653
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 11
Total number of places	72
Number of children on roll	273
Name of registered person	Stepping Stones Pre-School And Kids Club Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP906060
Telephone number	02476 387637
Date of previous inspection	26 February 2020

Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stones Pre-School and Kid's Club registered in 1997. It is independently operated but is situated on the site of Whitestone Infant School in Nuneaton. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday, from 7.50am to 5.30pm, during term time. The pre-school offers government funded places for childcare and early education. There are 24 childcare staff. Of these, 17 hold an appropriate early years qualification between level 2 and level 6. The manager holds qualified teacher status.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Clare Walton

Inspection activities

- Leaders joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- Parents shared their views of the pre-school with the inspector.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- Children spoke with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector and leaders carried out joint observations of group activities.
- Leaders showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

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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