

Inspection of Steady-Steps Pre-School

Rowner County Infant School, Copse Lane, GOSPORT, Hampshire PO13 0DH

Inspection date: 14 January 2022

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
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The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children benefit from being in the care of an exceptional staff team at Steady-Steps Pre-School. All children have the very best support for their learning from inspirational staff, who have extremely high aspirations for children.

Children enter excitedly and are warmly greeted by staff, who know them very well. They run in to find their key person, demonstrating they feel exceptionally safe and secure in the staff's warm and nurturing care. Children thrive at the pre-school.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. They are highly motivated and engaged during their time at the pre-school. Children clearly know what is expected of them and are very independent from a young age. They know to find helmets to wear when they use the balance bikes, for example. Children have excellent manners. They are highly effective communicators and play cooperatively in the stimulating learning environments that staff provide.

Children are highly caring and respectful. They offer to help their friends peel their bananas, for instance, and invite the inspector to sit down and share their lunch. Children help their friends with their learning. Staff offer an abundance of warm praise and encouragement to children, building their self confidence and self-esteem to high levels.

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

- Leaders and managers have embraced recent changes to the early years foundation stage. They offer children extremely well-thought-out learning experiences. Staff have an excellent understanding of how children learn.
- The support staff put in place for children who require additional help for their learning is outstanding. Highly individualised plans focus and build on what children can do. Staff form highly effective partnerships with external professionals. This ensures the very highest levels of consistency for children's care and learning.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, staff have reflected on what gaps children have in their learning. A highly innovative series of planned learning opportunities in small groups, and through individual support, have targeted the weaker areas. Children make excellent progress. Staff confidently offer pioneering support for children's resilience and self-regulation. The support staff offer for children's communication and social skills is exceptional.
- Children have many opportunities to become engrossed in books and develop a love of reading. Cosy reading areas invite children in, to settle down and to investigate the wide range of books on offer. They can practise telling familiar

stories using small figures and painted spoons, and exploring different sized copies of the same story. Children's vocabulary is supported and extended very effectively through staff sharing highly engaging stories, rhymes and songs.

- Children laugh with delight as they post balls into tubes and watch as they are blown away by a fan. Children can challenge themselves and take appropriate risks as they play. For example, they climb ladders to post balls and ride bikes over uneven ground in the forest area. Children have ample opportunities to develop their physical skills.
- Staff offer children simply amazing learning spaces and opportunities. They encourage children to find out about the diversity of the wider world through exciting and thought provoking activities. Children show high levels of curiosity, which are developed further by stimulating activities and lively discussions with staff.
- Children show a can-do attitude. They confidently problem solve and make ramps to roll tyres down, working together to move larger planks of wood. Highly sensitive staff allow children to develop their play. They maximise children's learning at every possible opportunity through high-quality and timely interactions.
- Parents comment extremely positively about the pre-school staff and the support their children receive. Staff go 'above and beyond' to ensure parents are confident to leave their children at the pre-school, for instance. They offer exceptional support to parents, through the pre-school and in their daily family life.
- Leaders and managers empower the staff team to continually develop their skills and knowledge. The whole staff team is extremely proactive in ensuring the pre-school continues to develop. They constantly seek out new ways to benefit children's learning. Leaders ensure that the staff's emotional well-being is a high priority. Quality is never compromised.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities to promote children's welfare and well-being at all times. There is a robust training plan in place for staff. They all complete regular safeguarding training as well as paediatric first-aid qualifications. Highly engaging staff meetings offer staff the opportunity to practise their skills and knowledge through innovative scenario situations. Staff recruitment follows a rigorous procedure. An extensive induction programme and ongoing supervision ensures staff are suitable to work with children.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY364360
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10108670
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 7
Total number of places	52
Number of children on roll	84
Name of registered person	Steady-Steps Pre-School
Registered person unique reference number	RP903292
Telephone number	01329 237338
Date of previous inspection	3 February 2015

Information about this early years setting

Steady-Steps Pre-School registered in 2008 in its current premises. It is located in the grounds of Rowner Infant School, Gosport. The pre-school is open from 7.30am to 4pm, every weekday during school term time only. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are 17 staff employed to work with the children, 14 staff hold relevant early years qualifications at level 3 and above.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Emma Dean

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 this into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The curriculum lead joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about the curriculum and what they intend for the children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided indoors and outside and assessed the impact this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector talked to staff and the children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- A meeting was held between the inspector and manager. The inspector looked at relevant documentation and saw evidence of suitability of staff.
- The manager completed a joint observation with the inspector.
- Parents shared their views of 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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