

Inspection of Stepping Stones Day Nursery

29 Reform Street, Gomersal, Cleckheaton, West Yorkshire BD19 4JX

Inspection date: 12 January 2023

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

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children develop their curiosity as they play and explore at this warm and welcoming nursery. For example, they take part in activities that encourage them to use their higher level thinking skills. Older children observe what happens when carbon tablets are mixed with water in a tube. They use their knowledge about what they have already learned to predict that the lid will pop off, and they giggle with excitement when it does. These experiences support children to develop positive attitudes to learning.

Children develop their physical skills in a variety of ways. For example, they learn how to safely climb on wooden play equipment or balance across a plank of wood. Older children delight in swinging on a rope swing in the outdoor area. This helps children to begin to understand how to manage risks as they play. Opportunities for children to build their independence skills are well thought out. For example, babies use slanted open-top cups to drink from at mealtimes. This helps to develop their mouth and tongue muscles in readiness for learning how to talk. Toddlers serve their own meals. They use real plates and glasses and take responsibility for looking after them. Children carry out special jobs, such as setting the tables for snack and mealtimes. As a result, their confidence and self-esteem grow.

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

- Children show that they understand what is expected of them. They listen when staff remind them to use their 'walking feet'. When children show exceptional behaviour, they earn a 'bead in a jar'. Children work as a team to receive a special group reward, such as an outing or pyjama day, when they have collected a certain number of beads. This encourages children to learn how to manage their own behaviour and try their best.
- Children explore with enthusiasm as they take part in activities led by adults. For example, children giggle as they use feather paintbrushes to make marks. However, at times, staff do not always consider how to fully support children in their independent play. For example, the environment is not always set out to enable children to select resources and play and explore independently. This does not fully support children's learning and development to the highest levels.
- Children of all ages thoroughly enjoy joining in with story and rhyme-time activities. They learn new words, such as 'castanet', as they do the action for this word. Children learn how to pronounce words and sounds correctly. However, due to the daily routines, children do not always get the opportunity to hear the end of stories and fully develop their love of reading. In addition, some singing sessions take place with large groups of children, resulting in high noise levels. This does not support quieter or less-confident children who may benefit from smaller, more-focused group sizes.

- Children learn to name their emotions. They can place their photo in a bowl labelled 'happy' or 'sad' to share with staff how they are feeling. Staff teach older children to recognise other emotions, such as angry or scared. This supports children to understand how they can express their feelings.
- Parents and carers say that their children look forward to their time in the nursery. They are supported to help their child continue their learning at home. For example, they can take suggestions for activities to do at home from the nursery's learning library. Parents are invited into the nursery to join their children for special events and celebrations. This extends children's experiences and further engages parents in supporting their children's development.
- The manager works with staff to identify where they need further support. She provides coaching to help staff work on individual areas for development. Leaders recognise the achievements of staff. This motivates staff to continue to improve their teaching skills. Leaders have accessed training from the local authority. This has supported them to make improvements since the last inspection and further raise the quality of the care provided by the nursery.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular training to keep their safeguarding knowledge up to date. They understand the importance of recording injuries that happen to children outside of the nursery. This ensures that staff are able to identify and report potential abuse or neglect. Leaders monitor any accidents that have happened in the nursery. They make necessary changes to prevent further accidents. Staff closely supervise children when they take part in risky play activities, such as climbing and balancing. They talk to children about how they can keep themselves safe. This helps to promote children's safety in the nursery.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- enhance the learning environment and the ways in which staff plan for times when children are engaged in independent learning to support children in making further progress as they play and explore
- consider the organisation of group activities to ensure that quieter children are further supported to join in and all children are able to fully focus on their learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY305237
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10271311
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	48
Number of children on roll	70
Name of registered person	Stepping Stones Nurseries Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP535314
Telephone number	01274 872877
Date of previous inspection	24 May 2022

Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stones Day Nursery registered in 2005. The nursery employs 14 members of childcare staff. Of these, 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. One member of staff holds a relevant qualification at level 6. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7.00am to 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Samantha Lambert

Inspection activities

- This inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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 inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the manager.
- Parents shared their views on the nursery with the inspector.
- The manager 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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