

Two Steps

St. Johns Methodist Church, Price Street, SMETHWICK, West Midlands, B66 3QU

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

11/01/2013

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision	2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Children enjoy close relationships with their key persons who are caring and sensitive as they identify and support children's individual needs.
- Children are happy, motivated and eager to learn supported by the skilled and enthusiastic staff who promote children's personal, social and emotional development well.
- Some older, more able children are making exceptional progress particularly in developing their communication and literacy skills because staff have high expectations of how children learn.
- There is a very strong focus on inclusive practice; highly committed staff support children from a very diverse community, valuing and respecting each family's background.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Opportunities for children to self-manage their activity and take measured risks are sometimes hindered as staff occasionally over-direct and restrict movement around the indoor environment.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities and staff interaction in the care rooms and during outdoor activities.
- The inspector spoke with a representative of the registered organisation and conducted joint observations with the manager.
- The inspector took account of the views and comments from parents spoken to during the inspection.
- The inspector examined a range of documentation including records to assess staff suitability and qualifications, children's records, policies and procedures and children's developmental records.
- The inspector read through the setting's self-evaluation and discussed the content with the manager and a representative of the registered organisation.

Inspector

Patricia Webb

Full Report

Information about the setting

Two Steps Pre-school was registered in 2012 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register and is situated in St John's Methodist Church in

Smethwick, Sandwell. It is managed by a committee from West Smethwick Enterprise and works in conjunction with another of the organisation's settings sited nearby. The group serves the local area and is open to all children. It operates from a self-contained suite of playrooms on the first floor of the premises, accessed via a flight of stairs. There is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The setting employs five members of childcare staff including the manager. All staff hold relevant qualifications to level 3 and the manager has Early Years Professional Status. The setting opens Monday to Friday, term time only, from 8.45am until 3pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 20 children on roll in the early years age group. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- extend the opportunities for children to be more independent in their choice of activities and the use of their environment by encouraging them to move freely between rooms. Encourage staff to intuitively assess the need for direct intervention to enable children to take measured risks.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children make good progress in the setting supported by the dedicated and enthusiastic staff. Some older more able children are supported in making rapid progress particularly in their communication and literacy skills. For example, some four-year-olds competently write their names, as staff phonetically spell out the words. Others recognise letters and sounds in the environment, such as the familiar brand logos for some stores and advertised products. Staff nurture this development through effective planning, observation and assessment. Further challenge and extension for such children is assured as staff are introducing some elements of Key Stage 1 curriculum in their individualised planning. Staff accurately assess children's progress through pertinent observations of their activities. They plan effectively to cover all areas of learning by identifying children's individual interests. For example, a child becomes absorbed in small world play with the beautiful wooden ark and the animals. The child's learning record shows how they become aware of pairs of animals and consider why the animals need to go into the ark. The child is then able to transfer this play to another object, making the wooden bread bin in the

role play area into a 'smaller' ark.

The quality of teaching is good and staff use effective questioning to extend children's thinking and encourage them to problem-solve in their play. This is instrumental in preparing children for the next steps in their lives, such as the transition to school. Staff support and acknowledge children's learning abilities. As a child chooses to access the computer and struggles to use the mouse on the right hand side of the computer. The child then fetches a small stool, places it on the left hand side, positions the mouse on the stool and settles to work on the game. The child beams with satisfaction at having solved the problem. Some staff are intuitive in engaging children. For example, when playing in the water tray, children experience the feel, weight and buoyancy of the glass beads. A member of staff develops a game, making the beads in her hand disappear and re-appear as if by magic. Children are amazed and seek to solve the trick through discussion, uttering the word 'abracadabra', copied from the member of staff's input.

There is a strong emphasis on promoting children's development in the prime areas of learning. Staff discuss feelings and emotions with children using additional prompt cards with the younger children. This enables all children to participate effectively in the activity. They relate very positively to their key persons who take time to discuss care routines and individual needs with parents from the outset. Children are also gaining skills in the use of signing and non-verbal communication. They eagerly sign to their favourite songs and rhymes and some children use the gestures to indicate their needs. Staff encourage children to contribute to stories, building children's anticipation about what happens next in the story. Some children accurately predict the next step, beaming with delight when they are right.

Every child and their family are warmly welcomed into the setting. Staff discuss cultural and family backgrounds and seek out reliable information about these to ensure that each child is supported effectively. For example, staff have linguistic skills in some of the home languages prevalent in the community. Children access a wide range of resources, equipment and activities that promote positive images of diversity and disability. They listen to various types of music from around the world and enjoy making their own music using both commercial and home-made resources. Outside, they bang out rhythms using the old pots, pans and metal utensils strung along the fence, delighting in the noises they make.

Parents contribute actively to the children's learning and are seen as true partners in their children's attainment. Staff value what parents tell them about the activities their children do at home. Some parents bring in photographs of family members, holidays and family events to add to the developmental records. Children eagerly share some of these with visitors explaining who the people are and what was happening at the time. This promotes children's sense of belonging and furthers their emotional development.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Staff are very diligent in ensuring children's safety, although at times this can impinge on how children begin to assess some risk for themselves. For example, safety gates are in

place across the main playroom and children's free movement from one room to another is restricted. Occasionally, some areas become a little congested when a number of children congregate in one place. This means that some children cannot always easily move from one activity to another area as they wish.

Children do, however, manage the stairs in the setting with ease, honing their physical skills and holding the rail. They develop their independence in attending to their self-care as they understand what clothes to wear in the various weathers. Some older children help the younger ones in finding their coats and hats, particularly when staff have secreted hats down coat sleeves when hung up.

Staff offer positive role models for the children to gain an understanding of acceptable behaviour. They sit with the children at snack and meal times, encouraging good manners and social interaction as well as promoting children's eating habits. Discussions take place about healthy options and what ingredients are used to make the freshly baked pizzas. Children's specific dietary needs are discussed with parents and adhered to ensuring children's dietary and religious preferences are met.

Children access the well-resourced outdoor play area as a planned activity, as the building does not lend itself to free-flow access. Children thoroughly enjoy clambering over the car tyres. They develop their senses as they discover how sound changes when they shout down the vacuum cleaner hose. Dexterity and manipulation develops as they weave ribbon and materials through the fencing. A parachute game is used to great effect by staff as children learn to work together as a team, making the chute inflate and deflate through their actions. One child develops a confident manner, adopting the role of retriever when the ball is bounced off the chute by the other children. Such activities also contribute well to children's physical development and good health.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded well through the robust procedures for the recruitment and selection of staff. Staff know the procedures to be followed in the event of any child protection concerns. This reassures parents of the organisation's commitment to meeting its legal duties and the requirements for safeguarding. Risk assessments are in place with great care taken to maintain the premises safely and securely. At times, the commitment to keeping children safe can impede their free movement around the setting. For example, the safety gates are still in place on the playroom although the management have now fitted a fully secure, lock-operated door to the top of the stairs.

Good practice is established as the organisation is committed to ongoing improvement and supporting the identified needs of families in the community. Parents speak with deep appreciation of the management and staff working with them to ensure all children make good progress and are safe and well cared for. Some parents are opting to continue their children's early education within the setting rather than attending a school-based setting. They cite the high staff ratios and skills and the 'family-feel' of the setting as indicators in their decision.

Policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and implemented very effectively by all staff. Students attending the setting are effectively supported and mentored by senior staff. This ensures that they learn from the good practice around them and children gain from a consistent and professional approach from all involved in their care, learning and development. Practice is monitored well through staff appraisals and regular supervision. Staff also observe each other's practice and share ideas and skills effectively to promote children's progress and enjoyment. They evaluate and reflect upon practice, accurately identifying strengths and areas for further improvement. For example, they are very aware of ensuring that sufficient extension and challenge are planned for with children who are achieving above their expected levels of development. The robust monitoring of the educational programmes ensures that staff are confident in the delivery of the broad range of experiences that are planned to help children make progress in all areas of learning and help to ensure there are no gaps in their learning and development.

Partnerships with other early years providers are established and information is shared to support children's continuity of learning. Staff from some of the feeder schools visit the setting to observe and introduce themselves to the children, helping children to be familiar with them before joining full time education. Staff work effectively with other professionals who may be involved in supporting individual children in their overall progress. This ensures that interaction is consistent and focused.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an

acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.

Met The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.

Not Met The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY451188
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	808377
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	20
Name of provider	West Smethwick Enterprise
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	07825837928

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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