

Stepping Stones Day Nursery (Durham) Limited

Suit 15-17, The Crossgate Centre, Alexandra Crescent, Durham, DH1 4HF

Inspection date	17/01/2013
Previous inspection date	11/04/2012

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	3
	Previous inspection:	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is satisfactory

- The children are happy and settled in the setting because the staff have very good relationships with the children.
- Good relationships with parents mean that staff can build on children's interests from home.

It is not yet good because

- Staff do not always know where children are at in their learning because assessments are not matched to the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The two year progress check for children aged two to three has not been carried out because staff are not familiar with this yet.
- Children are not always able to access resources independently because they cannot see clearly what is available.
- The manager does not monitor assessment within the setting which means that underachievement is not always identified.
- Children are not able to access an outdoor environment on a daily basis which means that access to fresh air and learning from the environment is limited.
- There are missed opportunities for counting which means progress in mathematics is

slower than in other areas.

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 voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector toured the setting with the manager.
- The inspector interviewed the manager.
- The inspector carried out observations and held discussions with staff and students.
- The inspector carried out observations with the manager.
- The inspector looked at a sample of documents including planning, assessments and policies.

Inspector

Elizabeth Fish

Full Report

Information about the setting

Stepping Stones Day Nursery (Durham) Limited is owned by a limited company and was registered in 2011. It operates from The Crossgate Centre in Durham City. The setting serves the local and wider community. There are currently 37 children attending who are

within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The nursery employs six members of child care staff. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round closing on bank holidays and in between Christmas and New Year. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop ongoing assessment as an integral part of the learning and development process so that staff understand children's level of achievement within the Early Years Foundation Stage and shape learning experiences for each child to reflect that
- ensure staff are confident and able to carry out the two year progress check to provide a summary of development in the prime areas of learning between the age of two and three years.

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

- monitor assessments to ensure they contain an accurate picture of skills and progress so that underachievement is identified and targeted
- reorganise resources so that children know what is available and where they can get it from
- develop opportunities for children to access outdoor play on a daily basis
- develop opportunities for counting in everyday routines such as snack and meal times.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have a sound understanding of the learning and development requirements for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Observations carried out by the staff recognise children's interests and next steps for planning but they are not linked to any guidance such as Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage which means that staff are not able to fully match activities to children's needs and there is insufficient challenge in activities for some children. This means that children's progress is generally satisfactory. The staff are aware of the need to complete the two year progress check however this has not yet been completed as staff are not yet familiar with the document and are awaiting training on this.

Children enjoy a range of activities that are planned according to the seven areas of learning, taking account of learning and interests at home. For example, babies enjoy exploring snow and painting snow pictures building on information from parents. This means that children are interested in the activities. Staff generally support play well and help the children explore and develop their ideas further. When a baby explores paint with her fingers she is given opportunities for finger painting and similarly when an older child makes an igloo in shaving foam he is supported into developing this using other materials. As a result children begin to explore and express their ideas in different ways.

A range of activities are planned to help children develop their communication skills and staff have a sound knowledge of how to support language skills, they rephrase and extend children's communications and encourage further communication by talking about things themselves. When staff say 'the ice cream van is my favourite' it promotes further conversation about colour and favourite ice creams. This means that children are generally making steady progress in communication and language. Children enjoy a range of books and help staff to select favourite books for the book corner meaning children are acquiring an enjoyment of books. Physical development is planned for within the setting and outside as children visit the park and enjoy digging in the sand and snow. However, the setting does not have an outdoor area which means that access to the outdoors is restricted to planned outings which impacts on the development of large muscle skills.

Children enjoy using shape sorters and jigsaws to support their understanding of shape, and activities planned into the sand and water help children to develop mathematical language such as full, empty and bigger. Children are encouraged to count as they build with blocks but opportunities to promote counting within the daily routine are missed as staff put out cups and plates and cutlery for snack and lunch. This means opportunities to engage in meaningful counting is limited.

Staff engage with parents well. There is a good dialogue between parents and the setting which means that information is generally transferred between home and setting effectively. Verbal communications and a daily diary support this flow of information. Some parents also use email to communicate with the setting which means that care information as well as interests from home can be incorporated into the daily routine.

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

Children have access to a large open play space with some defined spaces for books and the home corner and creative play. Resources are stored in boxes but because it is not always clear what is in the boxes, children are not accessing equipment themselves. As a result the opportunities for children to follow their own interests are limited. Children develop an awareness of acceptable behaviour as they play alongside each other within the room and learn to move around safely. However the organisation of the room means that there are large spaces where children can run around and become more boisterous.

Children are settled within the setting and have warm and loving relationships with the staff. The size of the setting means that children and their parents become familiar with their key person and form a close bond with other staff in the setting. The views of the parents support this. Children are confident within the setting, they cheer and clap as they finish jigsaw puzzles and younger children try out new things, such as the trampoline, and persevere with this until they succeed. This means children are generally developing skills to support them with future learning.

Children are kept safe in the setting as entry to the setting is controlled by an intercom and buzzer. Safety gates are used to separate the kitchen from the room. Risk assessments are thorough with potential hazards identified and threats eliminated.

Children are developing an understanding of being healthy as they enjoy fruit and vegetable fingers for snack and have access to water throughout the day. Parents provide a healthy lunch for the children. Children obviously enjoy their vegetables as many children eat peppers and cucumber before the rest of their meal. Children have access to fresh air through planned visits to the park to feed the ducks, however this is restricted as the setting does not have an outdoor play area.

Children move between rooms within the nursery easily as the children have lunch and snack together and have opportunities when they can socialise as a larger group. This means that children know staff and children well and are prepared for the next stage within the nursery. There are currently no children attending other settings but the manager is organising visits and developing relationships with the nursery. This will support children in making a smooth transition to nursery.

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

The manager has a reasonable understanding of her responsibilities in meeting the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is a suitable programme of activities to motivate the children and allow them to make progress. However, the manager does not always monitor planning and assessment. As a result activities sometimes lack challenge because assessment is not rigorous enough to highlight where children are not making progress and where interventions are needed.

The manager has a sound understanding of her responsibilities in relation to safeguarding. She is the named person and has attended recent training. She has clear policies that

have been updated and shared with all staff and parents and she knows who to contact if she has a concern about a child. Clear recruitment and vetting procedures mean that children are safe in the setting.

Self-evaluation is satisfactory. The actions from the last inspection have been addressed and consent is now given for emergency treatment. Recommendations from the last inspection are being addressed as the manager has sourced land for outdoor play on site and is developing this with the council. The manager is aware of the strengths within the setting and has identified areas for development with the support of the local authority. She has an action plan in place which highlights areas for development such as developing observation and assessment systems and developing the environment to allow children to follow their interests. She has contacted the local authority to arrange training.

The manager has developed systems for appraisal and supervision. Training is targeted according to the needs of the setting and the staff. Feedback to the staff enables the whole team to evaluate the provision and make changes that they feel would benefit the children. Recent changes have included using next steps in their planning. As a result professional development is beginning to have a positive impact on the setting.

The Childcare Register

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

The requirements for the voluntary 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	EY436726
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	876074
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	22
Number of children on roll	37
Name of provider	Stepping Stones Day Nursery (Durham) Ltd
Date of previous inspection	11/04/2012
Telephone number	01913843471

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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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