

Stepping Stones Day Nursery Spixworth

Spixworth Infant School, Ivy Road, Spixworth, NORWICH, NR10 3PX

Inspection date	25/02/2013
Previous inspection date	Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
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's progress is rapid because they are taught by staff who are knowledgeable, committed and enthusiastic.
- Children are encouraged to be active learners. Discovery, exploration and independence are key features of their day and staff support this very well.
- Each and every child's needs are closely considered by the staff team and steps are taken to ensure these are met.
- Children show high levels of concentration in what they do because staff extend and develop their ideas, so that the most is gained out of each activity.
- Children form strong bonds with staff, who are caring and kind and know their key group children very well.
- The proprietor shows an inspiring commitment to continuous improvement, to benefit and enhance children's learning and development.

It is not yet outstanding because

- At times during the day, when changes occur in the routine of the nursery, such as tidy-up time, children lose focus. At these times, their very good learning is less progressive.

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.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities throughout the nursery and in the garden.
- The inspector spoke with the proprietor/manager, staff and children during the inspection and carried out observations of the children.
- The inspector looked at children's progress records, a selection of policies and required documentation.
- The inspector spoke to parents during the inspection.

Inspector

Andrea Snowden

Full Report

Information about the setting

Stepping Stones Day Nursery Spixworth was registered in 2012 on the Early Years Register. It operates from Spixworth Infant School, located on the outskirts of Norwich. The nursery is one of two settings owned by the proprietor. It serves the local area and is accessible to all children. Children use a large classroom within the school and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday between 9am and 3.15pm during school term time only. There are currently 56 children on roll who are in the early years age group. The

nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds. It supports children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The nursery is privately owned and managed by the proprietor. She employs seven members of childcare staff and also works in the setting herself. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the way breaks in the natural flow of the nursery routine are managed, to ensure that the otherwise rich and challenging focus on children's learning is maintained.

Inspection judgements

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

Children make very good progress in this setting because staff understand how young children learn and they provide a broad range of activities to stimulate and engage them. Staff also encourage children to steer their own learning, by allowing them to choose their own activities and helping them to extend and develop ideas. For example, when a child draws a picture of an egg, staff facilitate a conversation about where eggs come from and then follow up the discussion by taking the child to look at the eggs in the nursery kitchen. This helps children to make links in what they learn and gain a greater understanding.

Regular and insightful observations of children at play help staff to plan next steps for children, which provide challenge and depth. Key persons know their children exceptionally well and monitor their development closely, ensuring they are reaching the expected milestones. Activities are planned around each child's individual needs and interests and, as a result, they are fully engaged. Staff are skilled at ensuring children get the most from an activity and support children in seeing it to its natural conclusion. High levels of concentration are evident in the older children, preparing them for more structured learning when they move to school. Children are encouraged to evaluate their own learning and understanding at the end of an activity, by talking with staff about what they found out and enjoyed doing.

While the great majority of time in the nursery is spent with children actively learning and exploring, the rich and challenging focus on children's learning dips at times when the

nursery routine changes. For example, at tidy-up time, getting ready for lunch time, and large group times, many children become disengaged and, as a result, their learning is less progressive at these times.

There is a good partnership with parents and, as a result, parents say they feel well informed and supported. They join in with music sessions and story times and have access to their children's assessment records. This ensures they are involved in children's learning and provides the child with some continuity. Parents comment that they have every faith in the staff helping children to make progress in their learning and that staff have helped them manage their children's needs effectively at home.

Children express themselves well. They chatter to each other when they are playing, talking about what they are doing or what has happened. They listen well in small groups and understand instructions and comments made by staff. Children are exposed to lots of mathematical language. They know the names of shapes, for example, they specifically ask to make a circle shaped train track. They count well and match the number to quantity correctly. They can add one more or take one away. Children select books and ask for these to be read to them. A variety of books offer opportunities for staff to talk to children about different cultures, while puppets and props help children to act out elements of favourite stories. Children sound out letters to help them learn to spell and many can confidently write their names, for example, on their artwork.

Meaningful activities, such as cooking food, help children to learn about different cultures and celebrations. For example, during Chinese New Year children created menus of Chinese food, and on Shrove Tuesday they made pancakes. Children confidently use computers and learn to trace letters on the touch screen. They talk about the world around them, what lives in ponds and how food is made. Children recreate stories by dressing up or using small world activities to promote their imagination. They freely explore the musical instruments, shaking tambourines and banging drums. Children investigate the paint, using their fingers and hands to smear paint and mix colours on the table top. They draw lots of pictures to represent what they have seen and to express their ideas, and displays of children's artwork show that they use a wide range of craft media.

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

Children form good friendships with their peers and close bonds with their key person. As a result, they feel secure and settled. Where children are less confident, their key person supports them in separating from parents, but maintains close contact with parents regarding children's emotions. As a result, parents manage their children's settling-in alongside the staff. Children's choices are respected at all times and they learn to work together and cooperate in their play. Their behaviour is very good. Staff use positive comments to help children learn, for example, they talk about using 'kind hands' or 'walking feet'. Children are encouraged and praised and they develop an understanding of the expectations and boundaries set by staff. As a result, they have respect for their friends and show self-respect and a high level of self-esteem.

In the garden children are active and enjoy physical challenges. They use scooters and bicycles confidently, building up their leg muscles, while digging and exploring the sand develops strength in their smaller muscles. Children routinely use soap to wash their hands before snack time, fetch tissues to blow their noses and help staff prepare healthy options for snack. This demonstrates that they are beginning to understand about healthy and hygienic lifestyles. Children behave in a way that suggests they feel safe in the setting. Staff teach them about personal safety through asking questions, such as 'what do you think might happen if...?' Children are reminded to use equipment safely, for example, when a child puts a knife in their mouth at snack time, the member of staff reminds them that it is sharp and that it will need to be washed.

The nursery environment is welcoming, brightly decorated with children's artwork and set out to promote children's independence and to help them develop confidence in their surroundings. They play in the garden, close to the school reception class, and are beginning to make associations about their move to big school. Children's progress in the prime areas of learning is good and, as a result, they are equipped with the skills they need for their future learning.

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

Staff are mentored and led by the proprietor/manager, who nurtures and supports staff to get the best from them. Close monitoring of the educational programmes and the quality of teaching assure the good standards in this setting. All staff have a clear understanding of the requirements placed upon them to maintain children's safety and promote their welfare. Staff fully understand the issues surrounding child protection and are clear about the procedures to be followed to report concerns. Detailed risk assessments keep the premises safe, hazards are minimised and children are kept safe on routine outings. As a result, children are well cared for and their safety and good health is assured.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well. Staff are vigilant and observant so that any emerging specific needs are recognised quickly. As a result, appropriate and timely action and interventions are made to improve results for children. The nursery liaises well with other providers caring for children at the setting. For example, daily dialogue with childminders at collection time ensures children benefit from continuity in their care, learning and play.

The self-evaluation of the setting is effective in highlighting successes and areas for development. Parents' views are sought and children feed back their thoughts and ideas. The proprietor and staff are committed to improving the setting further. Changes in the layout will further improve opportunities for children to develop independence. For example, by creating a seating/changing area near the door to the garden, children will be able to put on their coats and boots more easily as there will be more space. Moving the toilets into the main playroom will ensure children learn to be independent and confident in their self-care before moving on to school.

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	EY454154
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	882253
Type of provision	

Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	56
Name of provider	Martyne Claire Ellison
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	07539069653

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Type of provision

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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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