

Derwent Stepping Stones

Derwent Stepping Stones, St. Marks Road, DERBY, DE21 6AH

Inspection date	05/09/2013
Previous inspection date	17/03/2009

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 enjoy their play because practitioners plan around children's interests. Very high quality information is recorded about children's achievements and supports their next steps of learning to ensure they make good progress in their learning and development.
- Children move smoothly through the nursery because of the tailored way this is supported. Careful consideration is given to the needs of each child, for example, ensuring they remain in their established friendship groups, as they move to the next room.
- Practitioners' professional development is varied and relevant and has a clear and positive impact on the children they are caring for.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those, who speak English as an additional language are well supported, to make progress in their learning and development.

It is not yet outstanding because

- On occasion, practitioners' interactions in the outdoor environment do not always fully support and extend children's learning and development.
- The range of information gathered about children's achievements at home varies and is, therefore, not yet robustly supporting their learning and development.

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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled 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 observed activities in the five playrooms and outdoor area and completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers included in the self-evaluation.
- The inspector spoke with the staff about the daily routines, children's individual learning and self-evaluation.
- The inspector looked at a selection of documents, which included the safeguarding policy, complaints log, children's learning records, planning and the setting's self-evaluation.
- The inspector also took account of the views of a parent spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Justine Ellaway

Full Report

Information about the setting

Derwent Stepping Stones was registered in 2006 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in a purpose built premises in Derby and is managed by a committee. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 38 members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 6, 23 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and eight hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 134 children attending, who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The nursery supports a number of 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:

- enhance the learning opportunities in the outdoor area by consistently identifying the right moment to intervene in supporting children's learning and development
- extend the range of information gathered about children by developing further ways to encourage parents to share what they know their children can do, in order to plan to help each child make even more progress.

Inspection judgements

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

Children make good progress in their learning and development. Practitioners clearly know the children well, who they are working with and where they need support. The broad range of activities regularly incorporates children's interests and therefore, promotes their enjoyment. This includes spontaneous events, for example, planning an activity focusing on mowing the lawn, as the children enjoy watching as the lawn is cut next to the nursery. A particular strength of the nursery is the consistently high quality information that practitioners gather and record in children's learning files. This accurately reflects

what children can do and identifies relevant and appropriate next stages of learning. This includes the progress check at age two, which is a clear and useful record to support children's learning in the future.

Practitioners are positive in their relationships with children and through being involved in their play effectively support them to make progress towards the early learning goals. For example, practitioners explain how to begin a jigsaw puzzle, sorting the pieces by picture and shape. They consistently and clearly explain the routines and expectations, which supports children's independence. Practitioners successfully engage children's interest in stories and books with their enthusiastic reading style. However, there is scope to further support children's learning and development in the outdoor environment. Recent changes means that all of the areas of learning are given equal consideration in the outdoor environment. However, on the odd occasion, practitioners do not always fully challenge children in their interaction with them. For example, they engage in play with the construction bricks, building them up, but do not consistently extend this to other areas, such as counting skills.

Practitioners engage children in songs, rhymes, stories and conversations to support their communication skills. This also prepares them in their readiness for school. Older children engage in detailed conversations, recalling past activities and linking other relevant comments together in a successful way. Younger children enjoy looking at pictures in books and staff encourage them to develop their vocabulary by repeating simple words. Practitioners encourage children's independence as there are regular sessions during the day where children can choose what they play with. Even children of a younger age move around with purpose as they go to the next activity. Older children develop their self-care skills as they use the toilet independently. Practitioners skilfully maintain a safe level of supervision while encouraging this independence, which supports their readiness for school.

Children effectively develop skills in mathematics through a range of resources and interaction. When playing in the sand, they learn about concepts, such as empty and full. Younger children stack cups and staff encourage them in their early counting skills. Children enjoy using their imagination as they make up games with their friends, including props from the dressing-up in role play areas to extend their play. Children develop their physical skills as they use a range of age-appropriate toys and resources. They develop their small muscle control as they learn to grasp and hold smaller items. For example, children use smaller and more complex construction pieces to make a model.

Children develop their understanding of the world through a varied range of appropriate activities and resources. Celebrations about different festivals or cultures are made all the more meaningful as they often link to the children's or their family's culture or religion. For example, an older group of children are growing things, which includes an unusual vegetable from another country. Interesting resources encourage children's development of skills in information and communication technology, for example, using a light box to make patterns and pictures.

Practitioners share a very useful summary of children's progress with parents and carers twice a year. This includes very good quality information about how parents and carers

can extend their child's learning at home. Parents and carers are also able to attend a meeting with the child's key person to discuss this and view their child's development folder at anytime. Practitioners send home a very useful 'activity at home' sheet, which details specific activities, to help parents and carers to further support children's learning. A parent comments on how useful this information is. Some developmental information is gathered from parents and carers, both at the time of placement and on an ongoing basis. However, there is scope to improve this by exploring different ways parents may wish to provide this information, to fully engage all parents and carers in their child's learning.

Practitioners provide very effective support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They are proactive in identifying concerns and seeking appropriate support, so that each child achieves their full potential. The well-organised notes clearly evidence the support for the child, what progress they are making and what other professionals are involved. Similarly, support for children with English as an additional language is effective. Children are supported to feel included by listening to stories in their own language. Staff learn familiar words and are very competent in using these at appropriate times during the routine. They also encourage other children to use them, which further supports the child's inclusion.

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

Practitioners provide individually tailored settling-in visits to support children as they move into the nursery. They gather relevant information about children's needs from parents and carers. The tailored support includes encouraging new parents to use a parent and toddler group within the children's centre where the nursery is based, to help children become familiar with the premises and practitioners of the nursery. Practitioners give careful consideration to the needs of each child, for example, whether they will benefit from moving up to the next room in a small friendship group. Children play together outdoors, so that they become familiar and comfortable with other adults and children. Practitioners know children well as the key person system is very effective in practice. A co-key person system ensures consistent support when a practitioner is on leave. All children have very good relationships with practitioners, they are happy and secure in their room and when using the outdoor areas. Practitioners deploy themselves well and engage in constant communication to meet children's needs. Practitioners, who work in the baby room are very attentive to children's needs, to ensure they are reassured and comfortable.

The learning environment is a very welcoming and homely space. Practitioners effectively organise the furniture and equipment, so that as children and adults enter each room, they are drawn to the comfy furniture, cushions and throws. Children thoroughly enjoy playing in these areas and particularly cuddling up on the sofa to listen to a story. The range of resources is carefully chosen, so as to provide plenty of choice but not overwhelm children in their decision making. As a result, children carefully choose what they are going to play with, while helping themselves to additional resources to extend their play. Children of all ages behave well. Practitioners skilfully remind children of the rules and reinforce this with consistent and clear reminders. A practitioner very quickly minimises some potentially disruptive behaviour from a small group of children by

reminding them of the rules and distracting them into another activity. Practitioners give children lots of praise and encouragement, which promotes their self-esteem. Children explore their feelings and emotions through activities, such as group time discussions.

Through resources, everyday routines and consistent reminders children effectively learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, practitioners explain the impact of running indoors. Children learn about road safety as they play with the traffic light while playing on their trikes in the garden. They learn about a healthy lifestyle as they engage in role play activities, such as going to the dentists. Children understand why they wash their hands and talk about getting rid of the germs. Practitioners talk to children about healthy foods at lunchtime. They explain the importance of wearing sun cream when the weather is hot. Children are given good support to cope with the emotional move to school. They listen to stories, sing songs and talk about the routines of the classroom. Children, who already attend school share their experiences to further reassure the other children.

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

The management of the organisation is sound in ensuring that the requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage are effectively implemented. A strength of the nursery is the knowledge and confidence of all practitioners in dealing with any concerns regarding safeguarding. They skilfully use their experience to inform their practice. The clearly defined procedures are supportive in ensuring that concerns are quickly progressed. Checks to establish the suitability of all adults working on the premises are robust and consistently maintained. Children play safely on the premises as staff are well deployed to ensure constant supervision. There is at least one additional practitioner available at all times to support the setting up and clearing away of routines, for example, lunchtime. Children's safety is further promoted as staff do a visual risk assessment of the premises on a daily basis, to identify and appropriately minimise possible risks and hazards.

The nursery demonstrates a good commitment to promoting improvement. Induction is detailed in an individual work plan and is very effective in informing practitioners of their roles and responsibilities. Regular supervision sessions provide constructive feedback on performance, coaching and mentoring and opportunities for personal development through training. The management team do a regular random audit of the children's learning journeys to check the quality of the information and any gaps in children's learning. They have provided bespoke training to strengthen staff effectiveness in gathering and recording the information. The benefits of this can be clearly seen in the high quality information recorded in them. Similarly, the range of behaviour management training undertaken means that staff are very effective in this area. Monitoring of the educational programmes is well established. Regular checks of planning and staff interaction allow the management team to ascertain whether there is a broad and balanced curriculum of activities for children. Through their evaluation and monitoring, the management team have a good understanding of their strengths and areas to improve. All practitioners input into this. They implement changes to promote good outcomes for children. For example, reorganising and extending the mathematics equipment in one of

the older rooms, which is now used frequently to support children's learning in this area. Feedback is also regularly gathered from parents and carers and children and acted upon accordingly. For example, the regular newsletter now includes staff profiles, so that parents and carers have information about the qualifications and experience of adults working with their child.

Information shared with parents and carers about the nursery's policies and procedures is useful and relevant. Along with the initial prospectus, detailed information is shared with parents and carers at the initial visits. A professional newsletter keeps parents and carers informed of any changes within the nursery and about other services in the building. The management team have strong links with a range of other agencies within the area to support families and children. This includes supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities through involving relevant professionals. The nursery takes a proactive approach to sharing information with other settings that children attend, to support consistency of care in their learning and development.

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 action. 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	EY330097
Local authority	Derby, City of
Inspection number	908364
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	128
Number of children on roll	151
Name of provider	Derwent Stepping Stones Nursery and Community Training Centre
Date of previous inspection	17/03/2009
Telephone number	01332 372245

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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, which are usually the childminder's 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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