

Stepping Stones

The Institute, Main Street, Cononley, KEIGHLEY, West Yorkshire, BD20 8LJ

Inspection date

24/01/2014

Previous inspection date

06/05/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

2

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

- The staff team actively promote a highly effective information sharing system with parents and the local school. Together they work to meet the individual care and learning needs of each child. Parents say how happy their children are and feel well informed.
- Staff accurately observe, monitor and assess all the children's progress well, enabling them to plan interesting activities to promote learning. They carefully track this development to ensure children receive additional support should it be required.
- Children are happy, interested and eager to try new experiences, They are making good progress in their learning and are supported well by skilled staff.
- Children are safe in the nursery because it has very good systems of assessing risk, checking staff suitability and implements clear policies on safeguarding children.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Children's developing creative thinking skills are occasionally not promoted as well as possible.
- There is scope to develop more innovative activities, especially in the outdoor environment to further promote children's very good learning.

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 play and learning activities and spoke to staff and children in the indoor environment.
- The inspector looked at a selection of children's learning journals and progress tracking information and carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector carried out a meeting with the manager and registered person, and looked at and discussed a range of policies and procedures, including safeguarding, accident and medication records.
- The inspector checked evidence of all staffs' suitability and qualifications, along with arrangements for self-evaluation, improvement and risk assessments.

Inspector

Amanda Forrest

Full report

Information about the setting

Stepping Stones was registered in 2005 and is privately owned. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery operates from the village institute where children have access to a main playroom, large hall and supporting facilities. There is no access to an outdoor area, but children are taken out on regular walks and visits within the local community. The nursery operates from Monday to Friday from 7.30am until 6pm, term time only.

There is 11 staff employed at the nursery, all of whom work on a part-time basis. Of these six hold appropriate early years qualifications; five at level 3 and one at level 6. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- extend children's creative skills, for example, by encouraging them to find new ways to do things and giving them the space and time to explore and experiment during the creative process
- strengthen the good use of the outdoor environment to include activities, such as large scale den making, construction and gardening to further extend children's learning in this area.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are well cared for and make good progress in their learning and development. This is because all staff have a good knowledge of the seven areas of learning and staff know their key children well. They observe them closely to assess what they like doing and plan interesting activities that encourage individual children's development. Consequently, children are well prepared and motivated for the next steps in their learning. Individual learning files are in place for all children and these include photographs, observations and assessment. These are linked to the areas of learning and are used to track and plan children's next steps. Staff use the tracking to ensure children continue to make good progress and receive additional support in the nursery and from outside agencies should they require it. Staff work well in partnership with parents. Before children start at the nursery, staff work closely with the families to ensure they understand

each child's individual learning requirements. The ongoing sharing of information ensures parents are involved in their child's development. Staff also provide parents with regular progress summaries, including the required progress check at age two.

Staff understand how to motivate children to learn well. They play alongside children and engage them in complex conversations, valuing their speech and ideas. This promotes children's speech and language. Staff speak to children constantly about what they are doing, talking expressively to them as a matter of daily routine. They encourage children to extend their vocabulary through questioning and explanation as they gain confidence in constructing sentences. Staff pay attention to the messages children send verbally and non-verbally and respond appropriately. They also introduce the children to mathematical terms and concepts, such as shape and number in everyday play, as they name shapes of items in their lunch boxes or use tapes to measure in the construction area. This shows that staff introduce all areas of learning into playful activities and routines. Children enjoy a selection of creative activities and are given a variety of resources to aid this. However, some staff occasionally use pre-cut templates or photocopied sheets for children, which reduces their input and interpretation of an activity and does not fully support their creativity, own ideas and thoughts.

Children enjoy their time in the nursery. They learn about a wider society and use resources that reflect positive images of the wider world, such as, dressing up clothes, play figures and books. Children take part in new activities and learn about different festivals and celebrations, such as Chinese New Year. They talk about recently making lanterns and cards to send to their families to celebrate the Chinese 'Year of the Horse'.

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

Children settle particularly well into the nursery because staff take time to find out about the children's preferences, needs and routines. For example, information exchanged with parents ensures that specific medical needs and allergies are known and accurately met. This means that care is consistent, so children make the transition from their home into the nursery with ease. There is an effective key person system and settling-in sessions are offered so that children have sufficient time to form strong attachments. As a result, children quickly feel at ease and happy in the nursery.

Children's behaviour in the nursery is good. They consider each other's feelings, share well and pass each other resources. This is because staff are good role models and give lots of encouragement, praise and model saying please and thank you. Children are encouraged to be independent and learn to choose from the well-organised resources. These are clearly labelled, so children know where to put things away when tidying up. Children are extremely well prepared for the move to school and for future learning. This is because children learn positive skills and attitudes to explore, learn, build friendships and develop their self-care.

Children learn how to keep themselves safe as they begin to take responsibility for their own welfare and safety. For example, the children wash and dry their own hands and

hang up their own coats and aprons. Children are given calm reminders to sit on chairs at meal times so that they do not fall. Staff are excellent role models and help children to follow the well-established hygiene routines. They eat their lunch with the children and discuss their healthy snacks and food preferences, taking time to listen to all the children. Although there is no direct access to an outdoor play area, staff ensure children have good opportunities to take part in planned daily outdoor activities. These take place in the local school's outdoor area. Through this, children learn to take manageable risks as they run, climb and balance and the use of the outdoor space is utilised well. However, there is scope to enrich the range of resources to enhance children's learning further when playing outdoors.

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

The nursery owner and manager are conscientious and have a very good knowledge of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff have a good understanding of child protection and the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a child in their care. All staff receive training to ensure that they are confident in the measures to safeguard children and that they understand all the policies and procedures. Risk assessments are in place, updated and reviewed regularly. New equipment is risk assessed to ensure it is age and stage appropriate for children. Rigorous recruitment procedures are in place to ensure staff are suitable to work with children. Staff are well supported and the manager monitors their practice by providing regular supervision, reflective journals and annual appraisals. These methods ensure that any concerns about staff are quickly addressed and standards are continually improved. Staff, parents and children are involved in the self-evaluation process; their views and ideas have helped to develop the finished format and the implementation of a development plan. The staff team are committed to continually improving standards and they have regular staff meetings to discuss practice, to plan and to set targets.

Children's individual progress is monitored closely by each child's key person and is overseen by the manager. The manager regularly samples children's records and reviews the progress of all children to ensure continual improvement and achievement. This enables the manager to quickly identify any additional support that a child may need to reach their learning and development targets. The nursery has worked closely with the local authority to ensure that children are fully supported within the nursery, such as the local authority speech and language officer, to provide extra support for children.

Partnerships with parents and others are very strong. Parents speak highly of the staff, including their commitment to their role and understanding their child's development. Parents are very happy with all aspects of the nursery. Systems are in place to liaise with parents and the local school to support continuity of care and learning by using 'link books', which parents say are 'a great way of sharing information'. There is a planning board in the entrance onto which parents and staff can write ideas about children's interests at home. Displays are colourful and informative, they demonstrate how children learn and develop through play. Daily discussions take place with all parents and regular

meetings are planned each term. Overall, the needs of all the children are very well met.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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	EY312228
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	862091
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	28
Name of provider	Joanna Clark
Date of previous inspection	06/05/2009
Telephone number	07929 474788

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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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