

Stepping Stones Nursery

Stepping Stones Day Nursery, Gledhow Lane, LEEDS, LS8 1RT

Inspection date

20/01/2014

Previous inspection date

19/10/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

4

Previous inspection:

3

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	4
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children	4
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision	4

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is inadequate

- Children are not effectively safeguarded in the setting because staff knowledge and understanding of how to protect children is weak, the premises are not adequately secure and the policies and procedures underpinning practice are not clearly understood by staff and management.
- The quality of teaching is poor because staff do not have comprehensive knowledge of their key children and do not clearly understand how children learn and develop.
- Children's well-being during snack, meal times and baking activities is not effectively promoted because the majority of staff are not sufficiently trained in the safe and hygienic preparation and handling of food.
- Children's health is not effectively promoted because staff do not keep the premises adequately clean and hygienic.

It has the following strengths

- Children have created positive relationships with staff and peers because clear rules and boundaries are set and children understand the behaviour expected of them.
- Staff provide a wide range of creative resources and activities for children. As a result, children enjoy exploring a range of textures and sensory experiences and engage in creative activities for a sustained period of time.

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 children in the two rooms currently in use and in the outdoor area.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager of the setting.
- The inspector held discussions with the provider, manager, staff and three parents.
- A range of documents were inspected including observations, planning and tracking of children's progress.
- The inspector checked evidence of staff suitability, training certificates, policies, procedures, registers and the setting's self-evaluation documents.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Laura Hoyland

Full report

Information about the setting

Stepping Stones Nursery was opened in 1995 and is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in the Roundhay area of Leeds and is privately owned and managed. The setting serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The setting employs 13 members of childcare staff. Of these, 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The setting opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 65 children attending who are in the early years age group. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- safeguard children by ensuring the premises are kept secure to prevent any unauthorised access
- ensure an accurate daily record of all children being cared for on the premises and their hours of attendance is maintained
- improve staffs' knowledge and understanding of the safeguarding policies and procedures including how to identify signs and symptoms of possible abuse and neglect and what to do if there is an allegation against a member of staff
- improve the quality of teaching by coaching and mentoring staff to get to know their key children well and have a clear understanding of how children learn and develop
- consider the individual needs, interests and stage of development for each child and use this information to plan a range of adult-led and child-initiated experiences for each child in all areas of learning and development
- improve the ongoing assessment of children's learning by regularly observing their play, planning their next steps and accurately tracking their progress in order to close any gaps in their learning and development
- ensure all staff involved in preparing and handling food are competent to do so by supporting staff to obtain training in food hygiene
- promote the good health of children attending by keeping the premises clean, especially bathrooms and nappy changing facilities to prevent the spread of infection.

Inspection judgements

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

Teaching is weak. This is because staff have a poor knowledge and understanding of each child's individual needs and activities are not effectively planned to support children to make good individual progress. Staff do not sufficiently know how children learn and develop and how to build on observations of children during play. Consequently, next steps are not effectively planned to develop children's interests and support children's progress. Staff do not clearly understand each child's stage of development and therefore

activities do not always match their needs. Adult-led activities for younger children are not sufficiently planned for and although children can choose what they would like to play with, staff do not build on their interests through role modelling play, communicating consistently well with children or extending their learning to build on their curiosity. There is lack of interaction and discussion during children's play that does not encourage good language skills in all children, including those who speak English as a second language. Furthermore, the tracking of children's progress is not robust. For example, staff cannot discuss their reasoning behind how they have tracked children's progress and they do not know if gaps are emerging in children's learning and development. This means any gaps are not quickly identified and closed.

Children self-select toys to play with and babies are keen to explore a range of natural resources and household items. For example, they enjoy banging a metal colander with a wooden spoon, while others sit and splash in the water tray. Older children take part in a range of creative activities. They use sponges to create snow pictures and talk about their favourite pizza toppings as they create pizzas from play dough. Staff regularly bake with children, which they all thoroughly enjoy. The majority of children listen well at story time and show confidence as they talk about the plot. Children sing a range of songs and listen to simple instructions given by staff. This supports children to acquire some skills for their future learning.

Most parents feel included in their child's learning and time in the setting. Children's development files are accessible to parents and the pre-school room leader has started to ask parents for their child's interests at home. Regular newsletters detail what is happening in the setting and are handed out to parents termly. The majority of parents comment that their children have learnt new skills in the setting and the staff are always available to talk about their child's day. This demonstrates the majority of partnerships with parents are positive.

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

Children are keen to talk to visitors about what they are doing in the setting and have made firm friendships with their peers. Children behave well and they follow simple instructions and understand the rules and boundaries of the setting. They have created positive relationships with staff and find comfort in cuddling staff to be reassured when their parents leave them. However, children have a false sense of security because staff have a weak knowledge and understanding of how to safeguard children from harm and the premises are not kept adequately secure. This means children's well-being is not effectively protected.

Staff have implemented a key person system and support children to settle into the setting through an initial trial week. Parents stay with their children if they wish until they feel happy to leave their children with the staff. Staff follow children's individual routines and these are displayed for easy reference for all staff to adhere to. Clean bedding is provided for children to sleep on and staff liaise with parents regarding comforters and sleeping routines. Younger children have their nappies changed by their key person who is responsible for their intimate care. This supports children to make secure bonds and

attachments to their key person.

A range of meals and snacks are provided by the cook in the setting. The cook has suitable qualifications for the preparation and handling of food as does the manager and one other member of staff. However, the majority of staff do not hold food hygiene qualifications or have been adequately trained to ensure that food prepared for children is handled correctly. Consequently, staff lack an awareness of how to adequately support children's health during baking and meal times. In addition, the premises are not always kept suitably clean and hygienic. For example, rubbish bins in the toilets are not effectively emptied, floors in some children's rooms are not kept clean and the nappy changing area is not kept organised and regularly sanitised to stop the spread of infection to ensure children's health is sufficiently promoted. Staff are aware of children's dietary requirements and ensure alternative meals are provided. Menu changes are communicated to parents using a blackboard in the entrance to the setting where the daily meals are displayed. Children access the large outdoor area and enjoy using bicycles in the open space. Older children negotiate space well and all children play well together. Daily fresh air supports children to adopt a healthy attitude to exercise.

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

Staff use positive behaviour management strategies and manage children's behaviour adequately. Staff understand the behaviour management policy and talk to children in a calm and considerate manner. However, children are not adequately safeguarded in the setting because staff have a weak knowledge and understanding of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse and neglect. Staff have attended in-house safeguarding training but cannot recall key information. The provider and manager, who are the designated people for safeguarding do not have a robust understanding of the course of action to take if an allegation was made against a member of staff. There is a comprehensive safeguarding policy, however, the management are not able to clearly discuss the content. In addition, not all entrances to the setting are secure because staff forget to close the doors and ensure they are locked. This means unauthorised people can access the premises and children are not kept sufficiently safe. Furthermore, registers of children's time of arrival are not routinely recorded by staff. For example, a child who has been in the setting in excess of two hours has not been signed in. This means the number of children in the setting is not accurately recorded in the event of an emergency. These are also breaches of the Childcare Register. Staff are subject to a clear recruitment procedure and all staff have been suitably vetted to ensure they are safe to work with children.

The provider and manager work in the setting daily. They regularly conduct staff appraisals and some training needs have been identified for staff. Observations of staff practice are not yet securely in place to bring about significant improvement. The manager and provider have started looking at children's development files. However, significant weaknesses in the planning system have not been quickly addressed. All staff have childcare qualifications. However, they are not fully supported to provide high quality teaching and fully understand how children learn and develop.

The manager and provider have created positive links with the local authority development worker. For example, the development worker hosts training sessions in the setting and has started to work with staff on how to observe and plan for children's needs. However, training is in its infancy and not yet embedded. Further partnerships have been created with local schools and staff invite teachers into the setting to meet children before their transition to school. This means children can become familiar with new teachers before they leave the setting. Partnerships with most parents are positive and some parents would recommend the setting to others.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

To meet the requirements of the Childcare Register the provider must:

- ensure that no one can enter the premises without the knowledge of a person who is caring for children on the premises (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- keep a daily record of the names of children looked after on the premises and their hours of attendance (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- ensure that no one can enter the premises without the knowledge of a person who is caring for children on the premises (voluntary part of the Childcare Register)
- keep a daily record of the names of children looked after on the premises and their hours of attendance (voluntary part of the Childcare Register).

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	EY338816
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	948290
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	65
Name of provider	Stepping Stones Nursery School Partnership
Date of previous inspection	19/10/2009
Telephone number	01132 668005

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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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