

Stepping Stones Nursery

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

Inspection date

08/07/2014

Previous inspection date

20/01/2014

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

4

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

- Staff know children well and they use effective teaching skills, which means that all children make good progress given their starting points. As a result, children are well prepared for their next stage of learning.
- Partnerships with parents and other professionals are well established. Information sharing practices fully support children's well-being and progression in learning.
- Staff fully understand the arrangements for safeguarding. They are clear about the procedures if they have a concern about a child in their care, which means children are safeguarded.
- Staff's caring and sensitive manner helps children to form secure emotional attachments and develops their confidence. This builds a strong and secure base for children's increasing independence.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is room to enrich the environment by providing more opportunities for children to see numbers in their play and daily routines, to further support their early mathematical development.
- There is room to build on the information and communication technology resources and programmable toys that are freely accessible to children, to enable them to explore and understand why things happen and how things work.

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 had a tour of the nursery, held a meeting with the manager and talked to the children and staff at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector observed children engaged in a good range of activities in the playrooms and the outside area.
- The inspector acknowledged the views of parents, including those spoken to during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at a selection of documentation, including staff qualifications, their Disclosure and Barring Service checks, the policies and procedures and children's learning records.

Inspector

Jane O'Callaghan

Full report

Information about the setting

Stepping Stones Nursery was registered in 1995 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is privately owned and operates from three main playrooms and an outside play area in a converted school in the Roundhay area of Leeds, West Yorkshire. The nursery serves the local and surrounding areas. It opens Monday to Friday from 7.30am until 6.30pm, except for Bank Holidays. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 83 children on roll, all of whom are in early years age range. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. It supports children who speak English as an additional language. There are currently 14 staff working directly with children, all of whom have appropriate early years qualifications at levels 2 and 3.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance opportunities for children to see numbers in the environment and in their play and activities, in order to maximise their understanding of early mathematical concepts, for example, recognition of numbers
- extend opportunities for children to develop their understanding of the world, with particular regard to supporting their understanding of information and communication technology.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have a good knowledge of how children learn and effectively promote and support their development. They spend time with parents gathering children's starting points when children first attend the nursery. Their ongoing abilities are assessed through regular observations and completing individual developmental trackers. These observations support staff to have a good understanding of children's stage of development. As a result, they are able to effectively plan and provide activities which individually challenge and fully engage children in their learning. Staff ensure that all children's differing abilities and interests are purposefully catered for. Consequently, children make good progress in all areas of learning and are well prepared for their next stage of development and the move on to school. Parents have regular access to children's learning records. Staff spend time each day discussing their children's achievements, enabling them to support their ongoing learning at home. Staff and parents also work in close partnership to complete the progress check for children between the ages of two and three years. As a result, any gaps in children's learning are identified and quickly addressed.

Staff have a good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and are skilful at extending learning and providing opportunities for further development. For example, older children sit enthusiastically and listen to a story being read to them in Hindi. Staff give clear explanations to children as to how to pronounce different words in their home language and in English. Children who speak English as an additional language are eager to show their friends how to say familiar words, such as 'hello' and 'rabbit'. This develops children's communication and language skills as well as their understanding of the world. Children show a keen interest in the inspector's laptop computer. There are some opportunities for children to access resources which support this interest throughout the nursery. For example, babies develop their understanding of cause and effect as they press the buttons on the toys to hear sounds and see lights flash. However, overall, information and communication technology resources and programmable toys are not freely accessible to children. As a result, opportunities for them to explore and understand why things happen and how they work are not fully maximised.

There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities, enabling children to learn through a variety of rich learning opportunities. Children learn about colours in their everyday play and activity. Staff ask them about the different colours of the crayons on offer. For the younger children, staff introduce the names of the colours as they show the children the corresponding crayon. Children repeat the name of the colour and are encouraged to find a matching crayon. This develops their early recognition of colours and introduces new words extending their vocabulary. Children receive lots of praise for their efforts and are thrilled as staff give them a clap. This raises children's self-esteem and confidence. Older children are keen to go outside to play; they tidy away the toys as requested by staff, following instructions well. Some children help to brush up the sand and are keen to show the new children visiting the room how this is done. Children's counting skills are supported as they help the staff to count how many children are present. Staff support this understanding further by encouraging them to draw different numerals. There is, however, scope to support this learning further by providing children with opportunities to see numbers displayed in the learning environments, both indoors and outside.

During outdoor play, children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills. They confidently steer the bicycles along the lines on the playground. This supports their developing coordination and ability to balance and follow directions. Children are eager to join in with a member of staff at a planned activity. They draw on their paper with glue sticks and then when prompted pour sand over the glue on the paper. Children carefully follow the instructions from the staff as they shake the excess sand from their paper. Staff use this as a learning opportunity for children to develop their sense of feel and understanding of different textures. For example, children feel the sand on the paper, telling the member of staff how rough this feels. They then feel the skin on their arm and recognise that this feels soft. Staff demonstrate their quality of teaching as they extend this activity further by asking children to look for different textures around the outdoor play area. Children eagerly run around and are able to identify bumpy bricks and smooth paper. All children are provided with good opportunities to develop their creativity. They paint, play with shaving foam and enjoy junk modelling. Staff ensure all children's own work is displayed and enjoyed by them and their parents. This boosts their confidence and

self-esteem, and also supports them to follow their own ideas and design skills. Staff communicate with children enthusiastically and this promotes their engagement in activities and motivation to learn.

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

Children's emotional well-being is supported very well. Their key person oversees their development, supports them in the routines of the day, and works closely with the parents to provide continuity of care. Children are sensitively supported during settling-in periods to ensure they experience a smooth transition from home to the nursery. They are able to settle at their own pace through a settling-in period that is tailored to meet their individual needs. Parents and children are warmly welcomed by staff throughout the nursery. Staff take the time to get to know the parents and children's individual routines. As children move rooms within the nursery, they make planned visits. Together with their parents, they are introduced to their new key person. Therefore, children's individual needs are passed on and understood, and their physical and emotional well-being is effectively supported. Staff are skilful in encouraging children's confidence and learning during play and daily routines. Staff talk to children about what they are doing so they begin to understand about possible risks. Staff encourage children to take controlled risks and this challenges their thinking and understanding effectively. As a result, children recognise potential dangers and understand the need to do things differently to keep safe. They practise the emergency evacuation procedure regularly and staff remind children not to run inside and explain that they need to sit on the chairs nicely. This promotes their good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. As children become more aware of safety, make friends and learn to manage their own self-care, they gain the essential skills and attitudes to support their future move on to school.

Staff use effective strategies to help children develop their independence and learn new skills. For example, children are provided with the space and time to master the skill of using a knife and fork at mealtimes. Older children are able to self-serve at lunchtime and to pour their own drinks. Staff offer lots of praise and encouragement, giving children the confidence to practise these skills under their close supervision. Children behave very well. They are very thoughtful and caring towards each other as they play and they share resources well. Staff manage children's behaviour consistently and children receive praise and encouragement as they play. This effectively promotes children's self-esteem and social skills very well.

Good attention to hygiene practices and promoting a healthy lifestyle for children is apparent at all times. Children benefit from nutritious, healthy meals that are prepared and cooked on site. They enjoy fresh air and physical exercise and have lots of opportunities throughout the day to access the outdoor area. While outside, children test their developing skills as they climb on tree stumps and ride on wheeled toys. Babies practise their early walking skills as they pull themselves to standing and move along supported by baby walkers. Staff prepare children well for the move on to school and their future learning. They develop positive links with local schools and good working partnerships with the local teachers. Staff invite teachers into the nursery to meet with

parents, children and the key person before children move into school. As a result, children's stage of learning and individual care needs are effectively shared.

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

Children's safety is assured, as staff supervise them closely at all times and ratios of staff to children are high. Clear records of visitors to the nursery are maintained and identification is checked. Children are not left unattended with unvetted adults. Robust recruitment and selection processes are in place. These include conducting interviews, seeking references and taking out Disclosure and Barring Service checks. These checks confirm that staff are suitable to work with children. Each member of staff follows a detailed induction programme, ensuring they are clear about the expectations of owner and manager. Clear and concisely written policies and procedures reflect the care provided and are fully understood by staff. Roles and responsibilities are clearly understood by staff, and policies are shared with parents. All staff are appropriately qualified and actively seek ongoing training, keeping their knowledge of current practice and legislation up to date. Staff are proactive and very aware of the importance of protecting the children in their care from abuse and neglect. Their understanding of the signs of abuse, and the procedures they should follow if they have a concern about a child is very good. Detailed written risk assessments clearly identify potential risks within the setting and garden, and the steps staff have taken to minimise them. Additional daily visual checks ensure that the premises remain safe and suitable each day. A number of safety issues have been addressed by management since the last inspection; for example, secure padlocks on the entrance gates, locks and finger guards on doors and closed circuit television installed. This further ensures children's safety throughout the day.

The educational programmes are monitored effectively by the management team. Staff effectively identify children's individual learning needs through their ongoing observations and assessments. As a result, children continually make good progress across the seven areas of learning. Following the last inspection, Ofsted carried out a monitoring visit and acknowledged that good progress was being made. The actions and recommendations raised at the last inspection have been addressed successfully. A clear development plan is in place, which shows how the nursery is moving forward and the management's commitment to further enhancing the outcomes for children. Support and guidance are also gained from the local authority development worker, who offers advice for the ongoing development of the service. Staff actively seek the views of parents about the service provided, through discussions and written questionnaires. The information gathered is used alongside the views and ideas of the staff, to clearly identify particular strengths and areas for development. As a result, a positive drive for improvement is displayed and staff continually enhance the service they provide. This has a positive impact on the children and families using the nursery.

Staff understand the importance of working alongside other professionals involved in children's lives to support their development and ensure continuity of care. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well, and good communication with parents ensures a collaborative approach. Good arrangements are in place to keep

parents up to date with their child's progress, achievements and stage of development. Communication books are used to share further information about the activities children have enjoyed, as well as daily diaries. Parents speak positively about the service they receive and feel they have opportunities to discuss their child's progress. Parents find the communication book helpful and use it as a joint approach to their child's care. Parents are clear in their understanding of what to do if they are unhappy with any aspect of the care provided. They discuss how they feel able to talk to the staff to resolve any issues that may arise.

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	EY338816
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	967266
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	83
Name of provider	Stepping Stones Nursery School Partnership
Date of previous inspection	20/01/2014
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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