

Stepping Stones Nursery

67 Denton Street, CARLISLE, CA2 5DY



Inspection date

4 August 2016

Previous inspection date

Not applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Not applicable	
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- The manager and staff monitor children's progress carefully to identify the next steps in their development. They share this information with parents and other professionals, as appropriate, to support children's individual learning needs.
- Experienced and qualified staff interact extremely well with the children. They are provided with a wide range of stimulating learning experiences which engages their interest and motivates them to learn.
- All children are very happy and settled in this warm and welcoming nursery environment. Staff are calm and caring and children relate well to them. Children are included and valued and this effectively supports their emotional well-being.
- Partnerships with parents and other agencies are strong. Staff keep parents well informed of how their children are doing. Parents speak very highly about the staff and value the support and service provided for them.
- The manager is fully committed to providing a high-quality service for children and families. She takes on board the views and suggestions made by the staff, parents and carers to improve the nursery.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Occasionally, children do not follow the staff's guidance about how to carefully use resources when playing in the home corner.
- Although older children have free access to play outside, the suitability of this play space for babies and toddlers does not fully enable them to independently explore and investigate.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance children's understanding of using real-life resources in a safe and suitable way during play
- explore further opportunities to enhance the outdoor provision for the youngest children in the nursery and for those children who prefer to learn outside.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the nursery manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery manager. She looked at all relevant documentation, such as the policies and procedures, children's records, self-evaluation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector spoke to a group of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Carys Millican

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff attend designated safeguarding training and they all hold current first-aid qualifications. They are very secure in their understanding of what to do if they have any concerns about a child's safety or welfare. Staff are confident in using the policies and procedures of the nursery, including the whistle-blowing procedure. Children are supervised well and ratios are maintained at all times. Staff's professional development is well supported by an enthusiastic new owner/manager who has already made several improvements since taking over the nursery. Staff are well qualified. They use their good knowledge and skills to support children's learning and development. Parents' opinions are requested through detailed questionnaires and their wishes taken into consideration to continuously improve the nursery.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff listen to and observe the children during their play. They plan exciting activities using children's interests and the next steps in their development. Children are engaged and interested in their play. For example, in the baby room they enjoy exploring the edible sand and complete sticky pictures. These positive experiences help younger children develop the use of their senses. Staff support older children's learning. For example, they introduce numbers, colours and shapes during baking activities. This contributes to children's understanding of mathematics. Children learn life skills. They learn to be patient as they wait their turn to mix the ingredients and share the kitchen utensils. Generally, older children choose when to go outside and decide which activities to take part in. All children enjoy stories and singing songs together and join in when listening to stories. Children in receipt of government funding make good progress from their starting points. This is because funding is spent well on resources and extra sessions during the holidays.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

The well-established staff team knows their key children well. They are positive role models and help children to develop good levels of independence and self-esteem. They constantly praise children during activities and as they play. Children establish close relationships with the staff and develop secure friendships with the children in their group. Positive relationships are established with parents and other professionals working with the nursery. Staff feel valued and work closely together as a team. Staff find out about children's individual needs and background information. Children enjoy trips into the community and learn about the place where they live. Older children are highly active during their play. On the whole, children are well behaved. Some children are highly active, especially during their super hero role play.

Outcomes for children are good

Children's communication and language and their physical skills are promoted well. This helps to prepare them for their future learning. All children, including those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress from their starting points.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY490863
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	1021653
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Age range of children	0 - 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	40
Name of registered person	Aimee Sarah Irving
Registered person unique reference number	RP906744
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	01228 514333

Stepping Stones Nursery was registered in 2015. The nursery employs eight members of childcare staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and the manager has early years teacher status. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 8am to 6pm. 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.

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.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120354.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our website for news, information and updates at www.ofsted.gov.uk/user.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2016

