

Stepping Stones Nursery

C/O United Utilities, Lingley Mere, Great Sankey, Warrington, WA5 3LP



Inspection date	10 August 2017
Previous inspection date	7 October 2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Outstanding	1
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Outstanding	1
Outcomes for children		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is outstanding

- The experienced manager is an inspirational leader. She works tirelessly to maintain the highest possible standards. She has created a culture where staff aspire to be the best possible practitioners they can be. They constantly reflect on their practice and implement detailed and challenging improvements that benefit children.
- The highly qualified staff have an expert knowledge of child development. This enables them to plan a remarkable range of activities, matched precisely to what children need to learn next. Children display high levels of confidence, a motivation to learn and children of all ages show an exceptional can-do attitude.
- Arrangements in place to support children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are first rate. Inclusion is at the heart of the nursery's ethos. Staff work extremely closely with parents and other professionals to offer targeted support and interventions. All children make consistently outstanding progress.
- Children's behaviour is impeccable. All children are friendly, polite, they show high levels of self-control and a true knowledge of what is right and wrong. Staff are superb role models who implement a highly effective, consistent and age-appropriate approach to promoting positive behaviour. Strategies are shared with parents.
- Partnerships with parents are exemplary. Parents are extremely complimentary about the manager and staff. They successfully contribute to assessments and highly effective systems are in place to support them to extend children's learning at home.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities and free play. She assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector viewed a range of documentation, including a sample of policies and procedures, children's admission records, assessment records and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector observed a planned activity with the nursery manager and they jointly evaluated the teaching.
- The inspector spoke to children and staff at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke to a number of parents and she took account of their views.

Inspector

Savine Holgate

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is outstanding

Safeguarding is effective. Children's safety is given high priority. Staff knowledge of child protection procedures is excellent. The manager ensures that the environment is safe and secure at all times. She meticulously monitors children's accidents. She conducts assessments of the common causes and plans are implemented to reduce further risks. The manager ensures that staff ratios are maintained and staff provide excellent supervision for children. A high percentage of staff are trained in paediatric first aid. This helps them to respond immediately in the event of a first-aid emergency. The manager uses her expert skills and knowledge to support and coach staff through detailed feedback on practice and supervision sessions. Bespoke training plans are implemented for individual staff members. The dedicated manager strives for excellence. Training is highly beneficial. For example, following on from training on outdoor play she has worked relentlessly with staff to develop inspirational opportunities for children outdoors. Despite this, the manager has plans to enhance the outdoor provision even further.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

Staff make regular, accurate and precise assessments of children's learning. These are moderated by senior staff and children's progress is closely monitored by the manager. Staff engage babies in exciting rhythm and movement sessions. Babies become deeply immersed and involved as they use a range of resources to explore sounds. This helps to develop their concentration, listening and attention skills. Toddlers are eager to join in with animated story times. The environment is carefully planned and helps to bring the story to life. Children confidently join in with familiar parts of the story. They embark on a journey in the garden where they balance on beams, jump onto numbers and find hidden pictures. This activity supports children in all areas of learning. Pre-school staff ask children to use their imagination to create their own jungle animal. Superb questioning helps children to extend their thinking skills. Children capably write simple sentences based on their imaginative animals. This helps them to develop creative writing skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

All children are extremely happy, settled and attached to their key person. Care practices are highly individualised and children are self-motivated and involved. For example, children requiring medical care are confident in routines and staff treat them with the upmost respect. Staff are highly skilled at supporting children to take manageable risks. Pre-school children are involved in risk assessments and their understanding of how to look after themselves is excellent.

Outcomes for children are outstanding

All children make consistently outstanding levels of progress. Many children are working above their expected age bands. Pre-school children show exceptional mathematical and literacy ability. Babies and toddlers are highly motivated to learn and display wonderful levels of concentration. Children are exceptionally well prepared for school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY292630
Local authority	Warrington
Inspection number	1110623
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	98
Number of children on roll	131
Name of registered person	Little Acorns Nurseries Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP535314
Date of previous inspection	7 October 2013
Telephone number	01925712683

Stepping Stones Nursery registered in 2004. The nursery employs 29 members of childcare staff. Of these, most hold appropriate early years qualifications at levels 2 and above. Three members of staff are unqualified. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round from 8am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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