

Childcare @ Stepping Stones

9a George Street West, LUTON, LU1 2BW



Inspection date	6 September 2017
Previous inspection date	21 February 2014

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
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 the staff regularly evaluate their work. They include the views of parents and make positive changes where relevant to improve. The manager reflects on the needs of parents and shares information with them through a variety of different methods.
- Children are very well supported as they settle in the childcare setting. Staff implement a flexible approach based on each child's needs. This helps children quickly feel secure in their new environment. They engage happily in play and learning.
- Staff develop strong partnerships with parents and other professionals. They work collaboratively to ensure that children's care and safety are consistently promoted. Parents speak highly of the staff, they state they provide a safe environment where children feel at ease and are able to talk and express their feelings.
- Staff provide a stimulating environment. They carefully set up attractive and exciting activities. Children are eager to explore the different materials and textures. Staff help children to make good progress with their speech and language development as they use clear descriptive words as they play.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- The provider's procedures to supervise staff's practice are not sharply focused on raising their knowledge and teaching skills to the highest possible level.
- At times, staff do not provide babies with the same opportunities as older children to explore the stimulating and well-resourced outside area.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- provide more precise, targeted support and professional development for all staff
- extend opportunities for babies to explore and enjoy the outside natural environment.

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 spoke with staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector discussed children's learning through activities with the manager.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager. She looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff.
- The inspector spoke to a number of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Jill Hardaker

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff have a clear knowledge and understanding of the procedures to follow if they have concerns about children in their care. They know which professionals to contact if they have child protection concerns in the setting and in other relevant agencies. The provider ensures rigorous recruitment and induction procedures are in place to employ the best possible staff. A thorough induction programme helps staff to swiftly understand their role and responsibilities within the team. Staff have opportunities to develop some aspects of their knowledge and skills through training. They talk positively of the impact training has on their practice. For example, staff now have more knowledge of how to support parents to understand the benefits of play in the setting and at home.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff give children time and space to play freely and express their ideas. They offer them support when it is needed and to extend their learning. For example, as children pretend to brush a doll's teeth, staff teach them how to hold the brush correctly to gain maximum effect. They also use these opportunities to talk to children about the benefits of brushing their own teeth regularly. Outside, children engage in imaginative play. They pretend to make meals in the playhouse and staff teach them how to make healthy food choices. Staff have a good understanding of children's interests and learning preferences. They regularly complete a range of observations to identify how children are developing and link their interests to their next steps in learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Staff are very welcoming to children and parents. Children arrive at the setting happily and quickly engage in play and learning. Staff give parents time to talk about what children have been doing at home. For example, they tell staff how they are helping babies to communicate so that the same strategies can be used at the setting. This helps to promote continuity in their development. Staff help to promote children's good health. They ensure that children have regular opportunities to enjoy and learn about the benefits of fresh air and exercise. Children show their good physical skills as they steer bicycles and negotiate their way round the play area. Children are provided with healthy food at mealtimes. They are learning how to attend to their own care needs.

Outcomes for children are good

Children are making good progress and are developing into independent learners as they choose where and with what they want to play. They are learning about space and quantity as they fill trucks and diggers with pasta and rice. Babies enjoy sharing books with adults and are beginning to take turns in conversations as they explore how to use sounds to communicate. Children are swiftly gaining the skills they need to be ready to move to their next stage of learning or on to nursery and school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY435517
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	1102358
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	0 - 3
Total number of places	15
Number of children on roll	66
Name of registered person	Stepping Stones (Luton)
Registered person unique reference number	RP528459
Date of previous inspection	21 February 2014
Telephone number	07530 425 154

Childcare @ Stepping Stones registered in 2008. The setting employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and one holds qualified teacher status. The setting opens Monday to Friday all year round, except bank holidays. Sessions are from 9.30am until 4pm.

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 2017

