

Stepping Stones Day Nursery and Nursery School

5 Edington Square, Witney, Oxfordshire, OX28 5YT



Inspection date

14 May 2018

Previous inspection date

13 December 2017

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
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 nursery is well led and managed. Leaders are focused on raising standards and their self-evaluation is reflective and thorough. They consistently review the provision and make effective changes to continually improve.
- Leaders effectively track individual and groups of children's progress. Staff identify any gaps in children's learning and work with parents and other professionals to implement development plans. All children, including those learning English as an additional language, make good progress in relation to their starting points.
- Staff use many successful ways to keep parents informed of their children's learning.
- Staff are warm and caring. They take time to get to know the children in their care, particularly when they first start, so they settle quickly and easily. Children behave well and learn to manage their behaviour effectively.
- Leaders deploy staff well to maintain ratio requirements and to supervise children closely. Children learn to manage risks cautiously, such as climbing and balancing.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Leaders have not fully considered all ways to enhance and monitor staff's ongoing performance to raise the good quality of teaching to an even higher level.
- Staff do not consistently provide the highest levels of challenge and extend reflection and thought to optimise pre-school children's independent learning.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- strengthen the procedures for monitoring staff practice and precisely identify and target any weaknesses in teaching and enhance their training opportunities
- provide even greater levels of challenge for pre-school children and extend opportunities to think and learn independently.

Inspection activities

- The inspection was conducted by two inspectors. The inspectors observed activities in the three main base rooms and garden.
- One inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager and checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of staff working with children.
- The inspectors looked at relevant documentation, including planning and a selection of the setting's policies and children's records.
- The inspectors held meetings with the owner, and the manager. They spoke with staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspectors took account of the views of parents spoken to during the inspection.

Inspector

Anneliese Fox-Jones

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

Since the last inspection, leaders have reviewed all aspects of leadership and management and raised the quality of the provision effectively. Actions from the last inspection have been addressed successfully. There are effective systems to monitor children's progress. Staff identify the next steps in children's learning and act swiftly to close any potential gaps in their development. Safeguarding is effective. All staff have a thorough understanding of their responsibilities to protect children and keep them safe from harm. For example, staff follow detailed risk assessments of the premises and activities to keep children safe. Leaders implement effective recruitment procedures to ensure the suitability of all staff working with children. Overall, staff receive individual support meetings where they can discuss their own development.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff effectively use information gained from observation and assessment training to plan for children's learning. They plan a range of stimulating activities that supports children's physical skills and confidence. Children have many opportunities to engage in imaginative play indoors and outside. Children talk about their families and familiar experiences, and at times staff ask questions that further extend conversations and their communication skills. Staff successfully provide resources that enrich all children's mathematical learning. For instance, children explore number stencils in the sand, numbered parking spaces for their ride-on toys and they enjoy pouring water into different containers. This supports children's understanding of number recognition, shape and size.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children's personal development is promoted well. Staff provide supportive key-person arrangements. They create an enjoyable and interesting learning environment. There is a good range of toys and resources to support children's learning for all areas of their development. Staff support children to understand the importance of living a healthy lifestyle. They provide healthy meals and snacks and daily opportunities for fresh air and play outside. Children learn to negotiate space, move their bodies in different ways, take turns and play well together as they climb on equipment. Children behave well and respond positively to staff. They develop good independence and learn to manage their own personal hygiene and serve themselves at mealtimes. Children have opportunities to develop their understanding of the world through outings and themes that interest them. This helps them learn about different people, their communities and cultures.

Outcomes for children are good

Children play with good levels of concentration. Babies enjoy exploring a variety of sensory experiences and develop confident physical skills. Toddlers have lots of opportunities to be creative. Older children explore and make discoveries during play indoors and outside. Children's language skills grow as they sing nursery rhymes and listen to stories. Children develop a wide range of skills in readiness for their move to school and the next stage in their learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY258333
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	1120094
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 - 5
Total number of places	75
Number of children on roll	54
Name of registered person	Stepping Stones Day Nursery & Nursery School Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP908150
Date of previous inspection	13 December 2017
Telephone number	01993 708822

Stepping Stones Day Nursery and Nursery School registered in 2003. It operates from purpose-built premises over two floors, in a residential area of Deer Park in Witney. The nursery accepts funding for the early education of children aged two, three and four years. It is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6pm all year round, excluding bank holidays. The nursery employs 12 staff. Of these, 10 staff hold appropriate early years qualifications from level 2 to level 7.

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