

Inspection of Stepping Stones Nurseries (Midlands) Ltd - Streetly

Stepping Stones Nursery, 2 Bakers Lane, SUTTON COLDFIELD, West Midlands B73 6XB

Inspection date: 4 March 2020

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
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| The quality of education | Good |
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| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
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| Personal development | Good |
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| Leadership and management | Good |
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| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Outstanding |
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children have fun at this warm and welcoming nursery. They separate from their parents easily and are keen to play and learn. Staff create an exciting and stimulating environment inside and outdoors. There are plenty of resources and activities to help engage children in play. Children show that they feel happy and emotionally safe. They enjoy attention from familiar staff and quickly settle into the nursery's routine. Children develop close and strong attachments with adults and each other. They behave well and play cooperatively together with their friends. Children are praised for taking turns with resources, such as favourite animal cutters, while they manipulate and mould play dough.

Staff provide plenty of messy play experiences for children to enjoy. Children delight as they immerse their hands in water or trays filled with different cereals. Staff encourage children to explore real-life objects. For example, children experiment with vegetables and fruits. They enjoy cutting the food with knives under the close supervision of staff. Children develop good language skills as staff encourage them to say new words, such as 'aubergine' and 'avocado'.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Managers and staff are very dedicated and work well as a team. Staff state that they are supported well by managers with regard to their workload. Managers explore opportunities for staff's training at regular supervision meetings. Staff complete all mandatory training. There is scope for professional development to be more focused on helping to raise the quality of teaching to a consistently higher level.
- Staff know their key children well. They carry out regular observations and assessments of children's learning. This information is used effectively to provide children with a well-planned curriculum that reflects their interests and next steps in learning. Managers and staff monitor children's progress and quickly identify and address any gaps in learning. This helps children to make good progress in their learning and development.
- Staff help children to learn about their local and wider community. For instance, they take children on regular outings, including to see local alpacas. Staff provide activities that focus on celebrations or festivals in different countries, such as Chinese New Year. This helps children to respect and value difference.
- Children develop independence well. Staff encourage children to do routine tasks for themselves. Children serve their own meals and use jugs to pour milk or water into glasses. Staff help to promote healthy lifestyles. For example, children benefit from nutritious snacks and freshly prepared meals.
- Staff build on children's early literacy skills and encourage their love of books. They read stories frequently to children. Younger children choose books

independently and turn the pages. Older children look at the pictures and recall what happens in their favourite story. Children develop early writing skills as they make marks with pencils, pens or paint brushes.

- Children develop strong physical skills. Staff provide plenty of activities to help children practise using their small- and large-muscle skills. Children use scissors, glue spreaders and pencils with increasing precision. Outside, children climb, build and balance. Staff engage children in ball games to help develop good hand-to-eye coordination.
- Staff encourage children to be creative and imaginative. They join children as they engage in role-play activities. Children become engrossed in play as they pretend to be fire fighters. They dress in high-visibility jackets and put on yellow hats as they tackle a 'blaze'. Staff use the opportunity to talk about how dangerous fires are, which helps children to develop some safety awareness.
- Parents are very happy with the service the nursery provides. They comment that there is a wide variety of resources available and that their children's social skills have grown since attending. Staff provide feedback about children's progress, such as through an online system and parent meetings, to help provide a consistent approach. However, partnership working has not been developed to a highly successful level, particularly in respect of harder to reach parents or when working with staff at other settings children attend.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained and knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities relating to child protection issues and keeping children safe. They know and understand signs of possible child abuse or neglect and of being drawn into extreme behaviours or ideas. Staff have a clear understanding of how to report concerns about a child's safety or allegations against adults. Managers carry out robust vetting procedures and ongoing checks to ensure staff are suitable to work with children. Staff receive a thorough induction when they start. All activities and areas are risk assessed to help keep children safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- focus the professional development of staff more precisely on raising the quality of teaching to a consistently higher level
- develop strategies to work even more closely with others involved in children's care, including parents, and staff at other settings children attend.

Setting details

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| Unique reference number | EY463068 |
| Local authority | Birmingham |
| Inspection number | 10116332 |
| Type of provision | Childcare on non-domestic premises |
| Registers | Early Years Register |
| Day care type | Full day care |
| Age range of children at time of inspection | 1 to 5 |
| Total number of places | 42 |
| Number of children on roll | 82 |
| Name of registered person | Stepping Stones Nurseries (Midlands) Ltd |
| Registered person unique reference number | RP906534 |
| Telephone number | 01213531200 |
| Date of previous inspection | 1 November 2013 |

Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stones Nurseries (Midlands) Ltd - Streetly re-registered in 2013. The nursery employs 15 members of childcare staff, 13 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. One member of staff holds early years teacher status, and one member of staff is training for a level 5 qualification. The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Trisha Turney

Inspection activities

- The inspector and manager completed a learning walk across all areas of the nursery to understand how the curriculum is organised.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children during the inspection.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the deputy manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the management team. She looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector spoke to parents and carers during the inspection and took account of their views.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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