

Inspection of Stepping Stones Day Nursery Ltd

Arboretum Street, NOTTINGHAM NG1 4JA

Inspection date: 9 February 2022

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	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children and their parents are warmly greeted by managers and staff as they arrive at the nursery. They engage in lively conversation with each other and demonstrate a shared excitement for the day ahead. Children say goodbye to their parents and confidently enter their group room. Staff make sure that resources and activities reflect children's interests and are accessible and within children's reach. Children choose what they would like to play with and quickly become engaged in their learning.

Children show strong relationships with the kind and caring staff and are friendly and welcoming to visitors. Children are encouraged to do things for themselves from a young age. Babies learn how to move independently. They confidently crawl towards resources that interest them and pull themselves up to stand. Toddlers use buckets and help themselves to water from the tap to fill the water tray. Children behave well. They remember to say please and thank you and learn to share and take turns. Pre-school children play cooperatively with their friends. At tidy-up time they work together to complete tasks. For example, one child holds the toy box while another child sweeps the blocks from the table into it. Children show their sense of accomplishment as staff quickly offer praise for their team work.

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

- The manager and staff know the children and their families well. They have a good knowledge and understanding of what children already know and can do, and what they want them to learn next. Staff quickly identify where children may need additional help. They work closely with parents and the nursery special educational needs coordinator to ensure that any necessary support is swiftly put in place. This ensures children's individual care and learning needs are effectively met.
- Staff interactions with children, in the main, are positive. They show a strong interest and enthusiasm in what children do. For example, as children make play dough, staff encourage them to keep mixing until the ingredients are 'combined'. They warmly congratulate babies as they learn to take their first independent steps. However, during some activities staff are less successful in helping children to understand the importance of listening to others. This results in some children not being heard or as involved in their learning as those around them.
- Children's good health and well-being are well supported. Staff have a good awareness of children's individual needs. They place a high emphasis on the importance of, and teaching children about, appropriate hygiene routines, having a healthy diet and exercise indoors and outside. Children know to wash their hands before eating and after playing outside. They help themselves to tissues to wipe their noses and know to put them in the bin afterwards. Children

learn about food that is good for them and understand which food they should avoid to promote their good health.

- Staff, overall, create an environment that is exciting and entices children to explore and learn. They plan activities that they know children will enjoy and want to investigate. However, the large number of resources and equipment available results in a learning environment that, at times, becomes disorganised and distracts some children from their learning.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Staff maintain a regular two-way exchange of information, sharing details with parents about their child's care and learning. The nursery invites parents' feedback and initiatives, such as the 'parent charter', help to keep parents informed of nursery events. Parents describe how they 'trust' the nursery to meet their children's needs. In addition, how their children have progressed in their learning, and are now 'counting and recognising letters'.
- Staff provide activities to help children develop the skills for their future learning. They introduce and repeat new words, ask questions and use Makaton signs to support children's communication and language. All children enjoy singing, staff invite babies to choose what song they would like to sing from a selection of picture cards. Children look at books and listen to stories read to them by staff. Toddlers count how many spoonfuls of rice and curry they serve themselves at lunchtime. Pre-school children use tape measures to find out the length of worms they have found in the garden.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The provider and manager understand their safeguarding and child protection responsibilities. They ensure that swift and appropriate action is taken in the event of any concerns. Staff complete regular training and discuss child protection procedures during meetings to keep their knowledge up to date. They know what to do should they have any concerns about a child's welfare or other safeguarding issues. The manager ensures that all necessary checks are completed to make sure that those working with children are suitable. Staff are deployed effectively to ensure that children are supervised appropriately at all times. Risk assessments of the indoor and outdoor environment help staff to identify hazards. Action is taken to ensure that the premises remain secure and safe for children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- help staff to build on their practice to help them to further support children's listening skills
- review the organisation of resources and activities to further promote children's

consistent focus on learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	254643
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	10220779
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 4
Total number of places	217
Number of children on roll	223
Name of registered person	Stepping Stones Day Nursery LTD
Registered person unique reference number	RP525378
Telephone number	0115 9101162
Date of previous inspection	26 October 2017

Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stones Day Nursery Ltd registered in 2000. The nursery employs 42 members of childcare staff. Of these, 39 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2, level 3, level 4 and level 5. Two members of staff hold qualified teacher status. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round, except for one week at Christmas. Sessions are from 7.45am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors

Claire Muddimer
Christy Dave

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the setting and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The inspectors observed the quality of education during activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspectors completed two joint observations of activities and evaluated these with the manager.
- The manager and both inspectors completed a learning walk together so the inspectors could find out about the manager's intent for the nursery curriculum.
- The inspectors held a meeting with the nursery manager and the provider. They looked at relevant documentation and checked evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspectors spoke with staff and children during the inspection.
- The inspectors spoke to a number of parents during the inspection and took account of their views. They read a number of written testimonials from parents provided by the nursery.

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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