

Inspection of Stepping Stones Day Nursery Spixworth

Spixworth Infant School, Ivy Road, Spixworth, NORWICH NR10 3PX

Inspection date: 25 April 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children arrive at the nursery with big smiles and are warmly welcomed by friendly staff. They show that they feel safe and secure and confidently separate from their parents as they wave goodbye. Children eagerly explore the environment, which is packed with enjoyable, purposeful learning experiences. Babies fill shopping baskets with pretend food and toddlers draw pictures of themselves on clipboards. Older children use construction tiles to build 'submarines' and 'space rockets'. Children show that they are happy. They laugh and smile at one another and chat about their learning and play. Older children tell each other the names of vehicles and sing songs about rain. Babies pass toys to one another and sit closely together to share a book.

Staff plan a curriculum that is rich in opportunities for children to be physically active. The nursery has two spacious and well-thought-out areas that allow children to benefit from exercise and fresh air. Older children run up and down a 'mud mound' and jump with two feet into large tyres. Younger children dig holes and march around, shaking musical instruments. Staff encourage children to 'go on a bear hunt' and children eagerly join in and stamp their feet, jump over obstacles and balance on one leg.

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

- Children quickly grow in independence. Babies find their own drinks bottles and search in baskets for toys. Toddlers set out road tracks, while older children turn on outdoor taps to fill up containers with water and use knives to cut up bananas at snack time. Children show their independence skills when using technology. They use interactive globes and electronic devices, to find out what animals eat, and use a computer mouse to click on colours when playing a computer game.
- Staff promote a love of learning. They develop a broad curriculum based around children's prior learning and interests. Additionally, staff ask children what they would like to find out about and these are recorded in project books. Staff comment that children enjoy the 'shared experience of finding out things together'. Older children confidently explain who the emergency services are and how they help people. Younger children explain that space is black and the earth is a planet.
- Relationships between staff and children are secure and trusting. Children are very well looked after and staff are aware of their needs and routines. Babies approach staff for cuddles and comfortably climb onto their lap to share stories. When children do become upset, staff attend to their needs promptly and with respect. Toddlers proudly show staff what they have made or drawn and older children enthusiastically ask staff to join in their role play games.

- Leaders have strong relationships with all staff. They provide ongoing evaluation, training and support. All staff comment on how they feel part of a team and that they are listened to and supported. The provider works hard to ensure that staff well-being is high. She organises well-being sessions and staff are encouraged to record positive comments about each other's practice. All staff benefit from shared planning meetings. This has a positive impact on the professional development of all staff.
- Staff work closely with parents to get to know children and their families. They act on information received during the settling-in process to ensure children are well supported when starting the nursery. Overall, parents are positive about the care their child receives. They comment that their child has 'flourished' and 'grown in confidence'. However, partnerships with some parents are not as strong. Weaknesses in communication means that some parents do not know who their child's key person is or how additional funding is spent.
- Children are active learners and they participate in all areas of their learning with enthusiasm. They show a keen interest in activities and staff encourage children to 'come and have a go'. However, staff do not always consider ways in which children can sustain high levels of focus and concentration. As a result, children are not consistently engaged in meaningful learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know how to identify and report concerns regarding the welfare of children or the behaviour of an adult. They evaluate risk assessments regularly, which ensures the learning environment remains clean, secure and safe. Leaders and managers use regular meetings to ensure all staff are aware of concerns, allergies or medical issues concerning children. Robust systems are in place for recruitment and induction. Management ensure that staff are suitably trained and that continuous professional development is organised for all staff. The provider and manager worked hard during the COVID-19 pandemic to maintain regular communication and provide support for children and their families.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- improve communication with parents through strengthening the key-person system to share information about children's learning and progress
- extend opportunities for children to be engaged in activities that sustain their concentration and focus so that they are consistently engaged in meaningful learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY454154
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10219412
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	0 to 4
Total number of places	61
Number of children on roll	147
Name of registered person	Ellison, Martyne Claire
Registered person unique reference number	RP909522
Telephone number	01603 891150
Date of previous inspection	19 August 2016

Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stones Day Nursery Spixworth registered in 2012 and is privately run and managed. The nursery employs 19 members of childcare staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 6, one at level 5, eight at level 3 and two at level 2. The nursery currently employs four unqualified staff, who are currently enrolled on appropriate level 3 apprenticeships within the setting, and a lunchtime assistant. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday for 50 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 7.30am to 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Helen Oakden

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed how the early years curriculum is organised.
- The inspector spoke with the provider and manager at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- Children spoke to the inspector about the activities they were doing.
- Staff spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector and the manager carried out a joint evaluation of an activity.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- A number of parents provided verbal and written feedback to the inspector, and the inspector 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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