

Inspection of Stepping Stones Day Nursery

29 Reform Street, Gomersal, Cleckheaton, West Yorkshire BD19 4JX

Inspection date: 24 May 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Staff have failed to identify and resolve potential risks to children in a timely manner. This puts children at risk of harm. However, the provider has now taken steps to rectify the issues to ensure children are safe.

Children are very excited to meet their friends as they come into the nursery. They are greeted by warm, caring staff, who know the children very well. Children demonstrate wonderful manners and behaviour towards their friends and adults. Children happily select their job for the day. For example, children choose to sweep the sand or help set the table for lunch and snack. This helps to develop children's life skills and respect for their environment, helping them to feel safe.

Children take part in exciting activities that spark their imagination. For example, when learning about volcanos, children create a volcano and build a bridge to walk over it. They add paint to make the foam look like hot lava. Knowledgeable staff build on what children already know as they take part in an experiment. Children take turns to add ingredients to make the volcano erupt. They experiment with different volumes as children ask 'what will happen if we add more vinegar?' or 'let's try more bicarbonate'. Children learn to be inquisitive in their play.

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

- Staff expertly follow children's interests and needs to implement the setting's curriculum. The sequenced curriculum helps to develop children's independence and self-esteem so that children will keep trying at their chosen activities. For example, when children are building with bricks, they want to add cement. They measure out sand and foam to create their cement. They trowel the cement onto their bricks, counting as they build. Children are making good progress in their learning and development, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Staff use every opportunity to introduce new words to children. They consider words they will use in activities to expand children's language skills. For example, children excitedly recall and repeat words such as 'volcano', 'eruption', 'lava', 'extinct' and 'dormant'. However, staff working with babies do not always consider the length of their sentences or of circle time on developing babies communication and language skills.
- Children have many opportunities to develop their physical skills. For example, children take part in group exercises. They feel their beating heart before, during and after exercise to understand the effects it has on their body. Children develop their small-muscle skills as they carefully use scissors to cut out stamps to place on their letters. Children are making excellent progress in their physical development.

- Stimulating and challenging activities present children with many opportunities to count, measure and weigh. For example, children count out the plates and cutlery at mealtimes. They measure the length of wood they need to cover the volcano and they weigh out ingredients in the role-play area. As a result, children learn good mathematical knowledge and understanding.
- Children benefit from a highly effective key-person system. When changes to key persons are needed, such as moving rooms or staff taking maternity leave, staff work exceptionally well together. This ensures the children have smooth transitions. As a result, children make good progress in their emotional and social development.
- Management has good oversight of the nursery. Staff receive regular supervision meetings that enable them to discuss safeguarding children, child development and staff's well-being. However, managers have failed to take action to resolve long-standing risks to children, to quickly identify and resolve new risks. This may put children at risk of harm. These issues have now been rectified to ensure children are safe.
- Partnership with parents is good. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, parents are now entering the nursery to collect children. This enables parents to see children in the nursery environment and have conversations with key persons. Parents comment that they are kept fully informed about their child's routines, and their learning and development. They valued the reintroduction of the parent evenings online or in the nursery.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff have a good understanding of the signs and symptoms that may indicate that a child is at risk of harm. Staff know who to contact and the procedures to follow if they have a child protection concern about children or adults. There are rigorous procedures in place to ensure the suitability of adults working with children. Although daily risk assessments are carried out, staff have failed to identify and resolve risks to children quickly. The provider has now rectified the identified risks to ensure children are safe and secure.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
ensure that staff have the understanding and knowledge to take swift action to identify and resolve all potential risks to children in the nursery and outdoor area.	07/06/2022

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

- consider the length of both sentences and focused time when babies play together, to better support their communication and language skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY305237
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10239817
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 4
Total number of places	48
Number of children on roll	79
Name of registered person	Stepping Stones Nurseries Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP535314
Telephone number	01274 872877
Date of previous inspection	14 March 2017

Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stones nursery registered in 2005. The nursery employs 14 members of childcare staff. Of these, 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. One member of staff holds a relevant qualification at level 6. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. 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

Jo Clark

Inspection activities

- This was the first inspection the provider 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 provider.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together to understand how the early years provision and curriculum are organised.
- The inspector made observations throughout the inspection of children's experiences in the setting and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- Children spoke to the inspector about their experiences in the setting.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- A meeting was held with the manager. This included a review of relevant documentation, including staff suitability and training.

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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