

# Inspection of Stepping Stones Day Nursery

Suite 7 & 8, 48 Westgate, SKELMERSDALE, Lancashire WN8 8AZ

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Inspection date: 26 May 2022

|                              |             |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b> | <b>Good</b> |
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|--------------------------|-------------|
| The quality of education | <b>Good</b> |
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|                         |             |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| Behaviour and attitudes | <b>Good</b> |
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|                      |             |
|----------------------|-------------|
| Personal development | <b>Good</b> |
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|---------------------------|-------------|
| Leadership and management | <b>Good</b> |
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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**

Babies are well cared for and the atmosphere in the room is calm and tranquil. They are highly engaged with their surroundings. Babies pick up the dried oats and drop them from a height, stimulating their curiosity. They laugh in delight and clap as the oats fall. Staff skilfully link nursery rhymes to activities and develop children's use of single words.

Children display impressive concentration levels when completing tasks. Toddlers love filling and emptying water. Pre-school children discuss and explore different occupations and how their roles assist the community. Children are imaginative and explore in various ways. For example, older children pretend to be firefighters and work collectively to extinguish a pretend fire. Children learn to adopt perseverance when their cars reach the end of the physical racetrack and need to land in a safe way.

Children behave reasonably and demonstrate that they feel safe and secure. Staff support children in dealing with any disagreements that arise in an effective and controlled way. For example, they praise toddlers who use 'kind hands' to share, when prompted by staff. When playing outdoors, older children wish to ride the bicycle and are reminded of the importance of taking turns. This activity helps children to grow in a positive environment and become fully aware of their actions.

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

- The swift intervention measures for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are excellent. Staff teach non-verbal children to communicate using pictorial prompts and relevant gestures. They encourage children to fully partake in activities and be involved with children of the same age group. The manager has proactively developed a sensory area which provides a range of hands-on resources to support children with SEND. The area provides the sensory stimulation needed to create a relaxing space for children to manage their feelings effectively.
- Additional funding, such as the early years pupil premium, is used productively. Staff have received additional training on a range of assessment tools for children with speech delay. However, the impact cannot be fully determined as the trial is in its early stages.
- Staff help to broaden children's knowledge of the world around them. They provide experiences, such as celebrating the Queen's Jubilee, through books and exciting conversations. This helps children to develop a greater understanding of the world around them.
- Staff guide toddlers and assist them on how to separate the herbs from the stalk. This helps strengthen children's small muscle skills. Together, children

enjoy experimenting with fragrances, commenting on the ones they like and dislike. That said, staff do not always identify precisely what they intend children to learn when planning activities. Sometimes, they try to cover too many things at the same time. On occasion, this can be confusing for children.

- Independence is promoted, and children enjoy their sense of responsibility. Children remember to wash their hands after using the bathroom and before eating, incorporating healthy habits into their daily lives. Their independence provides them with confidence and prepares them for school.
- Children are offered a range of vegetables to explore. They develop their understanding of healthy meals and are encouraged to try new foods. Children show a particular fascination for beetroot.
- Parents state that they feel well informed about their children's learning and development practices. They praise the strong communication between the nursery and home, creating a positive continuation of learning.
- The manager has a clear focus on staff well-being. She provides regular professional development opportunities for all staff. However, support does not precisely identify what staff need to do next in order to raise the quality of their teaching further.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a thorough knowledge of the signs that may indicate a child is at risk of harm. They know who to report their concerns to within the nursery and to external agencies. Staff understand the procedures to follow should an allegation be made against a fellow member of staff. They are confident that the manager will act on their concerns. There are adequate procedures to keep children safe, and all doors into the nursery are secure. This measure means children cannot leave the building unsupervised, protecting them from harm.

## What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support staff to always be clear about what they intend children to learn, so that children can make the best possible progress
- strengthen the use of strategies to consistently support individual children's communication and language development
- focus staff supervision more precisely on raising staff teaching skills to the highest level.

## Setting details

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|--|---|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>                     | EY488543  |
| <b>Local authority</b>                             | Lancashire  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                           | 10236651  |
| <b>Type of provision</b>                           | Childcare on non-domestic premises                  |
| <b>Registers</b>                                   | Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register |
| <b>Day care type</b>                               | Full day care                                       |
| <b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b> | 0 to 4  |
| <b>Total number of places</b>                      | 88  |
| <b>Number of children on roll</b>                  | 88  |
| <b>Name of registered person</b>                   | Boylan, Cheryl Toni                                 |
| <b>Registered person unique reference number</b>   | RP514111  |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                            | 01695 550255  |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>                 | 10 August 2016                                      |

## Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stones Day Nursery registered in 2015 and is privately run and managed. It is situated in Skelmersdale, Lancashire. The nursery employs 18 members of childcare staff. Of these, 17 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2, 3 or 6. The nursery opens from 7.30am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, all year round. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Maryam Chauhan

## Inspection activities

- This was the first routine 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 showed the inspector around the nursery. She discussed with the inspector how the curriculum and the experiences for children are planned. The inspector viewed the inside and outside spaces used by the nursery.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities and assessed the impact on children's learning. The manager and the inspector evaluated a few activities together.
- The inspector looked at a sample of the nursery's documents, including evidence of training and the suitability of staff.
- The inspector spoke to children and staff as part of the inspection.
- Parents spoke to the inspector to provide their views on 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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