

Inspection of Two Steps Pre-School

St. Johns Methodist Church, Price Street, Smethwick, Staffordshire B66 3QU

Inspection date: 30 June 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	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy and relaxed with staff. They are confident to leave their parents. Children who are unsettled are supported with a smooth handover by caring staff. Staff are friendly and know the children very well. Children have access to a wide range of activities, indoors and outdoors. They learn to play imaginatively in the water, and staff skilfully extend the children's vocabulary. Children excitedly play with the pretend sea animals. They talk about the sharks, sea lion and other undersea animals with staff. Staff take children on regular outings within the local area and instantly adapt the routine to take mini outings. For example, when the children run out of flour to make play dough, staff spontaneously respond to this. Children are taken to the local supermarket and staff extend children's learning as they teach them how to buy flour to make play dough.

Leaders work hard to maintain strong partnerships with parents and ensure that there is a two-way flow of communication between the pre-school and parents. Children benefit from a curriculum that suits their individualised needs. Leaders and staff plan activities to extend the children's development and progress. The leader trains and coaches staff with a variety of ways to deliver activities to suit the children and builds staff's confidence when supporting them. Children are well behaved and are encouraged to help with tidying away. Staff support children's behaviour with positive strategies and introduce incentives to promote positive behaviour. For example, children are given a superhero cape to wear for the session when they have tidied away extremely well.

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

- A newly appointed leader has joined the pre-school team and has a clear vision and expectation for the pre-school. Leaders and staff work together to ensure that the curriculum challenges and extends the children's learning. Staff provide children with lots of new and exciting experiences. For example, they visit the local supermarket, park and places of worship in the local area. However, staff do not consistently support the children to understand real-life experiences when exploring the natural world outdoors.
- Leaders understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. They recognise that some children have required more support to develop their communication, language and independence.
- Children wash their hands throughout the day and understand the importance of this. They inform staff that they wash hands 'to get germs off'. Children sing a handwashing song as they wait their turn to wash their hands. Children eat healthy snacks and all parents provide a packed lunch to eat during lunchtimes. Staff support children to make positive choices about the food they eat during

mealtimes. Leaders work with parents to promote healthy lifestyles and healthy lunchboxes.

- Leaders are reflective and look at ways to improve all areas of the pre-school. They take on board parent suggestions and make provisions to review aspects of the pre-school. Leaders also review their record-keeping and monitoring of documentation, such as accident and incident forms, to ensure that all systems are robust and information is shared with the relevant bodies.
- Staff plan interesting experiences for children to access. They tell stories to the children using puppets to support the books. Children are excited by the stories told by staff. Staff introduce new words into the children's vocabulary when reading to them, such as 'mystery'.
- Staff speak calmly and are attentive to the children's needs. When the younger children are feeling restless, staff take them to the sensory space to engage in calming sensory activities. Children with additional needs are monitored and supported by staff. Staff ensure that they work together with parents to help children to make progress. Leaders use any external support from the local authority when required.
- Parent partnership is strong. Leaders are passionate about providing support for parents. Parents report that the pre-school has a family-style approach and that they know that their child is looked after well. Parents know who to go to if they have a concern and feel comfortable speaking to any member of staff about their child. Leaders provide help for parents using their own family and child development workers. The workers carry out home visits and parenting support.
- Staff encourage children to share information about themselves. Children confidently speak to staff about their personal experiences. For example, children can describe visiting the doctors and use the word 'injection' to talk about the procedure at the doctors. Children's language is extended as staff talk to children about injections and how they might feel. Children express that they must be brave when they visit the doctor.
- Children learn about a variety of festivals and celebrations throughout the year. Staff involve parents with celebrations and parents provide cultural food for each celebration. Leaders ensure that the festivals celebrated are meaningful and well planned in a child-friendly way. However, positive images within the pre-school do not always reflect the children and families that attend.
- Leaders support staff with their professional development. Staff meetings and appraisals take place regularly. Leaders promote positive well-being and support for all staff. They have provided all staff with a well-being app to access as and when they need external support.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The leaders and staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities to keep children safe. Staff have a good awareness of signs and symptoms that indicate a child is at risk of harm. Staff understand the procedures that must be followed where an allegation is made about any adults working with children. They are

aware of the local safeguarding partnership procedures and how to make a referral. The pre-school is routinely checked for safety. Staff are deployed well to maintain good supervision. Therefore, risks are minimised. Robust recruitment procedures are followed to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- provide children with more opportunities to experience positive images and resources which reflect children and families from a range of cultures and backgrounds within the local community
- help staff to enrich experiences that encourage children's understanding of real life and the natural world while exploring outdoors.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2571062
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10239174
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	48
Name of registered person	West Smethwick Enterprise
Registered person unique reference number	2571060
Telephone number	0121 558 3475
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Two Steps Pre-School registered in 2020 and is situated in Smethwick. The pre-school employs six childcare staff. Of these, five staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. Sessions are available Monday to Friday, from 8.45am to 3pm, term time only. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Maryanne Hepburn-Bean

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection 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 inspector had a tour of the pre-school premises. The leader discussed the organisation of the pre-school and curriculum provided.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching throughout the inspection. Joint evaluations of the quality of teaching took place between the deputy and the inspector.
- The inspector spoke to staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke to parents at appropriate times and took account of their views.
- A meeting was held with the leadership team to discuss leadership and management arrangements.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and checked the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.

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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