

# Inspection of Stepping Stones Nursery

12 Stoney Road, COVENTRY CV1 2NP

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Inspection date:

24 August 2022

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## **Overall effectiveness**

**Outstanding**

The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

## **What is it like to attend this early years setting?**

### **The provision is outstanding**

Children are highly motivated and have lots of fun at this wonderfully inclusive nursery. Children are exceptionally inquisitive and enjoy the freedom to follow their own interests. All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make consistently rapid progress in their development. Children's behaviour and attitude to learning are exemplary. They are empathetic, considerate and patient. Children receive sensitive support from staff to help them to recognise and express their emotions and feelings.

All children build very strong attachments with their key person and staff, which ensures that they feel safe and secure. Staff know the children exceptionally well and are attentive and nurturing. Children have wonderful opportunities to develop their independence and physical skills. They engage in age-appropriate risk-taking, enabling them to understand how to keep themselves safe. For example, very young children competently use knives to chop up vegetables to make an Irish stew. Older children gain hands-on experience using tools, such as hammers, to bang nails into pieces of wood with care, developing their hand-to-eye coordination.

Children develop a love of books and enthusiastically join in with familiar nursery rhymes and actions. They express their creativity as they paint pictures while listening to music with headphones. Children take part in a range of exciting outings based on their interests to further extend their knowledge and understanding. For example, children's keen interest in transport led to a train journey to the airport. Children had lots of fun as they watched aeroplanes landing and taking off.

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

- The management team is highly knowledgeable, passionate and strives for excellence at all times. It places children at the heart of everything it does and adopts a curriculum that is designed to give every child the best possible start in life. The professional and dedicated staff share the same vision for quality and have the highest expectations for all children. Children with SEND are superbly supported by their key person.
- Before new children start at the nursery, managers and staff offer home visits, which help to build relationships prior to starting at the nursery. Staff gather key information from parents and use this to plan meaningful experiences and familiar care routines that help them settle.
- Parent partnerships are remarkable. Parents are involved in all aspects of nursery life and their child's learning. Staff use social events and a parent committee to ensure parents' voices are heard, creating a nursery community

that provides high levels of support. Parents hold the nursery and staff in very high regard.

- Staff are excellent role models and consistently extend children's vocabulary through thoughtful and high-quality interactions. They provide children with unlimited opportunities to think critically, problem-solve and test out their ideas. For example, younger children experience the effects of the wind. They blow bubbles and predict which way the bubbles will travel depending on the direction the wind is blowing.
- Children are provided with countless opportunities to practise their mark-making skills in preparation for writing. Older children demonstrate excellent pencil control as they practise writing the recipe for pancakes. They tell the inspector the pancakes will sizzle in the frying pan first and then they will flip them. Babies smile and babble during highly stimulating sensory play. They use the small muscles in their hands to squeeze the juice from an orange and use their fingers to make marks in flour.
- All children have daily opportunities to exercise and play in the fresh air. They learn about the natural world and living things when they help to care for the nursery's pet tortoises. They carefully stroke the tortoise's head and describe how the shell has a pattern of triangle and square shapes.
- The management team and staff are extremely passionate about helping children to understand the diversity of the world we live in. Children respect and embrace the similarities and differences between people and celebrate the uniqueness of their own heritage and culture. This successfully promotes inclusion and helps children to be extremely well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The management team has excellent links with teachers from the local schools the children are due to attend. Staff take children to visit the school to familiarise themselves with their new surroundings. They share information and assessments to ensure that children settle quickly and transitions are as smooth and exciting as possible.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The management team and staff have an excellent understanding of the signs and symptoms which may indicate that children are at risk of harm, including wider safeguarding concerns and the 'Prevent' duty. They know how to deal with concerns about children's welfare and have a secure understanding of local safeguarding procedures for reporting allegations. The management team uses robust recruitment procedures to check the suitability of new staff and the ongoing suitability of existing staff. The nursery is secure, and its risk assessments are thorough in minimising all potential risks to children.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY321490
<b>Local authority</b>	Coventry
<b>Inspection number</b>	10116433
<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>	72
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	117
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Smarteensies Ltd
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP906900
<b>Telephone number</b>	02476 222287
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	26 February 2016

## Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stones Nursery registered again in 2006. The nursery employs 20 members of childcare staff. Of these, 15 hold appropriate early years qualifications from level 2 to level 7. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round, except for one week at Christmas. Sessions are from 8am until 5.30pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Angela Hulme

## 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 management team and the inspector completed a learning walk together to look at how the curriculum is planned to meet children's needs and development.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- A meeting was held with the inspector and the management team to discuss leadership and management arrangements.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and checked evidence of the suitability of the staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children, and took account of parents' views about the provision.

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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