

Inspection of Stepping Stones Nursery and Woodland Adventures

Manor Farm, Upper Slaughter, CHELTENHAM, Gloucestershire GL54 2JJ

Inspection date: 6 October 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Inadequate

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children happily arrive and settle quickly as they are greeted by the friendly staff. Leaders and staff provide an interesting and welcoming environment which sparks children's interest in play and learning. Children develop good friendships in the nursery. They play together with their friends and work together to complete activities. Older children enjoy exploring the different coloured leaves that they find in the woodland; they then work with their friends to thread the leaves to create their own autumn wreath to display. Younger children enjoy using the outdoor space; they snuggle up with staff to listen to stories and use the scooters to practise their balance and develop their physical skills.

Children are keen to learn and motivated to be involved in the activities provided. Staff use every opportunity to teach children new words and to engage children in conversations. For instance, the youngest children learn to describe textures as they play with the spaghetti, commenting that it is 'cold' and 'slimy'. Older children talk about what may have caused the holes in the leaves that they have found. They confidently make their own suggestions and listen to the views of others.

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

- Since the last inspection, the leaders and staff have worked hard to raise the quality of their practice. They have worked closely with other professionals, reviewed and updated their procedures and developed processes for staff support. All staff reflect positively on the support and training that they receive from the leadership team. Together, the staff and leaders have taken part in training and reflected on the previous weaknesses that were identified.
- Staff make accurate assessments of children's progress. Leaders and staff provide a curriculum which focuses on their understanding of children's development and what they need to learn next. Staff skilfully interact with children, and this supports children's engagement in learning. However, at times, staff do not target their teaching precisely to children's individual learning needs, and activities can be too challenging for children's age and stage of development.
- Leaders and staff have good relationships with children's parents. Parents say that their children are happy at the nursery and that staff keep them up to date and well informed about their children's learning. Parents receive information about how they can support their children's learning at home and staff provide opportunities for parents to visit the nursery and find out about their children's progress.
- Overall, children behave well. Staff set clear boundaries so that children have a clear understanding of their expectations. Children respond well; they listen and follow instructions. However, at times, some children struggle to manage their

feelings and behaviour appropriately. Although staff manage this well, they do not consider how they can help children to learn how to recognise their emotions and consider the feelings of others.

- Key-person systems are effective. Children form strong attachments with their key persons and the other staff who look after them. Staff ensure that they follow children's routines well so that children are secure in their care. However, staff working with the younger children do not always consider how to organise their group times so that children benefit from group activities. For instance, during group story times younger children struggle to be involved. They lose interest and cannot follow the stories selected.
- Staff support children's interest in being creative. They provide children with opportunities to use their own ideas, and resources are readily accessible for children to select from independently. Older children choose to make their own masks. They confidently cut their own shapes, and staff support them to work out how to make holes for their eyes and what they need to be able to wear them. Younger children enjoy drawing, and staff support this well as children count the legs to draw on the spiders that they create.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Since the last inspection, the leaders and staff have carried out training to ensure that they have a good understanding of child protection and safeguarding processes. Staff are able to identify indicators that might suggest that a child is at risk of harm. Leaders and staff have a good understanding of the procedures that they should follow if they have any concerns about children's welfare or staff practice. Staff help children to learn how to keep themselves safe when using equipment such as scissors and knives. Children learn about personal safety when they leave the nursery and attend trips to the woodland.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- continue to develop the implementation of the curriculum to target teaching more precisely, to offer children appropriate levels of challenge
- support children to learn how to understand their feelings and emotions, and to express them appropriately
- review the organisation of group activities for younger children, to maximise their ability to engage and take part.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY301590
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10244648
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 3
Total number of places	75
Number of children on roll	31
Name of registered person	Wilson, Claire Louise
Registered person unique reference number	RP512714
Telephone number	01451 820345
Date of previous inspection	9 May 2022

Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stones Nursery and Woodland Adventures registered in 2005. The setting is based in Gloucestershire. The nursery is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year. The provider receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years old. There are eight members of staff working with the children. This includes the owner/manager, who holds a childcare qualification at level 4, three staff who hold relevant qualifications at level 3, two who hold relevant degree qualifications and two who are unqualified.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Victoria Nicolson

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The deputy manager, manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector talked to staff and parents at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of an activity with the deputy manager.

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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