

Inspection of Derwent Stepping Stones @ St James

Malcolm Street, DERBY DE23 8LU

Inspection date:

20 October 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Children are generally happy in the nursery. Younger children make strong attachments with staff and stay close to them for reassurance. They thoroughly enjoy their play. They explore shaving foam with excitement. Staff encourage the younger children to make large swirling movements with their hands and arms. This helps to strengthen their small-muscle skills. They dab blobs of foam on their cheeks, laughing as they do this. Babies have fun listening to the sounds of the rattles. They reach out and grab the rattle and shake loudly, smiling as they do this. Staff encourage these movements and repeat the sounds, making eye contact and smiling back.

Older children generally behave well and show some positive attitudes toward their learning. They learn to share toys such as cars. They have fun as they push the cars and trucks around the floor and make vehicle sounds, enjoying their play. However, staff do not give older children the support they need to encourage them to learn. They do not plan activities that challenge older children's learning. Staff who work with older children do not interact well with them. Some older children play alone or with their friends. Staff are present and sit at the children's level, however, they oversee children's play rather than supporting their learning.

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

- Leaders are not aware of the inconsistencies in staff practice across the nursery. They do not provide consistent support for staff working with older children to help them effectively engage and extend their development. As a result, older children do not receive a good quality of education to help their future learning.
- Leaders have a suitable understanding of the curriculum they wish to implement. However, staff working with older children cannot demonstrate what they want children to learn. They do not interact with children to inspire learning or extend what they already know and can do. For example, the staff's intent for a cornflour activity is to explore the texture and make marks. However, the staff do not encourage or promote this. Staff simply sit at the activity and lift the cornflour with their fingers. They let it drip onto the tray constantly saying 'it's sticky', consequently, children disengage and move away.
- Staff working with the younger children support their communication and language skills well. They make facial expressions with the children and talk to the younger children about what they are doing. They repeat words clearly, so the younger children can hear them to help extend their speaking skills. However, staff who work with older children do not model enough new words to extend children's vocabulary. They do not interact in ways that support their developing use of language.
- Leaders work hard to identify children with special educational needs and/or

disabilities. However, staff working with these children do not provide the support they need. They let them, at times, wander around the room aimlessly with no interaction. Consequently, children appear bored; they simply pick up toys look at them, then drop them and walk away. Staff do not meet their individual needs or extend their learning.

- Staff promote children's self-care skills. For example, older children take off their coats, wash their hands and pour their own drinks. Younger children show they are confident as they move around their room enjoying the activities on offer. They try and take off their shoes as they sit on the carpet area. This is helping their emerging independence.
- The staff treat all children with equal respect and courtesy. They find out about the children's backgrounds and cultures as they join the nursery. They widen these experiences and encourage the children to know about each other's families and cultures. They provide the children with activities to celebrate festivals that link to their cultures, such as Diwali, Chinese New Year and Christmas.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Suitable ways of communicating with parents are in place. Staff regularly speak to parents at the main door of the nursery as parents drop off or collect their children. Staff inform the parents about what their children have been doing while at the nursery. Parents praise staff and comment they are friendly and approachable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders provide opportunities for staff to undertake regular safeguarding training to keep their knowledge of safeguarding issues up to date. The staff know what to do if they identify concerns that may indicate children are at risk or an allegation is made against a member of staff. Staff recruitment is robust. The leaders follow effective procedures to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children, including monitoring staff's ongoing suitability. Staff work with the manager to carry out regular risk assessments to ensure the premises and outdoor area are safe and secure for all children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

	Due date
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ensure staff receive effective support, coaching and training to improve their practice and increase their knowledge of the curriculum and the importance of their interactions with the children	12/12/2022
improve the implementation of the curriculum to ensure staff working with the older children understand the purpose of activities and provide support for children's learning	12/12/2022
ensure staff support older children's communication and language development to help them learn new words and develop their speaking skills	12/12/2022
provide support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to meet their individual needs and extend their learning.	12/12/2022

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY396374
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	10235330
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	49
Number of children on roll	61
Name of registered person	Derwent Stepping Stones Nursery and Community Training Centre
Registered person unique reference number	RP906919
Telephone number	07590418779
Date of previous inspection	7 December 2016

Information about this early years setting

Derwent Stepping Stones @ St James registered in 2009 and is located in Derby. The nursery employs 10 members of childcare staff. Of these, seven hold a childcare qualification at level 3 or 4. The provider has a Master's Degree in childhood studies. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, from 9am until 4.30pm, term time only. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Jan Hughes

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 inspector completed a learning walk with the provider and discussed how she organises and implements the curriculum.
- The provider took part in a joint observation with the inspector. The inspector considered the quality of education during activities and the impact this has on children's learning.
- The children spoke with the inspector and invited her into their play at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector spoke to staff and key persons within the nursery to consider their knowledge of what they wanted the children to learn.
- Some parents spoke to the inspector on the telephone, so she could take into account their views.
- The inspector had a discussion with the provider about staff's performance and training and how she evaluates their practice.
- The provider showed the inspector relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of the staff.

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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