

Inspection of Stepping Stones Day Nursery & Out of School Club

York Road, Boroughbridge, York YO51 9EB

Inspection date: 31 January 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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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

Children arrive at the setting eager and ready to learn. Children have strong bonds with staff. They show that they feel secure and safe. Babies crawl onto staff's laps or reach out their arms for a cuddle when they need reassurance. Children are motivated and curious. When a member of staff sets up an activity using recyclable materials, children eagerly join in. They explore and investigate, finding things out for themselves, and developing their own ideas. For example, children test out whether their boat made from cardboard boxes will float or sink in the water.

Babies investigate sensory toys such as the various-sized textured balls. Older children develop early literacy and mathematical skills well. They make marks and practise writing in many different areas of the nursery, including outside. Older children develop their fine-motor skills as they manipulate play dough and practise using scissors. They are confident to ask staff for assistance if they need it, and enjoy staff's positive involvement in their play. For example, children show delight and anticipation as they make towers with bricks, giggling with their friends as the tower wobbles and falls over. Children gain independence. For example, they wash their hands before eating, serve themselves at mealtimes and tidy away the toys.

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

- The manager has developed a curriculum that focuses on promoting children's communication and language, and independence. Staff gain good information from parents about children's starting points and create activities to build on these skills. Staff know the children well. They speak confidently about what children already know. Staff take account of this information to plan activities and provide targeted support that helps children make progress in their learning.
- The staff team works closely with parents and professionals to ensure that all children's individual needs are fully met. This includes children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff create accurate targets, providing the right level of challenge for children.
- Staff provide opportunities to help promote children's communication and language skills. For example, songs and rhymes form a strong part of children's day. Staff comment, repeat language, ask children questions, and give them time to think and respond. They use signs and actions to accompany their communication. When the routine of the day changes, staff encourage children to listen. For instance, they sing the tidy up song, which initiates children to stop what they are doing.
- Children are busy, demonstrating sustained periods of concentration as they play. Staff offer children activities that they are interested and motivated to take part in. Children's behaviour is good. Staff follow a positive approach, gently but clearly reminding children to take turns and consider others.

- Children gain some knowledge about their similarities and differences. However, staff do not prioritise children's learning about different families, communities, and traditions.
- Staff promote healthy lifestyles. They provide children with nutritious meals and snacks. Children benefit from lots of fresh air and exercise, and enjoy energetic play outdoors. They learn hygiene routines, such as the importance of washing their hands before eating and after toileting.
- The manager holds supervision meeting to review staff performance, as well as checking their ongoing suitability to work with children. Staff say that they feel supported by their team and the manager.
- The manager uses additional funding, such as early years pupil premium, appropriately. For example, children benefit from a hot meal and an extension to their nursery day. This supports all children to have opportunities to develop and make good progress over time.
- The provider, manager and staff build strong relationships with families. They establish effective communication with parents to inform them of their children's learning and the next steps in their learning. Parents appreciate the online system for sharing information, and say they are 'impressed' with how much progress their children make. However, staff have not yet established effective working relationships with other settings that some children also attend. This means that relevant information to support continuity of children's learning and development is not shared.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The provider, manager and staff are well informed about the procedures to follow should they have concerns relating to child protection matters. Staff are aware of their responsibility to raise concerns about the conduct of colleagues. Robust recruitment procedures help to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children. Staff supervise children well and have a clear understanding of how to support their individual dietary needs, such as allergies. Staff carry out daily risk assessments to help minimise risks and hazards. This helps to keep children safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- persevere with efforts to establish effective working partnerships with other early years settings that children also attend, to ensure that all opportunities to support children's ongoing progress are fully used
- enhance opportunities for children to learn about cultures, traditions and different ways of life beyond their own.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY301561
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10267417
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 9
Total number of places	50
Number of children on roll	42
Name of registered person	Blakey, Jayne Nadine
Registered person unique reference number	RP910001
Telephone number	07921218287
Date of previous inspection	4 January 2018

Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stones Day Nursery & Out of School Club registered in 2006 and is situated in Boroughbridge, York. The nursery employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds qualified teacher status, one holds an appropriate childcare qualification at level 5, and four hold appropriate childcare qualifications at level 3. The nursery opens Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 6pm, all year round, except for public holidays and a week at Christmas. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Janet Fairhurst

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 carried out a learning walk with the manager and discussed how the curriculum is delivered.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities and assessed the impact this has on children's learning. She spoke with staff and children during the inspection.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery manager and the provider. She looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector spoke with parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

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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