

Inspection of Stepping Stone Nursery

Church Hall, Church of God, Green Lane, Halesowen, West Midlands B62 9LN

Inspection date: 1 February 2023

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

Management and staff have high expectations for all children to be happy, settled and for them to make good progress in their development. Children arrive and settle quickly and are happy when their parents leave. They demonstrate that they feel safe and secure. They are not fazed by visitors and happily engage them in their play ideas. They gain confidence through everyday routines at the setting. This supports children when they transition to their next stage of learning.

Children improve their hand-to-eye coordination and strengthen the small muscles in their hands. They engage in activities such as drawing around shapes, mark making with paint and different-sized paintbrushes, and exploring different textures. For instance, toddlers explore different textures in the sensory trays, such as rice and sand. They collect the sand and rice using spoons to fill their containers. Additionally, they learn important mathematical language, such as 'heavy', 'light', 'empty' and 'full'. Staff support children to develop an understanding of number through regular counting of objects. This promotes children's understanding of important mathematical concepts.

Children behave well and develop good friendships with each other. They have a good understanding of the expectations for their behaviour and follow the rules, such as turn taking and sharing resources. They eagerly follow instructions and help one another to tidy away the resources before they move on to the next activity.

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

- The curriculum covers all areas of learning. All staff receive regular supervision, and they are provided with regular training, mentoring and coaching. However, staff who are new at the setting would benefit from more highly focused training. This training would help them to understand the curriculum intentions for all children and further develop their teaching skills.
- Staff collect information from parents when their child first starts to attend, to help them plan a curriculum that embeds their child's likes and interests. This information also ensures that the dietary, cultural and medical needs of children are met. All children make good progress from their starting points.
- Children's independence skills are very well supported. Older children manage their own toileting needs and know to wash and dry their hands. Staff encourage children to put on their coats and attempt fasteners. They offer children an abundance of praise for their efforts, which builds on their confidence in their own abilities.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. Staff build strong relationships with other professionals and parents and

work closely with them to put extra support in place for children with SEND, to improve their learning.

- The nursery environment is bright, clean, warm and inviting. Overall, children enjoy activities and experiences that are new and exciting. They are motivated and curious to learn. However, staff have yet to consider ways to enable children to extend their imaginative and creative skills through role play. For instance, additional resources to fully support children's imaginary play, which captivate and challenge their interests further, are few.
- Staff support communication and language effectively. Children who speak English as an additional language are supported well. For instance, staff use pictorial cards so that all children can follow the routine of the day and know what comes next. Staff make good use of singing and nursery rhymes to widen children's vocabulary. Children demonstrate good listening skills and follow instructions well. They delight in joining in with action songs and taking part in circle time.
- Parents speak very highly of the staff and the relationships they build with families. They are kept up to date with their child's progress through the online system. They are given suggestions as to how they can support their children at home. Multilingual staff are on hand to support families using their home language. Staff enhance their understanding of complex documents and signpost them to the relevant support.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The provider places a strong focus on safeguarding. All staff have undertaken safeguarding training. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of how to identify potential child protection concerns and confidently share what they will do to safeguard children. They know the procedures to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague and in the event of an allegation against a member of staff. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures help to ensure staff are suitable to work with children. Staff routinely check all areas of the setting to make sure they are safe for children to use.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support staff to continue to develop their knowledge and implementation of the curriculum, including their teaching skills
- expand the range of role-play resources to enable all children to explore and develop their own play and ideas.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2654805
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10275763
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	2 to 4
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	8
Name of registered person	Daffodils Nursery Ltd.
Registered person unique reference number	RP534188
Telephone number	07986296853
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stone Nursery registered in 2021. The setting operates Monday to Friday, from 8am to 5pm. The setting employs three members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate qualifications from level 2 to level 6. The setting receives funding to provide free early years education for two- and three-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Beverley Devlin

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 deputy 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 at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of activities taking place with the deputy manager.
- The inspector talked to parents and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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