

# Inspection of Derwent Stepping Stones @ St James

Malcolm Street, DERBY DE23 8LU

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Inspection date: 20 September 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

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

### **The provision is good**

Staff ensure that children are offered a good range of activities and experiences to support their all-round development and interests. Children settle quickly into their chosen activities. The children who are new to the setting are offered reassurance by the kind and caring staff. These children then have the confidence to safely explore their surroundings. Staff who work with the younger children, including babies, support their communication and language development well. Babies mirror sounds that staff make. They attempt to repeat words, such as drip, when playing with water. Staff who work with pre-school children help them to develop their mathematical skills. Staff encourage children to count how many spray bottles they have and then compare who has the most water inside the bottles.

Staff understand how to implement their ambitious curriculum to help children have a positive attitude to their learning. Children behave well and clearly understand the expectations set by the staff. They enjoy the company of adults and often include them in their play. Staff make the most of planned activities and routines to help children to develop their independence skills. For example, toddlers are given plenty of time to work out how to manoeuvre themselves, in order to sit correctly on a chair during their imaginative play.

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

- Staff who work with babies understand the importance of encouraging them to develop their physical skills. Babies spend time on their tummy and are supported by staff to stand at activities to help to develop their core muscles. Babies learn how to hold objects. They tip and pour using tools during water play. This helps to build on their dexterity and hand-eye coordination.
- Staff quickly identify children with special educational needs or children who require extra support. They seek guidance and advice from external professionals to ensure that these children receive the appropriate care and attention they are entitled to.
- A new manager has been put in post since the previous inspection. Staff and parents comment that they have observed improvement in the service. The manager has a clear vision of what she expects for children and the families who use the nursery. Staff comment that the new manager is approachable, has clear leadership skills and supports their practice by monitoring and coaching them effectively.
- Staff are good role models for children. They help children learn to understand the importance of sharing toys and taking turns. Staff praise children on their achievements, which contributes to their developing confidence and self-esteem.
- The majority of staff across the nursery are very clear on what they want children to learn. However, occasionally, some staff who work with the pre-

school children, are less clear on the learning intentions. Consequently, sometimes the pre-school children miss out on specific learning experiences.

- Overall, staff plan activities that build on what children like and enjoy playing with. However, sometimes during spontaneous play, staff do not make the most of using children's interests to continue to build on their skills and knowledge further.
- Parents spoken to on the day of the inspection value the support they receive from the friendly staff. They comment on how well information is shared and exchanged with them when they drop off and collect their children from nursery.
- Children's health is promoted well. Staff who work with babies ensure that bottle feeds are freshly made up on site and they follow the current government guidance. Toddlers learn how to use a soap dispenser as they learn to wash their hands independently. Pre-school children spend plenty of time outside in the fresh air. They run around, roll and spin plastic hoops and use climbing apparatus carefully.
- All children's speech and language development is supported well. Children who speak English as additional language are given the necessary support by staff. Staff implement effective strategies to ensure that children's speech and language is progressing well. They are clear in their pronunciation of words and sounds and repeat these clearly to help children to expand on their range of vocabulary and understanding.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know how to identify possible signs that a child may be at risk of harm and how to report concerns regarding a child's welfare. This includes if children may be exposed to extreme views and ideas. Staff are clear on the procedures they must also follow should they have concerns about the suitability of staff and other adults working with children. Children are closely supervised by staff who also deploy themselves well to support the ongoing and changing needs of children. Staff complete thorough risks assessments of the environment to ensure that where children play is safe and secure.

## **What does the setting need to do to improve?**

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

- help staff to have an even greater understanding of children's specific learning intentions, so they are able to support them to learn as much as they can
- support staff further to make the most of children's spontaneous play and experiences to help children build on their knowledge and skills.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY396374
<b>Local authority</b>	Derby
<b>Inspection number</b>	10266043
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Sessional day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	0 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	47
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	66
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Derwent Stepping Stones Nursery and Community Training Centre
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP906919
<b>Telephone number</b>	07590418779
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20 October 2022

## Information about this early years setting

Derwent Stepping Stones at St James registered in 2009 and is located in Derby. The nursery employs 10 members of childcare staff. Of these, eight hold a childcare qualification at level 2 and above. The provider has a level 7 qualification in childhood studies. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, from 9am to 4.30pm, term time only. The nursery is in receipt of funding to provide early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Judith Rayner

## 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 manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The manager and inspector completed two joint observations of activities and evaluated the observations together.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities and assessed the impact that this has on children's learning.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day of the inspection.
- The inspector spoke with the nominated individual, the manager, staff and the children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The manager and nominated individual provided the inspector with relevant documentation, including the evidence of staff qualifications, and also checked the suitability records of staff and the board of trustees.

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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