

Inspection of Stepping Stones Day Nursery

Wychavon District Council, Civic Centre, Queen Elizabeth Drive, Pershore WR10
1PT

Inspection date: 27 September 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	Inadequate
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Leaders have made significant improvements since the last inspection. Relationships between staff and children are warm and nurturing. Children settle well into the nursery and seek out comfort when they want it. For instance, when children explore a painting activity and have paint all over their hands, they become a little unsure. Staff are patient and help them to overcome this feeling by talking calmly and reassuring them. They gently encourage children to come with them to wash their hands together.

Children demonstrate positive attitudes towards their learning. They access a range of activities that are designed around their interests and next steps in learning. Staff plan specific activities to build on children's previous experiences. For example, children become intrigued by what happens when rainwater fills an empty bucket that has coloured chalk in it. Staff talk to them about the different possibilities that might happen. Children develop their investigative skills as they predict the outcome. They get excited when they discover what happens to the water.

Children are curious learners. They explore their environment and collect different objects in the garden to help create animals with their dough. They take pride in what they have created and enthusiastically share this with staff. Staff provide an abundance of praise, which builds on children's confidence and self-esteem.

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

- Overall, children behave well. Staff remind them of the rules in the nursery. However, they do not talk to children about why the rules are in place. For example, staff remind children to use their 'walking feet'. However, they do not explain how running in some places could cause an injury. This does not enable children to fully understand that their actions can have consequences.
- Children explore the garden as they find different insects in the mud. Most of them spend some time concentrating on their new discoveries. However, at times, less-confident staff do not adapt their teaching techniques to support children to remain engaged in their learning. Consequently, some children lose focus and wander away from the activities.
- Parents comment positively on the changes made in the nursery. Since the last inspection, staff have developed better communication with parents. Parents say that they feel more informed about their child's development. They have regular updates about what their child is working towards. Staff share ideas with parents to help them to support their child's learning at home.
- Staff use assessments effectively to identify what children need to learn next. They swiftly act on any concerns with children's development and promptly

share this information with parents. The special educational needs coordinator provides regular updates to parents and other professionals. This ensures that children access the right support to help them make expected progress.

- Leaders meet regularly with staff to discuss any support they require to carry out their role effectively. Staff attend a range of training to help improve their knowledge and to develop their practice. They comment on how supportive leaders are of their own well-being and say that they feel valued members of the team.
- Children learn about the world around them. They discover what makes them unique as they learn about different cultural festivals their friends may celebrate. Staff also take the children on regular trips out in their community. This helps them to learn that they are part of the wider community. Children visit local places. For example, they go on walks to the duck pond. Staff teach children how they can keep themselves safe when feeding the ducks.
- Staff prepare children well as they get ready to leave the nursery. They work in partnership with schools to share key information about the children. This ensures that children receive continuity in their care and learning. Children have lots of opportunities to build on their independence. For example, they serve their own meals at lunchtime and put on their coats to go out in the garden.
- Staff place high priority on developing children's communication and language skills. Children who speak English as an additional language have support in place to enable them to develop their language. Staff use keywords in their home language alongside English to support and develop their skills further. Children enjoy a range of stories and songs to support them in learning new vocabulary.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding culture across the team is strong. Staff know the possible signs that a child may be at risk of harm. They understand their responsibility to promptly report any concerns they have about a child in their care or if there is an allegation against a member of staff. Staff are vigilant in their assessment of the environment to ensure that this remains safe for children. Staff deploy themselves effectively to ensure that they can respond to children's needs. While children rest or sleep, staff remain with them and carry out regular checks. Leaders follow robust recruitment procedures to ensure that all staff working with children are suitable.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- provide children with consistent and clear explanations of behaviour expectations to enable them to fully understand the consequences that their

actions may have on themselves or others

- support less-confident staff to enhance their teaching techniques to help all children remain highly engaged in their learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2696926
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10293966
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 4
Total number of places	35
Number of children on roll	26
Name of registered person	Monarchs Childcare Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP900988
Telephone number	01386565404
Date of previous inspection	14 April 2023

Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stones Day Nursery registered in 2022. The nursery employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications, including one with qualified teacher status and a masters degree in education. One member of staff has a qualification at level 6, two have qualifications at level 3, one has a qualification at level 4, and one is qualified at level 2. The nursery is open from Monday to Friday, all year round, except for a week at Christmas and bank holidays. Sessions are from 8am to 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Katherine Wilson

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the nursery.
- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager and the nominated individual joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the nominated individual.
- The inspector spoke to several parents and reviewed testimonials from parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- Staff and children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke with the nominated individual and the manager about the leadership and management of the nursery.
- 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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