

Inspection of Stepping Stones

The Institute, Main Street, Cononley, KEIGHLEY, West Yorkshire BD20 8LJ

Inspection date: 19 March 2024

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 thoroughly enjoy their time at this nurturing pre-school. They interact very well with the caring staff and receive lots of loving care. Children settle quickly and are well motivated to learn. Staff enthuse children to develop their independence and gain confidence. They encourage children to try new things and give them lots of praise. Children take pride in their achievements, such as finding their name card to put on the welcome board and post in the snack box to show they have eaten. Staff encourage children to make many choices in their play and select resources and activities for themselves. Children receive praise for their concentration and for finishing a good job. They are thrilled when they manage tricky tasks, such as putting spread on a cracker and removing tricky backing from Easter stickers.

Children behave very well and are very sociable. They welcome visitors and are keen to demonstrate their good manners. For example, when staff say 'thank you', children say 'thank you too' and give a beaming smile. Staff are exemplary role models and treat everyone with the greatest respect. Children form very secure attachments with their key person, as well as the whole staff team. They quickly develop a sense of belonging. The well-qualified staff are fun and enthusiastic. Children clearly enjoy staff's company. They invite staff in to their games, where they giggle together and enjoy their playfulness.

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

- The manager and her deputy work closely together and plan the curriculum well. They support staff daily with regular professional dialogues, such as discussing children's progress and next steps in learning. Staff share ideas for activities between the team. This means that staff are able to engage with each child in whatever they are doing to challenge and extend their learning. This has a positive impact on children's high levels of achievement in their learning and development.
- Staff plan daily outdoor outings to give children plenty of fresh air and exercise. For instance, children enjoy 'nature' and 'listening' walks around the local area. They spend long periods of time in the pre-school's well-designed and enticing allotment, where children have their own safe place to explore. Children learn about the natural world and how to care for living things. They learn about road safety, and to accept rules that help to keep everyone safe. For example, children happily hold the safety 'walking rope' which staff use to help to manage group outings more effectively.
- Staff know children and their families very well. They recognise the different experiences that children have had before joining the pre-school and gain valuable information from parents. Staff use this information well to identify

children's individual needs and interests to help new children to settle quickly. For instance, staff provide a multitude of resources and books based on children's individual interests to inspire children's developing language and communication skills. Staff have recently created a lending library for children to share favourite books with their family at home. This helps to build strong partnerships with parents.

- Children benefit from consistently good teaching from staff to help them to develop an understanding of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. They know how to keep their bodies healthy and learn excellent hygiene and self-care skills. Children help to plant and grow herbs and vegetables, and talk about good food choices. During the inspection, children were very excited about a planned train trip to Skipton to buy seeds and plants to grow their favourite pizza toppings.
- Parents speak very highly of the pre-school and are aware of the good progress their children make. Overall, staff routinely share information about children's learning and assessments with parents. They give them ideas of how they can support their children's learning at home. However, staff do not ensure that all parents are aware of their children's next steps in learning, to support their children fully to build on what they are learning and practising at pre-school. Additionally, key persons of children who attend other settings do not consistently share information about children's learning. This does not support children's continuity of learning.
- The provider and managers are very passionate about the pre-school. Their vast experience and knowledge results in consistently good outcomes for children. The provider and managers have an accurate evaluation of the service they provide in the community and constantly look at how they can improve. For instance, since the last inspection, this pack-away setting has worked within the community to provide an outside space for children's safe physical development and growing and planting areas for children.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- enhance the strong partnership working with parents, to ensure that they are aware of their children's next steps in learning and how they can promote these at home
- strengthen information-sharing with other settings that children attend, to provide further continuity in children's learning and development.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY312228
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10312412
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	36
Name of registered person	Clark, Joanna Marie
Registered person unique reference number	RP902978
Telephone number	01535634217
Date of previous inspection	30 April 2018

Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stones registered in 2005 and is located in Keighley. The pre-school employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, three staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 6, one member of staff holds a qualification at level 4 and one member of staff holds a qualification at level 3. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, during term time. Sessions are from 7.45am until 5.30pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Jan Harvey

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the pre-school 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 pre-school.
- The inspector viewed the pre-school and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The deputy manager, manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector spoke to children, to find out about their time at the pre-school.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and on a walk to the local pre-school's allotment, and assessed the impact on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a story time with the deputy manager.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection. She read parents' feedback letters 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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