

Stepping Stones Nursery

155 Whitefield Road, BRISTOL, BS5 7UB

Inspection date	22/05/2013
Previous inspection date	07/01/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- The effective key person system and friendly staff help children in all rooms to settle and play confidently.
- Children develop independence in their learning as they easily select activities of their choice from around the well-organised rooms and out door space.
- Children are keen to try the activities and make good progress in their learning because staff make their learning fun.
- Partnerships with parents are strong and there are good channels of communication to support children's learning and development.

It is not yet outstanding because

- At times, staff do not give children enough time to think about, and respond to questions.
- Links with other early years settings that children attend are not fully established to enable sharing of information regarding the children's progress.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children and staff throughout the nursery.
- The inspector spoke with the manager, area manager staff and children.
- The inspector sampled records for staff and children and children's learning records, staff and children documents and self evaluation.
- The inspector spoke with parents and grandparents to get their views.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager and baby room leader.

Inspector

Karen Prager

Full Report

Information about the setting

Stepping Stones Nursery opened in 2009 and is one of five nurseries privately run by a small group of individuals. It operates from two adjoining converted houses in the Speedwell area of Bristol, on a direct route to and from the city centre. The premises are accessible at ground level and babies are cared for on the first floor. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area to the rear of the premises. The nursery opens each weekday from 7.30am to 6pm, all year round except for bank holidays. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. There are currently 81 children on roll. The nursery provides care for three- and four-year-old children who receive funding for nursery education. Fourteen members of staff work with the children. Eleven staff are qualified to level three, and the other staff is working towards a level two qualification.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- strengthen children's communication and language development by giving children 'thinking time', and enabling them to think about what they want to say and put their thoughts into words
- develop further the partnerships with other early years providers to improve consistency in children's learning.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children are settled, happy and ready to learn because the staff provide a welcoming and stimulating environment. Staff understand that children learn through their play and the daily routine has a good balance of child led and adult directed activities. Overall, interesting activities are made available that are suited to children's stages of development. This means that children are usually keen to be involved and are motivated to learn. Consequently, all children make good progress towards the early learning goals, which prepares them well for when they move on to school.

There are secure systems to assess what children can do when they first start and for their ongoing development. Parents are valued contributors to the children's development and comment slips are available for them to complete. Each child's key person maintains a good dialogue with parents, which ensures that they share information about what

children can do and what they need to learn next. Staff offer ideas about how parents can support children's learning at home through informal discussions when children are collected, or at the parents' evenings.

The combined assessments from staff and parents are used by the key person to plan activities that will interest and challenge children. Whole group times are well planned. Children count the number of children present and take part in singing a welcome song. They learn about the pattern of the day and can say that 'in the morning the sun goes up, and in the afternoon the sun goes down.' They talk about the weather, and consider what clothes they might need if it is sunny or snowy. Staff have a good understanding of effective teaching methods overall, and use these to support children's learning. They provide good support during activities so that as children play they continue to learn. They plan activities that encourage children to listen and think critically. For example, children contribute to instructions to draw a house using a selection of shapes. Generally, staff interaction is very positive, encouraging and reassuring. They praise children when they remember the letters they need to write their name. However, at times, staff do not give children time to think and respond to a question, before posing another.

Resources are well organised and promote children's independence as learners. The outdoor space has recently been improved. This enables children concentrate for extended periods as they fill containers in the sand and staff sit with children offering support as they build with large blocks. Children of all ages enjoy looking at books developing their early literacy skills. Staff hold children's interest when they read in a lively manner and the youngest children chuckle when staff read their favorite book about a monster. Children develop good relationships with others. They sit companionably, talking with each other about the computer game they are playing. Toddlers develop important physical skills when they climb the stairs demonstrating that they have learnt to negotiate the steps safely and with confidence. Older children develop skills in peddling in the tikes and negotiating the space outdoors. Overall children make good progress in their learning. They enjoy their time at the nursery and develop positive attitudes towards learning.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children settle well at the start of the day. The effective key person system and friendly staff enable families to share information regularly. The babies and young toddlers are settled to sleep by familiar staff and they sleep well in the quiet rooms. Babies' care routines such as sleep times and nappy changes are carefully managed and warm relationships develop. Staff change children's nappies regularly so that they are comfortable and older children are well supported as they begin toilet training. Children are supported well when they move from one room to another and staff are sensitive to the needs of those children who find these times difficult. Staff explain to children when something is not acceptable. This helps them to consider the needs of others. Consequently, children behave well and learn to play co-operatively. Children are effectively supported in developing skills in independence. Children take a part in organising the snack times and the staff support them in getting their coats and aprons on.

The nursery is well resourced with good quality toys placed within easy reach of the children. Children benefit from outside play each day. Staff arrange the children's day so that older and younger children play in the garden at separate times giving them more space when they do play outdoors.

Staff use mealtimes as an opportunity to develop children's understanding of healthy eating and self-care. For example, children know to wash their hands before they eat. Children develop a good understanding of why it is important to eat a healthy diet and be physically active. Children like the nutritious food provided and older children eagerly serve themselves. Staff support younger children as they learn to eat independently. Staff talk with children about the food they have on their plate, and children sometimes visit local shops to buy food for cooking activities. This helps children to develop an understanding of the importance of healthy food. The broad range of experiences enjoyed by children show that they are developing skills for the future. They are well prepared for the next stage in their learning and move to school.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

Leadership and management are good because the owners and manager have an accurate overview of the provision for welfare and learning. They share a determination to drive improvement. They demonstrate a good understanding of their responsibilities in meeting the requirements of the early years foundation stage. Staff are clear about the nursery policies because these are regularly reviewed at staff meetings.

Keeping children safe is a high priority. Staff regularly assess potential risks and take effective steps to minimise hazards for children. Procedures for vetting staff are robust. Staff have all completed safeguarding training and know about the procedures to follow should they have a concern for a child's welfare. All staff complete first aid training and procedures for children who have a medical need are embedded effectively.

Procedures for evaluation of the nursery provision are effective. Regular staff meetings and supportive management means that the views of staff are readily shared. There is an action plan that identifies the priorities for the nursery's future development, which provides focused, continued and systematic improvement. The staff team is well established and staff work well together. Continuous professional development is valued. Senior staff regularly spend time in the nursery rooms to monitor and develop individual performance. These reviews improve practice throughout the nursery, to the children's benefit.

Partnerships with parents are strong. Parents speak highly of the care and support provided for their children. Staff and management value the partnerships with other professionals. However, links with other early years provision which children attend are not fully established, to enable effective sharing of information about children's

development.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY392108
Local authority	Bristol City
Inspection number	914181
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	44
Number of children on roll	81
Name of provider	Little Acorns (South West) Limited
Date of previous inspection	07/01/2010
Telephone number	01179 658241

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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