

Stepping Stones Nursery

322 Coleshill Road, Birmingham, West Midlands, B36 8BG



Inspection date

12 June 2015

Previous inspection date

26 June 2014

	This inspection:	Good	2
The quality and standards of the early years provision	Previous inspection:	Requires Improvement	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Good	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Good	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Good	2
The setting meets legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- The staff team are well qualified and demonstrate a good understanding of the different ways the children learn. The quality of teaching is consistently good. Staff use effective teaching methods to promote children's learning across all areas.
- The outdoor area has been significantly improved. Children benefit from a well-resourced, stimulating environment which enhances their learning experiences. Children have many opportunities to be physically active and enjoy exploring the natural world.
- Partnership with parents is good. Staff regularly share information with parents about the progress their children are making. They inform parents about what children are learning in nursery and give them ideas of how they can continue learning at home.
- Staff track the progress children make. The manager monitors this to ensure any gaps in children's learning are quickly identified. This means targeted interventions are put in place, to close these gaps so that every child makes good progress.
- The manager regularly evaluates the provision. All staff, parents and children are consulted with, in order to accurately identify priorities for improvement. Detailed improvement plans are used with maximum effect to ensure continuous improvement.
- The nursery places a strong focus on safeguarding children. Regular staff training means all staff fully understand their responsibilities to protect children from harm. Rigorous risk assessments are in place to ensure any risks are identified and minimised.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Information gained from parents when children first start does not always provide staff with the detailed information they require, to help them plan for children's future learning at the outset.
- On occasions, routines limit children's opportunities to make choices about what they want to do. This means children do not always stay focused during some activities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the depth of information gathered from parents about children's learning and development on entry to the setting in order to further enrich the planning process from the outset
- review the daily routines so that children can make even more choices in their play and learning, to foster their independence and help them become more engaged and focused during activities.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in all indoor areas used by children and the outdoor play areas.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to the manager, staff and children throughout the inspection and took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of staff working with children.
- The inspector looked at a sample of records and policies relating to children's learning, welfare, health and safety.

Inspector

Emma Daly

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is good

Staff use observations to assess children's development and identify their next steps for learning. This means all children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Children generally lead their own learning in a highly stimulating environment. They enjoy using a wide variety of natural resources which means they have many opportunities to investigate and be imaginative. However, during some parts of the daily routine older children are expected to join in with specific activities, such as quiet time and story time. The timing of when these activities are organised means children spend a long time sitting down. This leads to some children losing interest and not always being fully engaged in their learning. Nevertheless, staff interact well with children. They skilfully question them to extend learning further. For example, as children make coloured dough using flour, water and paint; staff ask children to describe how it looks and feels. Babies enjoy exploring paint with their hands and show their delight as they play with musical instruments. Children develop their problem-solving skills as they transport water through pipes and funnels to fill buckets and containers. Children have many opportunities to develop their counting, reading and writing skills in readiness for school.

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

Children are emotionally secure because they build positive relationships with their key person. Children are happy and confident within their environment. Staff are warm, caring and attentive, and they ensure that all children's individual needs are effectively met. Staff gather information from parents when children first start in order to gain an understanding about children's individual needs and interests. However, this does not always provide them with enough information about what children already know and can do. Consequently, staff do not always plan very precisely for every child from the outset. Children's independence is promoted as they confidently self-select from a variety of resources and equipment. In addition, children are encouraged to serve themselves during mealtimes and they develop good self-help skills relative to their age and stage of development. All children are effectively supported with their move into new rooms and their move on to school, because staff successfully share information with new key persons and teachers.

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

Since the last inspection a new manager has been appointed, and as a result, the leadership and management team is strong. They have made some significant improvements. The manager places a strong focus on performance management. Regular meetings, coaching and monitoring has helped staff to develop within their roles. Staff regularly evaluate each other's practice which ensures continuous improvement. Staff are eager to continue training to continue to raise their knowledge and enhance their teaching skills. The manager has built strong partnerships with other professionals to ensure that information is effectively shared so that every child is supported to make good progress.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY405710
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	1013599
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	62
Number of children on roll	100
Name of provider	Smarteenies Birmingham Ltd
Date of previous inspection	26 June 2014
Telephone number	0121 748 6666

Stepping Stones Nursery was registered in 2010. The nursery employs 17 members of childcare staff. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications from level 2 to level 6. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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