

Derwent Stepping Stones

Derwent Stepping Stones, St. Marks Road, DERBY, DE21 6AH



Inspection date

4 December 2015

Previous inspection date

5 September 2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Leaders and managers have a secure understanding of what works well at the nursery and what could be improved. They focus on the areas that most need improvement and understand their responsibilities.
- Staff assess children's development accurately and plan carefully for individual children's learning.
- Children are confident and settled at the nursery. They behave well, understand routines and know what staff expectations for their behaviour are.
- All children, including babies, show interest in their play. They concentrate well and take pride in the results of their efforts.
- Funds to support children identified as being at risk of not reaching typical milestones are used well to target development in the most relevant aspects of teaching.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Leaders and managers are unclear about the disqualification regulations and the offences linked to these when they ask staff to sign suitability declarations.
- Teaching for two- to three-year-old children is not as strong as in other areas of the nursery. Children do not experience high quality support for the development of their speech and language skills, and at times the range of resources and activities is limited.
- Nursery routines sometimes interfere with children's play and learning. Staff do not consider carefully enough when to intervene in play, for example, at nappy changing times.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- clarify with the leadership team their understanding of the disqualification regulations and the offences linked to the regulations so that staff declarations of suitability are made based on secure understanding
- improve consistency in the quality of teaching in the nursery so that all children have the best support to improve their speech and language skills and have access to a varied range of resources and activities
- review the daily routines to make sure that they do not cause too much disruption to children's play, concentration and learning

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed teaching and its impact on children's learning both inside and outside.
- The inspector spoke to members of staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection and held a meeting with the manager, deputy manager and Early Years Professional.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the Early Years Professional.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day and those seen in parental questionnaires set by the provider.
- The inspector looked at children's records, planning documentation, evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery and a range of other documentation, including policies and procedures.

Inspector

Joanne Mary Smith

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

There are sound policies and procedures in place to support the operation of the nursery so that legal requirements are met. Leaders and managers use a practical and sensible approach to evaluating the nursery's effectiveness, and re-focus their work and targets appropriately. They responded positively to action taken by Ofsted following two significant incidents in 2015 and have strengthened procedures and practice related to protecting children's safety and well-being. Safeguarding is effective. Robust systems are in place to check the quality of teaching and learning in the nursery, successfully identifying and targeting weaknesses. Staff have regular, good quality one-to-one meetings with their manager. They benefit from professional development opportunities, which they successfully use in their work. Recent work on making sure praise children receive is meaningful is, for example, developing well across most of the nursery.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Overall, children are well supported to learn and develop by a skilful staff team, although there is some inconsistency in the strength of teaching for two- to three-year-old children. Staff working with babies have a very good understanding of their developmental needs. They provide an interesting and stimulating environment that supports babies' physical and intellectual development well. Babies became engrossed in hiding objects in a tray of flour. During the play staff repeated words such as 'hiding', while covering the objects, so that babies could develop their understanding of language. When confident they attempted to repeat the words back to staff. Older children benefit from a well-planned and resourced environment which is a hive of focused activity. Staff skilfully manage children's differing levels of skill well. For example, they encouraged some children to write, recognise and name letters, while supporting others to simply make a connection that the marks they had made on their letter to Santa could carry meaning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Staff carefully manage children's care needs, making sure children are comfortable and safe throughout the day. Staff are good role models and behave with courtesy towards each other, parents and the children. A well-established key person system supports strong relationships with children and parents. Babies settle well into the nursery. They explore their environment independently, but check where their key person is from time to time so that they can seek comfort and support when they need it. Older children are supported to understand about sharing and taking turns by staff who use fun activities, such as card and board games, to reinforce messages. Support for children who need extra help to understand expectations and boundaries is very positive and when necessary extra staff are used to support the development of this understanding.

Outcomes for children are good

Children make good progress. Babies develop confidence and independence; toddlers refine these skills and add others, such as choosing when to have a drink and pouring it with control. Older children's literacy and numeracy skills are developing well; they recognise letters found in their name and count groups of items with accuracy.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY330097
Local authority	Derby, City of
Inspection number	1030186
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	0 - 11
Total number of places	128
Number of children on roll	129
Name of provider	Derwent Stepping Stones Nursery and Community Training Centre
Date of previous inspection	5 September 2013
Telephone number	01332 372245

Derwent Stepping Stones was registered in 2006. It is situated in purpose built premises in Derby and is managed by a committee. The nursery employs 31 members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds an appropriate early years qualification at level 7, 24 hold appropriate early years qualification at level 3 and two hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 2. The nursery is open from 7.30am until 6pm, Monday to Friday, all year round. The nursery provides early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children in receipt of nursery education grant and early years pupil premium.

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