

Stepping Stones Montessori Childcare Limited



The Old School House, Village Road, Waverton, CHESTER, CH3 7QN

Inspection date	14 March 2018
Previous inspection date	25 November 2016

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

- The newly appointed leadership team demonstrates passion, dedication and a clear commitment to enhancing the overall quality of practice. They have identified several relevant and ambitious targets for the future development of the nursery.
- Staff have good relationships with children. Staff working with babies develop positive, responsive relationships that meet babies' individual needs very well.
- Staff work well in partnership with parents. They regularly share information with parents about children's learning and give parents suggestions of ways that they can support children's learning at home.
- Children progress well from their individual starting points. They are suitably prepared for their next stages of learning and the eventual move to school.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Leaders' processes for the supervision of staff do not yet include regular and incisive evaluation of the impact of their practice, to further improve their knowledge and raise the overall quality of teaching to the highest level.
- Routines are not always organised well enough to ensure that children remain engaged and concentrate well, relative to their ages.
- Staff do not always fully facilitate children's exploratory play. For example, occasionally there are too few resources for children to use when playing in the sand.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- implement more rigorous procedures for supervising and coaching staff to improve teaching to the highest possible level
- review and develop daily routines to ensure that children's engagement and concentration is promoted as effectively as possible
- enhance the planning and resourcing of exploratory play experiences in both the indoor and outdoor areas.

Inspection activities

- The inspector had a tour of the areas of the premises used for childcare purposes.
- The inspector reviewed parents' written feedback.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection. She reviewed children's records and evaluated the quality of practice with the manager.
- The inspector met with the leadership team. She reviewed and discussed relevant documentation, including their policies, risk assessments and self-evaluation.

Inspector

Lauren Parsons

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

Safeguarding is effective. Leaders ensure that staff follow robust procedures to protect children from harm. For example, entry to the nursery is closely controlled and monitored. Staff have a good understanding of what to do if they have a concern about a child's welfare or the conduct of an adult. Risk assessment is used effectively to minimise potential hazards to children's safety. Staff work well in partnership with parents and other professionals. They regularly share information with parents and involve them in their children's learning. Parents' feedback about the nursery is positive, including the range of activities children participate in and how they progress over time. Staff's assessments of children's progress are monitored regularly. Leaders ensure that children who require additional support receive it promptly.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

The quality of teaching is good overall. Staff are suitably qualified and experienced. They understand how children learn and follow what children are interested in when planning activities. Staff working with the oldest children promote their understanding of written letters and spoken sounds well. For example, children identify different words or objects that begin with the same sound, including from pictures or toys in the room. They enjoy tracing the written letter in the sand tray using vehicles. Younger children enjoy being creative. They dance and copy actions while staff sing their favourite songs, and make monsters out of play dough. Babies enjoy playing in the outdoor area. They curiously observe the nursery's pet rabbits and develop their physical skills as they learn to run and navigate around different objects.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children enter the nursery happily. Those who are new to the nursery settle very quickly due to good relationships with their key person. Staff gather information about children's home routines, medical needs, allergies and interests. Robust procedures are in place to ensure that children's individual needs are consistently met and well-managed. Children enjoy serving their own meals, which are freshly prepared on site by the nursery chef. Children have ample opportunities to exercise and develop their physical skills. Staff encourage children to take responsibility for their own personal needs, where reasonably practicable. For example, children wipe their own noses and follow handwashing procedures before mealtimes.

Outcomes for children are good

Children progress well from their starting points. Older children develop a range of skills that helps to prepare them for their future learning. For example, children are encouraged to take turns during conversations and tidy up the resources they have been using. They enjoy practising their early writing skills, for example, as they use large pieces of chalk to copy what staff have written. Children develop good social skills and are respectful towards others. They listen well to adults and can follow instructions.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY415263
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	1132666
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 - 9
Total number of places	58
Number of children on roll	191
Name of registered person	Stepping Stones Montessori Childcare Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP902476
Date of previous inspection	25 November 2016
Telephone number	01244 332 270

Stepping Stones Montessori Childcare Limited registered in 2010. The nursery employs 14 members of childcare staff including the manager. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above or are working towards them. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday for 51 weeks per year, excluding bank holidays. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. They also offer before- and after-school and a holiday club. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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