



Positive Steps Stokenchurch

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY292355
Inspection date	24 January 2007
Inspector	Susan Mary Deadman
Setting Address	Positive Steps Day Nursery, Lower Church Street, Stokenchurch, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP14 3TG
Telephone number	01494 484 737
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Registered person	Positive Steps
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Positive Steps Nursery (Stokenchurch) is one of three nurseries run by the Positive Steps group. It opened in 2004 and operates from four rooms within a refurbished building. It is situated in the semi-rural village of Stokenchurch, Buckinghamshire, close to Junction 5 of the M40. A maximum of 58 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.45 to 18.15 all year round. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 52 children aged from birth to under eight years on roll. Of these, 12 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from the local area and beyond. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The nursery employs 12 staff. The owner and administrative staff are based in offices on the premises. Six of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications and one member of staff is working towards a National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in early years.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Through planned activities, children gain a clear understanding of the importance of healthy eating. For example, children enjoy fruit tasting sessions with a variety of fruits including water melon, cherries and raspberries. Children have independent access to their own water bottles throughout the day. Children enjoy the wide range of food on offer at all meal times. Older children help serve themselves and have very good appetites. Menus are varied and nutritious. Very good procedures ensure that staff meet children's individual dietary requirements. Children have their own place mats, on which staff record any foods they must not have access to.

Staff are organised to deal with accidents competently, which maintains children's physical well being. Hygiene procedures are generally effective. For example, staff clean the tables prior to meal times and wear gloves and aprons when changing nappies. However, the hand washing procedure is not always in evidence within the older baby room. As a result, babies sometimes eat using hands, which are not clean. The condition of waste bins in most areas does not promote good hygiene standards. Staff support children's personal health care as they encourage them to clean their teeth after meals.

Children benefit from the frequent use they have of a safe outside play area. They go out in most weather conditions and enjoy stomping through the snow wearing their Wellington boots.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from being cared for in a safe and secure environment. Staff safeguard children's welfare as they are vigilant at all times. All bathroom areas are within the playrooms so children do not leave the area. Staff regularly monitor sleeping babies, which promotes their safety.

The premises are very well organised and attractively presented. Children independently select from a good range of safe play equipment. The equipment that very young children require is in plentiful supply. Babies benefit from mobility aids, comfy floor seats and a clean cot in a quiet room.

Staff check the garden area prior to children's use. Children are safe during outings as staff complete risk assessments on the venue, take children's health requirements with them and work within a high ratio of staff to children. Staff promote children's welfare as they have a good understanding of the child protection procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy, settle well and are confident within the nursery. Good verbal interaction by staff maintains children's interest in the activities. Children participate with enthusiasm in a variety of activities. They enjoy delving into a large tray of shredded paper and make good use of the cosy book corner as they 'chill out' on the comfy chairs or cushions and look at the books. Children enjoy art and craft activities, such as foot painting and model making.

Children gain confidence as staff praise their achievements. They sustain interest in their play, spending as long or as little as they wish at each activity. Staff are flexible and allow children to participate in the activity of their choice. This results in children making their own decisions and enhances their enjoyment.

Staff provide babies with much physical interaction. They sit and cuddle them and sing songs to them as they change their nappies. The high level of care and attention benefits the young children and provides them with security. Babies have access to a good range of interesting play equipment that stimulate their curiosity and encourage mobility.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a clear understanding of children's needs and provide a sufficient range of activities and experiences. Staff's understanding of the early learning goals supports children's learning as they use these to devise planning. Children benefit from a good range of planned activities, which meet their needs and enhance their learning. Staff evaluate the outcome of the activities for children. However, they do not always use this information to plan the next steps for children, which restricts the value of the evaluation.

Staff engage children's interest during number rhymes as they use a good range of hand puppets to support children's understanding and subsequent learning. For example, staff show children the hand puppet with the five space men attached, and children are able to see these disappear one by one as they count down and predict how many are left each time. Staff support children's understanding of numbers through everyday activities such as counting at snack time.

Children take part in a good variety of physical play activities, which promote their physical development. Children experience music and dance as they march around the room playing their instruments. They very much enjoy the outside play area, which they access on a daily basis. Children pedal furiously around the garden, safely negotiating obstacles. They confidently manage the slide and climbing frame and use the balance bars with precision.

Children have good access to the written word and have a very clear understanding that print carries meaning. Planned activities, allow children to write notes or mark make. For example, children write in their dairies and draw pictures. Their art work shows a clear representation of persons and animals. Staff encourage children to write their own name on their work.

Children are very good at linking sounds and letters. They confidently point out to staff each time they see or think of a letter and inform staff of the words which start with that sound.

Once this discussion starts, there is no stopping the children, who are spontaneous and very keen to demonstrate their knowledge.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enjoy themselves at the setting. They form very good relationships with their peer group and staff. They are confident in the company of other adults. Children play very well together and staff deal with minor disputes in a sensitive way, which supports children's understanding of right and wrong. Staff work in partnership with parents to promote positive behaviour management. They are very good role models for children.

Staff meet children's individual needs. They enhance children's positive self-image and they praise and show interest in children's achievements. Children learn about the world around them through a variety of topics. For example, children learn about various festivals such as Hanukkah, St Patrick's Day and Chinese New Year.

Partnership with parents is good. Staff work with parents and other professionals to meet the individual needs of children who have special educational needs. The strong partnership and dedication of the staff team, enables children to make progress.

All children benefit from the excellent partnership with parents who are very welcome in the setting. They receive a good amount of information in relation to the various policies and procedures. Informative and regular news letters provide parents with much information relating to the care and education the setting provides. The information includes a detailed account of the types of activities children undertake and how the children benefit and learn from these.

Children benefit from the effective exchange of relevant information, such as health care issues. Staff gain a good amount of details relating to the individual care of children. They maintain clear records, which detail various contact numbers, dietary requirement and permission forms. Parents are extremely confident about the service the nursery provides. They enthuse about the commitment of all staff and how they enable their child to make progress. The regular sharing of information in relation to what the children learn, provides parents with a clear insight to their child's developmental progress.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The organisation of the setting is good. Children feel at home in the well-organised environment. Staff are warm and affectionate, which enhances children's confidence. Effective organisation and staff's understanding of how children learn, results in children playing purposefully with the equipment.

Good organisation ensures that the required records are in place. There is an effective system to record parent's written permission for issues such as outings, emergency medical treatment

and observations. There are effective systems in place to ensure parents have much information about the setting. Notice boards provide a good amount of relevant information relating to the care of children.

The leadership and management is good. Staff work closely as a team and are clear on their roles and responsibilities. A wide range of policies and procedures keep children safe, secure and promote their general well-being. There are effective systems in place to ensure staff hold the appropriate level of childcare qualification and undergo the required checks and references. A thorough induction for new staff, promotes children's welfare as it ensures all staff are aware of the aims of the setting and the procedures to follow. Effective management ensures that staff undertake additional training to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals. The setting works with other agencies to support the planning for the Foundation Stage.

The management team have a clear understanding of the requirements in relation to the complaints procedure. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection the setting was required to record fire drills, extend children's creativity through art activities and support children's understanding of differences.

Staff record each fire drill in full detail. This enables them to identify any issues that may result, which improves children's safety.

Staff provide children with the opportunity to enhance their creativity. They make models from recyclable items such as tubes and boxes. Children draw recognisable objects and use paints in a variety of ways.

Children gain an understanding of others through planned topics. They enjoy dressing up in the good variety of costumes, which include multicultural outfits. There is some access to resources, which show positive images of differences, although items which extend children's awareness of disability are limited.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the previous inspection there has been one complaint made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. The concern was raised in May 2006.

The complaint related to:

National Standard 6 Safety in relation to a concern that children were not adequately supervised whilst playing.

National Standard 11 Behaviour in relation to behaviour management techniques.

No evidence was found to support a breach of regulations for the above National Standards. However, Ofsted set one action in relation to National Standard 2 Organisation. The provider responded to the action appropriately. Ofsted was satisfied that by taking the required steps the provider met the National Standards and remained qualified for registration at the time the investigation was closed.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- improve hygiene procedures to minimise the spread of infection.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- extend the evaluation of activities and use the information effectively when planning the next steps in children's learning.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk