

# Stepping Stones

Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY305214
<b>Inspection date</b>	02/07/2009
<b>Inspector</b>	Clementina Ogunsanwo
<b>Setting address</b>	St Martins School, Ranmore Road, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 1HW
<b>Telephone number</b>	0870 446 0585
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Type of setting</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

## Description of the setting

Stepping Stones Nursery is run by Pipkins Nurseries Limited. It opened in 1992 and re-registered in 2005. It operates from a mobile classroom within the grounds of St Martins School on the outskirts of Dorking Town centre. It has use of a shared garden with the reception class children in St Martins School, an outdoor playground and large fields. A maximum of 18 children between the ages of two and five may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 09:00 to 11:45 for 36 weeks of the year. Currently, there are 26 children on roll, all of who are within the early years age group. There are currently no children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who are learning English as an additional language. There are four members of staff. Two members are qualified; two members of staff have NVQ at level 3. One staff has a Pre-school Education Diploma and one unqualified member of staff. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register, the compulsory Childcare Register and the voluntary Childcare Register, and liaises well with the primary school for the care and education of the children in the nursery. There is a ramp which facilitates access for children who may require disabled access.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Stepping Stones Nursery is a good setting where children can play within a caring and lively environment. Staff supervise the children well throughout the session, ensuring their safety and well-being at all times. Parents and carers hold the work of the setting in high regard as one parent commented, 'Excellent, my child comes here happily'. The nursery is well resourced and leadership has good capacity to improve further. The nursery has addressed most of the issues identified at the previous inspection although formal systems for informing parents about their children's progress are in the early stages of development.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- set up formal systems for informing parents about their children's progress
- extend the range of activities in order to promote children's awareness of other cultures

## The leadership and management of the early years provision

Leadership and management are good. Safeguarding procedures are secure and risk assessments are carried out on a regular basis. Staff have a good understanding of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. Self-evaluation is good. Staff have accurately identified the areas in which the quality of provision could be improved further. All children are included in scheduled

activities and use equipment safely, facilitated by constant reminders by staff. Staff are actively seeking ways to improve the quality of provision. For example, staff visits other childcare settings to develop new ideas on effective childcare practice. The nursery makes effective use of the indoor accommodation, outdoor playground and nearby fields. Children use the outdoor play facility to undertake enjoyable activities such as using plastic guttering as road tracks and undertaking active physical games facilitated by a range of outdoor resources such as hoops, beanbags and bikes. Parents have opportunities for informal discussions about their child's performance. They are provided with a good range of information about the nursery when their children join. All of the policies and procedures are in place, regularly updated and are implemented for the care of the children.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

The Nursery is popular with children; they are keen to undertake the activities available and have positive relationships with the staff that care for them. Staff actively engage with children and this helps in promoting a relaxed and happy atmosphere. Subsequently, children confidently talk to staff about their completed work and daily experiences. For example, one child said 'I visited the fire station and heard an alarm go off'. An enjoyable range of activities are planned to enhance children's creative expression. They enthusiastically take part in these, for example, in art where one child made imaginative drawings to illustrate 'an ocean with a shark and seaweed' which formed part of the wall display. Their knowledge of how to stay healthy is reinforced well when they are provided with a healthy choice of fruits and drinks. Children know the daily routines. For example, they count and record the number of children in attendance daily and match this with the corresponding number on the display board. Regular practice is helping to develop children's early writing skills. Physical development is good and children undertake energetic tennis games and obstacle courses, making good use of the outdoor facilities. Healthy snacks are available for the children each day, from which they make their own choices. Snack time is an enjoyable social event during which children actively undertake a range of interesting conversations with each other and share new information. However, there are insufficient activities planned to help children develop knowledge of cultures other than their own.

Children also make positive contributions, by acting as designated 'table leaders'. Staff interact well with the children and give regular reminders about safe-play-rules. Staff have high expectations of behaviour which are consistently implemented. Consequently, behaviour is good and children value and enjoy each other's company, evident as they hold hands and dress each other up during role-play activities.

## Annex A: record of inspection judgements

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	2
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met