

# Stepping Stones Private Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

303706

**Inspection date**

30/11/2009

**Inspector**

Rasmik Parmar

**Setting address**

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**Type of setting**

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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## 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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

## **Description of the setting**

Stepping Stones Nursery is privately owned and opened in 1997. It is affiliated to Boothtown Children's Centre. It operates from a converted building in Boothtown, Halifax. Children are cared for on the ground floor and the first floor, there is also an outdoor area at the side of the building, away from the main building. The nursery is open each week day from 7.30am to 6pm all year.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 77 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 35 children aged birth to under five years on roll in the nursery and 10 children on roll for the out of school club. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and there are no children who speak English as an additional language.

There are currently seven members of staff, all of whom have early years qualifications to at least level two and five members to at least level three. The manager is currently studying towards a foundation degree in early years.

The nursery receives support from an early years teacher.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The setting provides a happy, welcoming and inclusive environment where all children are well cared for and motivated. A good range of stimulating activities are provided, based on children's interests. Relationships are warm and positive so that all children feel secure and develop confidence and independence. The setting works closely with parents helping to support children's progress towards the early learning goals. The setting has a good capacity to maintain continuous improvement as regular evaluations and improvements are undertaken for better outcomes for children. However, the manager has not undergone the necessary procedures for her suitability for the post.

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

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- notify Ofsted of any change to the person who is managing the early years provision. (Suitable People) 20/01/2010

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

- further develop the outdoor play area to include opportunities for children to play with nature

- build links with other providers offering the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure continuity and coherence in children's development and learning.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Staff have good understanding of safeguarding children are knowledgeable about the procedures and their role to protect children as they have all recently attended a course on safeguarding. They are deployed successfully across the setting ensuring all children remain safe and receive support as they play. Clear and robust recruitment procedures that include Criminal Record Bureau checks and references are in place to ensure all adults working with the children are suitable to do so. However, the manager has not completed the necessary checks so that she can be approved to manage the setting. This is a breach of requirements. However, she mentioned that she completed the necessary forms and posted them to Ofsted but there is no information received to that effect. Systems for recording visitors are well maintained and staff are aware of the procedures to follow to ensure persons not vetted do not have unsupervised access to children.

The staff team are aware of their strengths and areas for development and have been involved in carrying out an evaluation of the setting. The proprietor and the manager are committed to ensuring that staff attend further training to build upon their skills and knowledge. The manager is currently studying towards the foundation degree in early years and staff have attended courses on language skills and story telling. The proprietor is proactive and has recently upgraded children's bathroom areas, provided new computers for the out of school club, introduced digital cameras in each playroom and bought a large metal cabin to store new resources for outdoor play. However, the manager is aware that the outdoor area needs to be improved to provide a greater variety of opportunities for children.

Children are happy and settle successfully into the setting as they have secure relationships with all staff. The key worker system works well and further supports children's learning. The resources through out the setting positively portray equality and diversity and children are encouraged to develop a good sense of community as staff have a caring approach to help children celebrate their differences and similarities. This ensures they feel valued and have a sense of belonging.

Discussions with parents suggest that they value the care their children receive and are very happy with the progress their children are making. Parents feel involved in the setting and are able to share and contribute to children's developmental records as they wish. Furthermore, learning is extended at home, whereby parents practise nursery rhymes and make shapes of favourite characters to complement the learning from the setting. Children have also taken a cuddly toy such as a bear or crocodile home and described the adventures they have been on during the weekend. Parents have been invited to join in sing-a-long sessions at the setting so that they are involved in their child's learning. Their views are taken into consideration through parent questionnaires and suggestion boxes to improve

the service. They receive regular newsletters to keep them informed about the setting and its activities and staff are able to sign post parents to services provided by the children centre, to which the setting is affiliated.

Partnership working with other professionals is in place. Staff work well with external agencies to ensure children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully supported. They provide local schools where children will be moving to with transition forms. Children attending the setting currently do not use any other setting. Staff are aware about establishing links with others involved in the provision of the Early Years Foundation Stage for children.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

Staff have good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and implement it well, to promote children's learning and development. They make relevant observations, and use children's identified next steps to plan further activities. Hence, learning is very much based on children's interests and staff support children in their learning so that they make good progress towards the early learning goals.

Children are seen as individuals and staff know each child and their family well. The setting is welcoming and children have a good sense of belonging. All relevant information is obtained from parents to ensure children's specific needs are met. Children and staff share a warm and caring relationship. They communicate easily with each other and this helps children to enjoy and achieve. Children enter the setting confidently and are relaxed and settled. They behave well and are keen to participate in activities. Babies show curiosity as they move around the soft furnishings and feel the texture of the cuddly toys. Staff smile and provide plenty of eye contact to reassure the babies. Toddlers repeat new words as they share stories as staff sit and read to them on the soft cushions.

Children independently access toys that interest them and take turns and show kindness. They enjoy listening attentively to stories and anticipate the next sentence. They self-select books and are able to read on their own. Children use language well in everyday activities. They skilfully put together puzzles, make patterns with magnetic shapes and accurately count. Children use the computer to play educational games to promote their thinking. They explore the lifecycle of tadpoles turning into frogs and caterpillars turning into butterflies, as part of exploring the natural world. External events coordinators have visited the setting to promote eating of fruit by introducing children to exotic fruit and talking to them about the importance of healthy eating. This results in good progress in their learning and encourages them to become active learners and enables them to develop appropriate skills for the future. Children are developing good confidence in their physical abilities and enjoy moving with some control, using their bodies in different ways. Snack and meal times are social occasions where children and adults sit together to enjoy their food and company. The good range of food offered raises children's awareness of the importance of healthy eating. Older children independently serve themselves to food at lunch time and they have eaten

foods from other cultures when celebrating festivals as part of broadening their awareness of the wider world.

Children's safety is given priority with areas checked on a daily basis to identify potential hazards and risks. Children learn about safety through topic based activities on fire safety and visits from the lollypop person. Children are polite, well behaved and learn to consider the needs of other people. Staff have used a reward system for children whose behaviour was in question very effectively. They recognise good behaviour and provide those children with stars every hour, resulting in a dramatic increase in the overall behaviour of children. Parents commented as to how well the system worked and how much of an impact this had for their child at home. Good hygiene practice is actively promoted and incorporated into the daily routines to encourage children to care for themselves. They have access to liquid soap and paper towels to dry their hands to minimise the risk of cross infection. Staff know individual children well and provide them with a good level of sensitive and appropriate support.

## 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*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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## **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