



Stepping Stones

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY301561
Inspection date	10 January 2006
Inspector	Katy Elizabeth Wynn
Setting Address	Boroughbridge Primary School, York Road, Boroughbridge, York, North Yorkshire, YO51 9EB
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Registered person	Jayne Nadine Blakey
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

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

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Stepping Stones has been registered since 2005. It is located in an annexe building within the grounds of Boroughbridge primary school. The setting is open Monday to Friday 08.00 until 18.00.

The setting offers care for 50 children from 3 months to 11 years. Children can attend for a full day, sessional care, before and after school care, and also wraparound care for children that attend the pre-school nursery at Boroughbridge primary school. The staff also look after children that attend Roecliffe primary school.

There are currently 69 children on-roll from 6 months to 11 years. The nursery currently cares for children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy because practitioners follow some current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. For example, they follow good procedures, such as hand washing, wiping tables before preparing food and changing cutlery when it has dropped on the floor. Children learn about simple health and hygiene practices as part of their daily routine, for example, there are posters at children's height in the bathroom reminding them to wash their hands after using the toilet. Staff also reinforce good hygiene through discussion. Children use their independence and understanding of hygiene to help themselves to tissues which are located at their height.

There is a qualified first aid staff member at all times and the first aid kit is appropriately stocked in each of the rooms. Staff implement a suitable sickness policy and children are protected when they are ill. Staff take appropriate measures and are skilful at dealing with a sick child. Children are comforted and their needs are met, and staff ensure that they do not deteriorate by constantly monitoring the child. There is a system in place for recording accidents and the administration of medication. The majority of these documents have been signed by parents, however, staff are not always vigilant to ensure that all the documents have been signed. This could result in parents not being informed of their child's accident or medication times and children's health could be put at risk.

Children begin to understand the benefits of a healthy diet. They enjoy nutritious snacks that meet parents' wishes and children's dietary needs. The older children benefit from having choices and gain independence and knowledge of healthy eating by suggesting snacks. The food is brought over from the school and staff ensure that it is at the correct temperature when it arrives to meet current environmental legislation. Drinks are provided at snack times and meal times. A jug of water with cups is available so that children can independently access drinks and are learning to meet their own needs.

Children are well rested. Young children sleep in line with their individual routines and older children are asked if they would like to rest. Children have few opportunities to enjoy and develop their gross motor skills. There is not a secure outside area at present. Staff take children out for walks around the school playing field most days and have an understanding of the need for children to have physical exercise.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, bright and welcoming environment. Children have a good sense of belonging within the setting as there is plenty of children's work displayed at their level. Children are warmly greeted at the setting, enabling them to develop positive relationships with the staff. The setting is well organised so that children can move around freely and safely. Children are beginning to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe, for example, they help tidy away equipment and move toys that they may trip on.

Children can independently select from a varied range of toys and equipment appropriate to their stage of development and these are kept in excellent condition. Children develop a good appreciation of the world around them as they play with dolls, read books and role play.

Risks of accidental injuries are minimised through extremely vigilant staff, who fully implement detailed safety routines and suitable risk assessments on the nursery. Children benefit from a good range of safety measures, such as heater covers, safety gates, fire extinguishers and a secure buzzer system on the front door. They begin to understand about safety in the setting through age appropriate explanations, such as 'Don't run in the nursery as you may fall and hurt yourself.' Children are becoming increasingly aware of boundaries and learning to keep themselves safe, for example, the children helped to mop up the water that had spilled from the water tray.

Children are well protected from possible abuse or neglect. Most staff have attended training and are aware of the types of abuse and signs to look for. Staff fully implement effective procedures and they have a named member of staff as the child protection co-ordinator.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have warm and friendly relationships with staff and as a result children are happy and settle with ease. Staff listen to what children are saying and younger children are confident in approaching them for help. More able children confidently express their needs and younger children make themselves understood by crying, and staff respond to these needs quickly and sensitively. Staff know the children very well and are successful at meeting their individual needs.

Children are developing good self-esteem through staff praising, encouraging and reassuring them. As a result children are proud of their work and are willing to show other adults.

Staff are skilful at managing the children that attend for sessions only, as some of the older children attend the pre-school nursery that they share a site with. They ensure that they settle into the setting and are able to have choices of activities. Children use their initiative well in most areas. For example, they are able to easily access and choose resources and equipment, and initiate their own activities. Staff set up a variety of activities and will, in most cases, encourage and develop play. Activities are changed frequently and therefore children do not become bored. The staff have started to develop some planning for the after school club and for the children aged 2

years and over. However, there are no systems in place to monitor children's progress and therefore to plan ahead and consider what the child needs to learn next. Children's progress could be hindered because of this lack of assessment. There is no formal play-plans in the baby room, however, toys and equipment are changed frequently and babies enjoy textures and sounds, which they explore with interest.

Children build on their natural curiosity as learners and develop their senses by using the sensory room, which captures their imagination and interest. Staff use this room with small groups of children to ensure that each child has some individual attention.

Children are acquiring some new knowledge and skills through good interaction by all of the staff. Children confidently engage in activities such as imaginative, creative, messy, small world and construction. They play cooperatively together relating well to adults and their peers. The activities cover most areas of play, however, focussed activities were basic and could have been developed according to the children's developmental stages.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are highly valued as individuals and are treated with equal concern. The staff encourage the children to spend time with their siblings, enabling them to move between the different age related rooms, therefore encouraging and celebrating the strong bond between families.

Their individual needs are effectively met as staff use detailed registration talks and agreements to find out about children's allergies, special requirements, routines, likes and dislikes. Children develop a positive attitude to others through observing staff who are positive role-models. Children, as a part of their play, access a range of resources that raises their awareness of the immediate and wider community, for example, an activity looking at books relating to professions who care, such as Police and Fire Fighters.

Effective arrangements are in place to care for children with special needs and for children who speak English as a second language. Staff work closely with parents and outside agencies to ensure that all children's needs are effectively met. The nursery have excellent relationships with the school and can therefore work closely with the teaching staff if a child attends the school; this ensures that children benefit from continuity of care.

The staff are committed to developing strong relationships with parents and children benefit from a sense of belonging due to these trusting and strong relationships between the staff and their parents. Children's wellbeing is fostered as staff communicate effectively with parents to ensure that all children's individual routines are met with regard to eating and sleeping. Parents are kept fully informed about the nursery through detailed information about the setting and their child's day. For example staff complete a diary sheet for each child detailing what they have eaten, played with, slept and any other relevant information.

Children behave well, they take turns, learn to share toys and show consideration for others. Children begin to understand right from wrong and learn to play harmoniously together. If any child's behaviour becomes disruptive, staff use distraction and explanations in accordance with their behaviour management policy. Good behaviour is valued and children receive lots of praise and encouragement.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The registered person implements appropriate systems regarding the recruitment and vetting of staff, which ensure that children are well protected and cared for by staff that have knowledge and understanding of child development. Staff go through an induction procedure to ensure that they are clear of their roles and responsibilities, and of the policies and procedures within the setting. All staff have police checks, and until these are cleared they are not left alone with a group of children to ensure children's safety. Staff are aware of the policies and procedures and are all following these procedures, therefore providing consistency of care for the children.

Staff have a good knowledge of childcare and education and use this to provide stimulating opportunities for all the children. Although staff are verbally informed about training opportunities, there are no formal development plans and staff do not have appraisals. This could lead to their individual training needs not being met to develop their own knowledge and enhance the care of the children.

Space and resources are effectively organised to allow children the space to move around freely. Staff are well deployed. Staff work effectively as a team and children flourish from this relaxed atmosphere. Time is suitably used and there are flexible routines in place around sleeping, eating and collecting children from school, which helps children to feel confident and secure. Staff spend most of their time interacting with the children and this enriches the bond between the staff team and the children. Although a key worker system is in place, the children are encouraged to interact with other members of the team. This elevates separation anxiety for the children if their key worker is not present.

The policies and procedures work in practice and the required documentation is in place and stored appropriately.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend the setting.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not Applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

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

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):

- Ensure that all accident and medication records are up to date with parents signatures.
- Further develop planning and methods of observation.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk