



Positive Steps Stokenchurch

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY292355
Inspection date	24 February 2006
Inspector	Samantha Hunt
Setting Address	Lower Church Street, Stokenchurch, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP14 3TG
Telephone number	01494 484 737
E-mail	
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 motorway. 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 58 children aged from birth to under 8 years on roll. Of these, 16 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from the local area and beyond. The nursery currently supports children with special educational needs.

The nursery employs 12 staff. The owner and administrative staff are in offices on the premises. Six of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications and two staff are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children begin to become aware of healthy eating through positive discussions with staff. They eagerly talk at meal and snack times about foods which are good for them, such as fruit and vegetables. Children have access to a well balanced menu of fresh meals cooked on site. All snacks consist of a variety of fresh fruit, such as pears, apples, and oranges or raisins and breadsticks. Children clearly enjoy the meals, many have seconds. Drinking water is available for all children to freely access throughout the day. Babies' individual needs are well catered for; staff regularly liaise with parents with regards to weaning requirements.

Children become aware of good hygiene through good routines and practice. Hand washing takes place before and after all meal/snack times, and faces are washed with individual flannels. Staff wash their hands before serving meals to children, and wear gloves and tabards when changing nappies.

Young babies sleep according to their needs in cots in the sleep room. Toddlers sleep on mats, usually after lunch. All bedding is clean and changed regularly by staff to maintain children's good health. There are effective procedures in place to ensure baby toys are clean, staff wash them every week. Procedures for recording accidents and giving medication are effective and parents always sign to acknowledge. This contributes positively to minimizing risk to children's health.

Children develop good physical skills and learn to become healthy. They access the nursery garden on a daily basis and make good use of the newly fitted climbing frame equipment. Children are freely able to practise skills, such as riding bikes, kicking balls, running, climbing and balancing. Staff support and extend children's physical play well. For example, they help children to play bat and ball games together, and give support and praise to children on the balancing stilts.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children have access to an environment that is clean and well maintained. Staff

supervise children effectively as they move around from room to room and set clear boundaries to ensure they do so safely. Older children know not to run inside as they might hurt themselves or others. Staff carry out and keep a record of daily risk assessments of all areas, both inside and out, to minimize risks to children's safety. However, there is not an up-to-date record kept of fire drills practised with children.

All children are able to access a suitable range of toys and equipment which are age-appropriate and meet their needs. All equipment is in a good condition and regularly checked and maintained. Babies are strapped into high/low chairs when taking part in activities at the table and mealtimes to ensure they do not fall and hurt themselves.

Children are protected from possible harm and neglect, because staff demonstrate a clear understanding of the child protection policy. They are aware of the signs to look out for and procedures to follow should they have a concern about a child in their care. The manager has a good understanding of child protection, including how to deal with any allegations against staff. All documentation is in place to support staff and help promote children's welfare within the setting.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children relate well towards one another, staff and visitors. They part well from parents and carers, and many clearly love coming to nursery. Many children are eager to ask whom visitors are and engage easily in conversation. All children are able to self-select many toys and resources freely. They take turns at structured activities and share toys, such as small world and sand implements, well with one another. Children build confidence and good self-esteem. All children receive a lot of positive praise and encouragement from staff. They are shown warmth and kindness and have many opportunities to play with and without support from staff throughout the day. Staff effectively plan daily routines and activities to provide children with a balanced range of structured and free play activities. This makes children's learning and enjoyment a positive experience.

Babies eagerly wiggle to familiar songs and rhymes, some begin to join in with the actions and all clap with staff at the end. Staff extend babies' enjoyment through positive interaction at their level. Children under 3 have regular opportunities to experience a variety of textures and experiences to extend their enjoyment and development. Experiences include painting, drawing, dressing up, as well as playing with dough and sand. Younger babies eat and sleep according to their individual needs and staff show a good awareness of these.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff demonstrate a clear knowledge of the Foundation Stage and are taking effective steps to help children learn. Many children are beginning to form good friendships with one another. They share and take turns well; for example, they pass glue and glitter tubs to one another on request. Children communicate well with staff and are eager to take part in activities.

Children are using language well to make their needs known and are beginning to look out for one another. They show good independence skills when putting on coats, Wellingtons and tabards. Children listen well to stories and participate well at group times, such as registration and doing the weatherboard.

They handle books with care and clearly enjoy sharing them with staff. Staff extend children's learning and enjoyment through positive questioning, for example asking what they think is going to happen next or asking them to find objects on the page. Children are eager to share previous experiences, such as holidays they have been on and activities carried out at home.

Many older children can write their names and younger ones are beginning to form letters with support from staff. Staff show a good awareness of children's individual stages of development and take good steps to meet and support them. For example, when practising writing skills younger children trace over their name cards, whilst older children copy from the card or do it from memory. Children are linking letters to sounds when doing the weather/date board and many are able to link letters to their own or others' names well.

Children count confidently to ten, with many counting beyond. They recognise numbers when playing games on the computer and operating the till in the baker's. Children have good opportunities daily to use their imagination, especially in the home corner. They act out experiences and pretend to be bakers, mummies and daddies. They experience a variety of textures and materials, such as corn-flour and water, paint, glue, sand, water and construction. However, children do not always have sufficient opportunities to express themselves creatively and freely through drawing and painting. All children enjoy physical play in the garden; and confidently and with ease handle a variety of tools, such as paintbrushes, pencils and glue sticks, knives, forks and spoons. Staff demonstrate an effective understanding of children's individual needs and abilities; they record children's progress regularly and are beginning to use it to inform future planning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual needs are valued and respected. Staff encourage children to participate in all activities to help them learn and develop. This helps them feel secure and part of the nursery. Children are beginning to learn about other cultures and religions through celebrating festivals and regular visits into the community. However, there are limited resources available to children that promote diversity and help them become aware of the wider community and feel positive about themselves.

Most children's behaviour is good. Children understand the clear boundaries that staff have introduced, such as 'smiley face' charts and a traffic light system to help children become aware of their own behaviour. Any inappropriate behaviour is dealt with in a consistent manner by staff, who are good role models for children.

Children's individual needs are met effectively by staff. There are clear policies and procedures in place to support and identify children who have special needs. Staff

are aware of where to seek help and guidance to support the setting.

Partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from good relationships between staff and parents. Parents of younger children receive written sheets detailing information about their child's day, including meals and sleep patterns, whilst pre-school staff relay information to parents verbally at the end of the day. Staff and parents work together to help children make progress. For example, display boards in the main entrance, pre-school room and inner hall give parents a lot of information about the Foundation Stage and the Birth to three matters, including how the nursery plans children's development. All parents are able to freely access children's individual achievement files and have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress on a formal basis at parent evenings. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled within the nursery and move around the setting well. They are able to freely and with ease access toys and activities, which helps them feel comfortable and settled in the setting.

Satisfactory staff ratios are maintained in all areas throughout the day and half the staff hold appropriate childcare qualifications. Policies and procedures that contribute to children's health, safety and well-being are in place. However, records relating to fire drills are not currently kept up-to-date, and staff do not always sign in and out of the building. Staff demonstrate a sound understanding of the policies and procedures, and monthly staff meetings are held to discuss issues and events which arise.

Leadership and management are good. The manager has a good understanding of the nursery's strengths and weaknesses and she is taking effective measures to address them. All pre-school staff have recently completed the Foundation Stage training and demonstrate a clear understanding of the early learning goals. Planning is in place and staff work together to plan and evaluate its effectiveness to meet all children's individual needs. The manager seeks guidance from her Local Authority and other agencies within the area to help monitor the quality of care and education they provide.

The provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to improve procedures for ensuring staff are checked suitable to work with children, children do not come into contact with un-vetted adults and staff deployment is effective to ensure children's safety, welfare and development. In addition, the provider was asked to improve staff knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage, develop effectively staff's explanation and questioning of children to make them think, and ensure children progress

towards the next step in their learning through effective planning and evaluation.

The provider has since reviewed all recruitment and vetting procedures within the nursery. There are effective policies/procedures in place to ensure all staff are suitable to work with children. All staff have a criminal records check and effective systems ensure no child is left with adults who are not vetted. Staff deployment is monitored daily by the management team and staff are moved if necessary to maintain ratios satisfactorily. This ensures children's safety, welfare and development is promoted.

All staff in the pre-school room have undertaken training in the Foundation Stage. This has helped staff to improve their practice and develop their awareness of effective explanation and questioning to help children think. Planning has been reviewed to ensure children do make progress in their learning effectively. All staff are involved in the planning and they carry out regular observations and evaluate practices to ensure they are meeting all children's needs well.

Complaints since the last inspection

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. There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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 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 toys and resources which promote positive images of culture, gender and disability to help and support children to become aware of the wider community.
- improve documentation to ensure records of fire drills and staff attendance are always maintained effectively.

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 opportunities for children to practise creatively through drawing and painting.

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