



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 152868

DfES Number: 532960

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	22/04/2004
Inspector Name	Lindsay Ann Farenden

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	STEPPING STONES PLAYGROUP
Setting Address	Alpha Road Surbiton Surrey KT5 8RS

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of Stepping Stones playgroup (surbiton) & 'committee' 1083626
------	---

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Stepping Stones playgroup (surbiton) & 'committee'
Address	41 Chiltern Drive Surbiton Surrey KT5 8LP

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

Stepping Stones playgroup opened in 2002. It operates from Surbiton Children's Centre Annexe. The premises consist of a main play room, entrance hall, toilets, and kitchen area. There is a garden for outside play. The playgroup serves the local area.

There are currently 26 children on roll from 2 years to under 4 years. This includes 14 funded 3 year olds. Children attend a variety of sessions. The group supports one child who has English as an additional language.

The group opens 4 days a week during term times.

Sessions are from 09:15 until 11:45

2 part time staff and 3 full time staff work with the children. Over 50% of staff have early years qualifications. There are no staff currently on training programmes. The setting receives support from a teacher for the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

Stepping Stones Playgroup provides good care for children. The premises offer a warm and welcoming environment for children. Staff give good attention to children's safety both inside and outside of the premises. Staff help to develop children's understanding of good hygiene practice. Children's individual dietary needs are respected.

The provision provides a good range of play materials. The children have access to play materials and activities set and to materials stored and displayed at their level. The children are encouraged to develop confidence and independence. Staff have a caring approach to children and there is excellent interaction between the staff and the children. Staff are child centred, they join in with children's play and assist them in completing tasks and activities. They make activities interesting and inviting for

children and consequently children are totally absorbed in the activities and their play. The children are settled and kept well occupied, they behave well and staff offer children lots of praise and encouragement.

There is a good emphasis of equal opportunities throughout the nursery. All children are respected and their individuality is valued. The children are encouraged to play with all the toys regardless of gender. Staff have a positive attitude to caring for children with special needs. There are effective procedures in place to support children with special needs and they work closely with parents and outside agencies to ensure children receive appropriate support.

The staff form positive relationships with the parents and exchange information with them verbally on a daily basis. Parents' questionnaires indicate parents are happy with the standard of care provided. All documentation is in place and well organized. All policies and procedures are in place.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Actions made at the last inspection have all been met. Policies and procedures have been up dated and put in place. Fire evacuation drills are recorded. Systems are in place to store documentation confidentially. Drinking water is made available to children at all times.

What is being done well?

- Wide range of activities and play materials provided which interest children and encourage them to make decisions, be independent and confident. Staff are child focused and support children with activities and in their play.
- Effective use is made of space. The hall is well organised and child centred. The premises are clean and are kept at an appropriate temperature. The garden is well set out with a range of large play equipment and play materials and the children can freely use both inside and outside.
- Staff have a good understanding of health and safety issues. Systems are in place to ensure children are safe in the premises and when on outings. Good hygiene practice is carried out.
- Staff respect children's dietary needs. Snack time is made into a sociable and learning time for the children.
- The children's behaviour is good, and staff promote positive behaviour.
- Staff build up good relationships with the parents. Parents receive information about their child on a daily basis, through news letters and meetings regarding their child's progress.

What needs to be improved?

- the equal opportunities policy to include procedures to challenge discriminatory behaviour.

Outcome of the inspection
Good

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION
<i>All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.</i>
<i>As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.</i>

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection	
Std	Recommendation
9	Ensure Equal Opportunities policy includes procedures to challenge discriminatory behaviour.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

Stepping Stones Playgroup offers high quality education where children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals.

Teaching is very good due to the positive teaching methods of staff. Staff know children well and have good relationships with them. They create an environment where children feel safe and well cared for. Staff are able to engage children to extend children's learning. Children are encouraged by staff to think for themselves and are supported through staff members good questioning techniques. Staff plan a wide range of activities and make learning fun for the children. Staff foster spiritual development well, for example, when children found the stag beetle whilst digging in the garden, children became very excited and staff focused on this appropriately. All staff have good knowledge of the early learning goals and observations and children's assessment are used to aid planning. Staff now only need to consider planning for the "what next stage of development" and include this in all areas of learning.

Leadership and Management is very good. The staff team work very well together to create a inclusive learning environment for children. They communicate well and are very supportive of each other. Staff know what is expected of them and are very committed to working as part of a team.

The partnership with parents is very good. Parents stated that they were very happy with the standard of care and education the playgroup provides. Parents feel they can approach the playgroup staff with any concerns. They liked information displayed on the board of activities that children will participate in. They stated that they receive sufficient information on topics and themes the children participate in and attend meetings on their children's individual progress and events within the playgroup. They also felt that they could participate fully in the daily routine of the playgroup if they wished to do so.

What is being done well?

- Staff have developed positive relationships with children and are calm and polite in their manner. Children are encouraged to share, take turns and be kind to each other. Children show confidence in selecting own resources and participated fully in all activities provided. The outdoor area is used well and children enjoyed exploring a wide range of outdoor activities. Children are able to work with their peer group, in small and large groups. Opportunities are provided for children to discuss and share ideas. Staff encourage children to extend their vocabulary and to problem solve.
- Children with special educational needs and English as an additional language are fully integrated into everyday provision. Staff find out all they can about children's specific needs and work in partnership with parents and

outside agencies to achieve this.

- All staff have sound knowledge of the early learning goals and know what they want children to achieve from activities provided to support learning. Staff have created a rich inclusive environment to support and extend children's learning. Staff are a very committed staff team and are always looking at ways of improving the playgroups provision.
- Parents interviewed stated that they were very happy with the standard of care and education provided. Parents felt they are fully included in the provision and enjoy receiving information provided by the playgroup.

What needs to be improved?

- Provide opportunities to promote children's independence at snack time.
- The "what next stage" of children's development.

What has improved since the last inspection?

This is the playgroups first nursery education inspection.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children appeared very confident in expressing their needs and ideas and relate well with each other and adults. They choose between activities, select resources for themselves, and take care of their personal needs, such as going to the toilet and dressing themselves. However children need to further develop personal skills at snack time. Behaviour is very good and children show care and concern for their self and are polite and considerate to others.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Many children are confident speakers, they can express their experiences and negotiate well. They responded with enjoyment and listened attentively to stories. Children enjoyed looking at books on an individual basis. Good use is made of the written word to enable children to understand that text carries meaning. Many opportunities are provided in role play areas for children to scribe. Many children recognise their first name and beginning to write these correctly with well-formed letters.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are able to say and use numbers from 1 to 10 with some children counting beyond. They learn that coins have different value as they buy items in the garden centre. They learn about shape and size through practical activities and spontaneous play, for example, when dressing and undressing the dolls. They use early mathematical language to describe size and quantity. Children filling up the watering cans said they were very heavy with the water inside.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children's design and making skills are well developed. Children have recently made models of their homes with boxes, glue and tape. Resources and many practical situations are provided to enable children to learn about different cultures and festivals. Children were observed frequently talking about past events and referred to the pictorial evidence displayed on the walls. Opportunities are provided for children to use technology, such as, the computer and electronic resources.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
------------	-----------

Children are set a wide range of challenges to develop their physical development. Good use of the outdoor play area ensures children have opportunities to manoeuvre bikes around obstacles and park in parking bays. Planks and balancing bars are available. Opportunities are provided for children to use a range of small tools, such as pencils, scissors and craft materials to develop fine motor skills. A wide range of malleable materials are also provided in every day provision.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
------------	-----------

Children are given the opportunity to express themselves through a variety of activities. Role play is a particular strength of the playgroup and children enjoyed the garden centre area. A wide selection of craft activities and free art is provided daily where children explore texture, colour, shape in two and three dimensions. Opportunities are provided to enable children to recognise songs / rhymes and explore music and musical instruments.

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

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- There are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- Review snack time to promote children's personal independence.
- When planning include the "what next stage" in children's individual assessments and include this in all areas of learning.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.