



Office for Standards
in Education

DAY CARE INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY281815

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 11/10/2004
Inspector Name Nicola Mary Eileen Matthews

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care, Out of School Day Care, Creche Day Care
Setting Name Stepping Stones
Setting Address Chilton Fields
Chilton way
Stowmarket
Suffolk
IP14 1SZ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Stowmarket And Area Opportunity Group
299613

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Stowmarket And Area Opportunity Group
Address Stepping Stones
Chilton Fields
Chilton way
Stowmarket
Ip14 1SZ

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care. When making judgements, inspectors have regard to how well the provider meets the National Standards for under Eights Day Care and Childminding. A list of these is attached. The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement.

This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

Information about the setting

Stepping Stones, a charitable organisation, registered in 2003. The provision aims to provide inclusive care for all children. It operates from a building in a residential area on the outskirts of Stowmarket. The group has sole use of the building, which includes a designated outside area.

There are currently 24 children from 2 to 8 on roll. This includes 3 funded four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a high proportion of children with special educational needs.

The group opens 4 days a week, Monday to Thursday, all year round.

Sessions are from 09:00 until 18:00. The preschool session is from 12:30 until 15:00 and the out of school club from 15:00 until 18:00. A morning creche is available for parents until 12:30.

There are 12 part-time members of staff working with the children. Over half the staff have recognised early years qualifications to NVQ level 3 or 4. There are 2 staff currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

How good is the Day Care?

Stepping Stones, a sessional preschool and out of school club, are providing good care for children. The documented organisation of the setting ensures everything runs smoothly. The committed staff update their qualifications to enable them to work effectively with each child meeting individual needs, some of which are quite complex. A warm welcome is given to both children and parents, which helps the parents feel secure in leaving their child in the care of others and the children to be happy and want to return another day. The good quality resources are set out attractively encouraging the children to be interested in their play. There are minor omissions in some policies and procedures.

The comprehensive risk assessment ensures children's safety is given high priority. Children's dietary needs are well met and good hygiene procedures are carried out routinely ensuring the children are developing good healthy practices. However, fresh drinking water is not always made available. Many children with special needs

are attending and the staff's practice is one of inclusion enabling all children to fully participate in the activities presented. Each child is treated with equal concern and their welfare is uppermost.

Children participate in a wide range of interesting and enjoyable activities to support their overall development. Staff encourage all children to communicate using signing and talking. Children have a wide range of different experiences where they can play energetically in the ball pool and quietly with tranquil moments in the light room. The strategies for managing children's behaviour is consistent and appropriate for the level for each child's age and level of maturity.

The partnership with parents is very good. Staff discuss each child's needs and development in detail with the parents and provide ongoing support whenever it is required.

What has improved since the last inspection?

n/a

What is being done well?

- The provision for children with special needs is inclusive. It enables each child to fully participate in all the activities provided and staff work closely with the parents and other agencies. The staff record each child's achievements using 'posting cards' which the child helps to complete, ensuring they fully celebrate the progress the children are making and develop their self esteem.
- Children are developing good relationships with each other and the use of signing by all enables each child to have an awareness of similarities and differences when communicating with playmates.
- There is a good wide range of activities to support children's overall development. Children play imaginatively using the appropriate resources to respond to experiences from home, for example, shopping and making cups of 'tea'.
- The safety of the children is maintained at all times. The premises are secure and children cannot leave them unattended. Some children can demonstrate challenging behaviour which the staff manage well ensuring the safety of the child and others at all times.

What needs to be improved?

- documentation; the complaints procedure and child protection policy
- confidentiality when recording incidents and accidents
- provision of fresh drinking water at all times.

Outcome of the inspection

Good

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

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
12	Ensure the contact details of the regulator are included in the complaints procedure made available to parents.
13	Ensure the procedure to follow in the event of allegations being made against a member of staff or volunteer includes contacting Ofsted.

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.