



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 303706

DfES Number: 512400

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	22/03/2004
Inspector Name	Shaheen Matloob

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Stepping Stones Private Day Nursery
Setting Address	20 Claremount Road Boothtown Halifax West Yorkshire HX3 6JQ

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Mr David Charles Marsden
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## 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 Nursery was registered in 1995, it is organised into three separate rooms on two levels catering for children from 0-2, 2-3 and pre school for there to five years of age. The nursery is also registered to provide after school care. The nursery serves the majority of Boothtown and other surrounding areas in Halifax.

There are currently 62 children from 0 - 5 on the register. This includes 21 funded 3 year olds and 2 funded four year olds. Children attend a variety of sessions. The nursery currently has one child with special needs and no children attending who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 7:30am to 18:00 pm, all year round excluding certain holidays.

There are 13 members of staff employed full and part time to work in the nursery including the officer in charge, half of the staff hold a relevant early years qualification and other staff are currently working towards a level 2 and 3 qualifications.

The nursery regularly takes students and has regular support from the Early Years Development childcare partnerships(EYDCP) and work in partnership with the Child development unit(CDU) where necessary.

### How good is the Day Care?

Stepping Stones Day Nursery provides a satisfactory standard of care for children in a safe and welcoming environment for both children and adults,there is a good amount of space provided although this needs to be organised more effectively to meet children's needs. Children are happy and settled with both staff and other children, staff spend time talking and playing with children and know them well. A reasonable range of planned and free choice activities are offered, however staff need to ensure that children are able to make informed choices and develop independence.Documentation required for the efficient management of the provision

and the welfare, care and learning of the children is of a satisfactory standard and some adjustment is required.

Staff are committed to ensuring that good health of children is met through daily routines such as hand washing and applying procedures to prevent the spread of infection. Arrangements for administering first aid and medication are of a good standard. Staff are aware of their responsibility towards children in their care regarding child protection and able to implement procedures. Children are provided with nutritious food and drink which promotes their healthy growth and development, information is requested from parents about dietary needs.

Staff are active in ensuring that appropriate action is taken when children with special needs are admitted into the setting, all children are valued and their individual needs acknowledged and met, however resources which reflect equality need developing. Procedures for behaviour management are effective and staff use methods which are appropriate and sensitive to the needs of children, good behaviour is promoted through praise and encouragement.

Staff have a good relationship with parents and know them well, they welcome parents and provide them with information about their children through verbal discussions and daily record sheets for younger children.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

It was agreed at the last inspection that the nursery would ensure that the appropriate records relating to incidents and medication were in place, the overall safety of the premises and electrical appliances and environmental health issues were adhered to and ensuring that staff held relevant qualifications which were appropriate for their role.

The nursery has made good progress towards addressing these issues and all issues relating to documentation and safety have been addressed, issues regarding staff are on going and some staff are working towards obtaining appropriate qualifications and ensuring that the staff- child ratio's are met.

#### **What is being done well?**

- Health is of a good standard within the setting, staff promote the good health of children and take positive steps within the setting and ensure proper precautions are taken to prevent the spread of infection/illness.
- Staff's awareness of children's dietary needs. Children are provided with regular drinks and food which is healthy and well balanced and in accordance with their needs.
- Staff manage children's behaviour positively and consistently, clear and realistic boundaries are set and children know what is expected of them and behave well. Procedures for behaviour management are understood and implemented in a way which promotes children's development. Good

behaviour is promoted through praise and encouragement.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- attendance register to be completed daily
- induction programme for staff and staff records kept
- fire evacuations carried out and records kept
- smoke alarms fitted where required
- risk assessment carried out of the premises
- develop resources to promote equality and anti discriminatory practice
- complaints procedure is made available to parents.

#### **Outcome of the inspection**

Satisfactory

#### **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 must take the following actions by the date shown**

Std	Action	Date
2	Ensure that the attendance register is completed daily	23/03/2004

##### **The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection**

Std	Recommendation
2	Devise an induction programme for staff which includes health and safety and child protection policies and procedures within the first week of employment
2	Ensure that accessible individual records are kept of staff, containing name and address and information about recruitment, training and qualifications.

6	Ensure that fire evacuations are carried out periodically and records kept
6	Provide smoke alarms which conform to BS EN standards, are provided as necessary
6	Devise and conduct a risk assessment of the premises which is reviewed if there is a significant change
9	Ensure that children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice
12	Ensure that the complaints procedure is made available to parents
13	Develop staff's knowledge regarding child protection issues

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

Stepping Stones Private Day Nursery provides a welcoming atmosphere where children settle well. The children make generally good progress in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and physical development. Development in mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development is satisfactory.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory, staff have a reasonable awareness of the stepping stones which lead to the early learning goals, however they are not making use of such knowledge to effectively plan for the curriculum to meet the developmental needs of the different abilities of the children. Children's assessments do not contain information about the stepping stones achieved, therefore staff can not effectively assess how well children are moving towards the early learning goals. Staff build good trusting relationships with the children and this impacts positively on the children's abilities to learn. They have high expectations of the children and manage behaviour very well. Effective systems are in place to support children with special needs or who speak English as an additional language. The range of resources available is satisfactory, however accessibility of many items could be improved to ensure children are able to use self selection to develop self esteem and independence.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and have access to a good training programme. However the monitoring of the provision is not rigorous enough to show what the nursery is doing well and what improvements need to be made. This has resulted in the lack of use of the stepping stones in the planning and assessments.

Partnerships with parents are satisfactory. Parents are warmly welcomed into the nursery and freely exchange information verbally, however there is a lack of written information made available to them about the setting and their child's progress.

### What is being done well?

- Children are settled and behave very well. They have established good relationships with each other and staff.
- Children's early reading skills are being developed; they handle books with confidence and are more able children are aware of the differences between text and pictures.
- Children are counting confidently, many up to ten and beyond, more able children are also beginning to count objects on a one to one basis.
- Children are beginning to develop their I.T skills. They have good access to a computer with age appropriate software and can operate the mouse to complete simple programmes.

**What needs to be improved?**

- The planning, monitoring and reviewing systems to ensure that all staff are clear about what children are expected to learn from activities.
- The children's assessment records ensuring that they are linked to the stepping stones which will make sure staff are aware of children's progress towards the early learning goals and that these assessments are used to inform future planning of the curriculum.
- The challenge for more able children.
- The opportunities for children to work independently, select resources and enjoy self chosen activities.
- The information given to parents about the foundation stage, curriculum offered and for parents to contribute to their child's learning and development through improved access to development records and information on how they can support and extend their child's learning at home.

**What has improved since the last inspection?**

The setting has made limited progress since the last inspection in addressing the areas identified for improvement.

Staff have improved children's understanding of ways in which books work by drawing children's attention to the author and illustrator and they show children pictures as they read. Children also have good access to books and take part in reciting the text.

However there has been no improvement in children's records/assessments These do not clearly highlight children's progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are settled and familiar with established routines of the nursery. They are involved and interested in the activities and happy to try new experiences. Children play well together and behaviour is very good. They have developed some independent skills, especially in relation to their personal needs. However, opportunities for children to select their own resources are limited due to the lay out of the room. Relationships established between staff and children are good.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are confident to speak, they interact well with each other and adults and engage in conversation. They listen attentively, respond well to stories and handle books appropriately, thereby developing early reading skills. Children are beginning to ascribe meaning to marks and some more able are beginning to form recognisable letters of the alphabet. However there is little opportunity for children to attempt to write for a variety of purposes, through everyday activities.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children's counting skills are progressing very well, some children count up to ten and beyond and more able children are counting objects on a one to one correspondence. However there is little opportunity for the children to take part in planned small group work concentrating on specific areas such as matching groups of objects to numbers, calculating and looking at quantity, size, shape in everyday situations.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children are developing an awareness of their environment, they explore, investigate living things and the natural world, for example as they look at the life cycle of a frog. They are beginning to develop their information and technology skills through the use of a computer as they confidently complete simple programmes using the mouse. Children have limited opportunity to use a range equipment to help them explore how things work and happen or use construction to build and join materials.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children move with confidence and are beginning to develop control and co-ordination skills, as they climb and use balancing apparatus. They are beginning to show an awareness of their own needs in respect of eating and hygiene, however they have little understanding of the effects of activity on their bodies. Children handle a range of equipment that promote good hand and eye co-ordination.



CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
Children explore a variety of textures and colour to make paintings and collages and they enjoy singing songs from memory. They play alongside one another in imaginative play engaged in the same activity and imitate their own experiences, as they pretend to make drinks and prepare meals. Children do not have frequent access to the full range of creative materials to express their thoughts, feelings and ideas.	

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

## OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The next inspection will take place in one to two years time.

## WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- extend the opportunities for children to work more independently, select resources and express themselves through a full use of creative materials at child height
- ensure that planning and child assessments are clearly linked to the stepping stones and that children's assessments are used to inform future planning
- improve systems for the monitoring of the provision
- improve information given to parents about the foundation stage, curriculum offered and for parents to contribute to their child's learning and development through improved access to development records and information on how they can support and extend their child's learning at home
- ensure that the more able children are provided with sufficient challenge to move them forward towards the early learning goals.

*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.*