



Office for Standards  
in Education

## DAY CARE INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY290184

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 08/02/2005  
Inspector Name Caroline Wright

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care  
Setting Name Stepping Stones Under 5s  
Setting Address Coupals CP School  
Chalkstone Way  
Haverhill  
Suffolk  
CB9 0LB

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Elaine McManus

## 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 Under Fives is a privately owned nursery. It opened in 2004 and operates from a classroom in Coupals County Primary School, which is situated in a residential area, close to the centre of Haverhill, Suffolk. A maximum of 20 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 09:00 to 12:00 and 12:45 to 15:15 during term times only. An additional lunch time session from 12:00 to 12:45 is available on request. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 42 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 25 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area.

The nursery employs four staff and four regular volunteers who work with the children. Four of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. Four members of staff are attending accredited training courses in Early Years.

### How good is the Day Care?

Stepping Stones Under 5's provides good quality care for children aged two to under five years.

Staff supervise children well and maintain good adult to child ratios. All areas of the premises are safe and the majority of essential information is recorded. An informal induction procedure helps new staff work effectively, and all members of the team are well informed about child protection procedures.

Relationships between adults and children are very good. Children initiate conversations and adults are interested in what children say and do. Staff make very good use of the play space available and promote equal opportunities for all children to access equipment and resources independently. The nursery provides a warm and welcoming environment to help children and their families feel welcome. Staff encourage children to pursue their own interests and make decisions, and children help themselves to nutritious snacks and drinks during each session. Good procedures are in place to help children learn about health and hygiene. There are satisfactory systems in place to provide support for children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents know what is going on through regular newsletters, notices around the nursery and an informative prospectus. Parents are confident to discuss their children's progress with the staff at hand over times.

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

Not applicable.

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

- Staff are all very experienced in working with young children, and hold accredited qualifications in early years. All members of staff are positive about the benefits of regular training; they attend a range of suitable courses and engage in further education to extend their knowledge, enabling them to continue to improve the way they work with children.
- The nursery team have a wide range of effective procedures and important information in place, to enable staff and volunteers to know how the setting operates on a day to day basis. A comprehensive operational plan covers all areas of practice and includes suitable policies and procedures for all aspects of their work. The manager provides informal induction training for new members of staff, to make sure everyone is aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- The staff provide a stimulating environment, with attractive displays of children's work, for families to enjoy. Toys are well organised and easily accessible, so that children can pursue their own interests and set their own challenges, both indoors and out. Activities are set out by staff before the sessions begin, so that children feel welcome in the setting and are keen to leave their parents to take part in the learning opportunities provided.
- The staff team have established a good partnership with parents. They discuss children's progress at hand over times each day, and a regular newsletter, informative prospectus and attractive notice board in the entrance area, help to keep parents informed of forthcoming events and important issues. Further plans have been made by the team to develop this area of their practice still further, to help them to continue to meet children's individual needs.

#### **An aspect of outstanding practice:**

Staff provide a wide range of practical activities for children to take part in. They plan activities that promote overall development and they actively support children's independence and decision-making. They make sure that the activities are appropriate to the age group of children and are suitably interesting, such as junk modelling to help children learn about size, shape and problem solving, whilst developing their imagination and creativity. They provide a permanent snack bar for children to help themselves to food and drinks during each session, so that children are able to acquire essential physical skills as well as learn to use mathematical language, such as 'more' or 'enough', in meaningful contexts. In addition, children access the outdoor play area freely, and the activities provided there are included in

the curriculum plans, so that children's learning continues throughout all areas of the provision. (Standard 3)

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

- documents, so that parents' addresses are clearly recorded in children's personal files, and their instructions are followed in the event of medical emergencies.

#### **PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)**

A concern was raised about the behaviour management techniques used by some members of staff (Standard 2: Organisation and Standard 11: Behaviour), availability of drinks (Standard 8: Food and drink) and that the provision had not dealt appropriately with the concerns raised by the parent (Standard 12: Working in partnership with parents and carers). Ofsted investigated this concern by conducting an unannounced visit on 28/02/05. Two recommendations were raised: under Standard 2, to make sure staff attend behaviour management training and include behaviour management in the induction of new staff; and under Standard 12, to ensure all incidents and concerns raised by parents are recorded. Inspectors were satisfied that children have free access to drinks, to which children can help themselves. The provider remains qualified for registration.

#### **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
14	Make sure that the parents' addresses are recorded .
14	Request parents' permission to seek emergency medical treatment or advice.

## **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.*