



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 317402

DfES Number: 519392

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	04/05/2004
Inspector Name	Stephen Andrew Blake

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Stepping Stones Day Nursery
Setting Address	60-62 Wood Street Maryport Cumbria CA15 6LD

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Stepping Stones Day Nursery (Cumbria) Ltd 4285302
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### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Stepping Stones Day Nursery (Cumbria) Ltd
Address	60-62 Wood Street Maryport Cumbria CA15 6LD

## 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 Day Nursery is registered for a maximum of 42 children and is located within a converted mid-terraced property in the centre of the west Cumbrian town of Maryport. The nursery is owned and managed by Mrs Allyson Tunstall and has operated for 13 years covering the immediate town and extended rural catchment areas. Stepping Stones Day Nursery is open all year, Monday to Friday 07:30 - 18:00 with the exception of approximately 2 weeks over the Christmas/New year period. Stepping Stones Day Nursery do not provide overnight care.

Currently there are approximately 100 children on roll. There are no children with identified special needs and there are no children for whom English is an additional language. Children have access to the whole of the ground floor except the staff office, kitchen and staff toilet. Children are escorted across a shared yard to the rear of the property to an enclosed outdoor play area. There are 3 main playrooms accommodating children aged 0 - 2 years (the baby room), 2 - 3 years and pre-school children. The baby room is registered for a maximum of 12 children.

Stepping Stones Day Nursery also operate a Holiday Playscheme and Out of School club (the Jungle Club). The Jungle Club occupy the pre-school room (when pre-school children are not present) and is registered for a maximum of 12 children.

Stepping Stones Day Nursery employ a total of 11 staff, 9 of these are full-time (including the owner/manager). There is 1 part-time and 1 relief member of staff. Of the 11 staff, 6 hold appropriate child care qualifications and 4 staff are currently pursuing a training course in child care.

Stepping Stones Day Nursery offers places to children in receipt of nursery grant funding and receives support from the Early Years Partnership Advisory Teachers. Currently there are approximately 27 children in receipt of the nursery grant.

Stepping Stones Day Nursery is a member of the National Day Nursery Association.

### How good is the Day Care?

Stepping Stones Day Nursery is a good nursery. Staff are well organised and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Most staff hold a relevant child care qualification. Policies and procedures are generally well written and work in practice. The operational plan is implemented effectively. Staff organise and make good use of available space to enable children to learn, play and rest appropriately for example through the use of the 3 playrooms and the 2 sleeprooms.

Attention to safety on the premises is good. Staff implement appropriate procedures to ensure children's safety within the registered premises for example through risk assessments. Staff are able to identify and minimise potential hazards. Staff do not have written parental consent for children to travel in staff vehicles. Measures to ensure appropriate health and hygiene practices are generally effective. Some aspects of the nappy changing procedure are not followed for example the wearing of aprons to prevent cross infection. Ants are currently present in the nursery room. Staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures.

There is a broad and stimulating range of varied and well planned care, learning and play activities across the provision. Planning shows a good awareness of child development and of children's individual needs within the registered age range. Children funded by the nursery education grant receive education in accordance with the Foundation stage curriculum. There is a good level of interaction between staff and children.

There is a good partnership with parents. Parents feel informed about their child within the setting and communicate with staff informally before and after sessions. Parents feel confident in the staff's ability to provide care in accordance with their wishes and the child's individual needs. Parents have access to a noticeboard and policies and procedures.

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

Since the last inspection Stepping Stones Day Nursery has:

Established a registration procedure for registering children and staff on a daily basis. This ensures that the presence of all children and staff is known at all times.

Installed additional toilets to ensure there is a minimum of one toilet and one hand basin with hot and cold water available for every 10 children over the age of 2 years.

Ensured that rooms are maintained at an adequate temperature so that children remain comfortable on the premises.

Revised the nappy changing procedure so that children's dignity and privacy is respected.

Reviewed security arrangements for the rear door. This ensures that adults cannot enter or children leave the premises unsupervised.

Minimised accessible hazards to children on the premises.

Established and displayed clear procedures for the emergency evacuation of the building in accordance with fire officer recommendations. A new fire alarm system has also been installed. This ensures that adults and children can be alerted to a fire or other emergency incident and leave the premises swiftly.

Established written operational procedures for the safe conduct of outings.

Established a visitors book so that there is a clear record of all visitors to the premises.

Obtained prior written parental consent for the administration of all medication. This ensures that parents are aware of and agree to all medication to be given to a child before it is administered and that blanket consents to administer medication are not used. These documents are stored appropriately to ensure confidentiality.

Established a no smoking policy. This promotes children's health within the setting.

Established effective procedures for the safe storage of food.

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

- Organisation within the provision is good. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities and space and resources are well organised to maximise children's choice and learning opportunities.
- The partnership between staff and parents is good. Staff have a good understanding of children's individual needs and parents are confident in the ability of staff to meet their needs.
- The level of interaction between staff and children is good. Staff use a variety of positive techniques to value individual children and promote their self esteem.
- The environment is warm and welcoming for children and their parents and this enables children to settle quickly into their surroundings.

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

- The written arrangement between parents and staff regarding the transportation of children in staff vehicles.
- Some aspects of health relating to the nappy changing procedure and the presence of ants.
- The written procedures regarding Special Educational Needs and complaints.
- The availability of the public liability insurance document.

#### **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
6	Obtain written parental permission for children to travel in staff cars.
7	Ensure that appropriate steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection. RE: the ants in the nursery room and the use of protective clothing during nappy changing.
10	Review the Special Needs Policy to include reference to the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.
12	Review the complaints procedure to include the address of the Regulator.
14	Ensure that a valid certificate of public liability insurance is available for inspection. Send a copy of the insurance certificate to the Regional Centre.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

Stepping Stones Day Nursery is a good nursery where children make generally good progress towards the early learning goals in all 6 areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff have a clear knowledge of the Foundation stage and the Early Learning Goals. Short-term, medium-term and long-term plans are clear and indicate the desired learning outcome. Planning ensures that available space is used well. Children have access to a wide range of activities and resources to help them make generally good progress across the curriculum. Interaction between staff and children is good. Staff model and encourage positive behaviour and social interaction during planned sessions. However, during snacks and mealtimes some children's behaviour becomes disruptive and opportunities for social interaction are lost. Evaluation of activities informs future planning. Staff do not monitor children's chosen activities during periods of 'free choice'. Staff record children's progress as it occurs.

The quality of leadership and management is generally good. The manager, deputy and staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities and compliment each other well. Communication between staff is generally good. Planning for the Foundation Stage curriculum is undertaken by the lead member of staff. However, there is no system in place that would ensure the continuity of this curriculum in the absence of the lead member of staff. Staff are well supported. Policies and procedures are clear and generally well written.

The partnership with parents is very good. Staff provide written information to parents about the setting in the form of a booklet. Staff and parents exchange verbal information daily. Parents attend fundraising events, have access to their child's work, attend an 'open evening' and participate in outings. Policies and procedures are accessible to parents and a notice board keeps parents informed of current topics and daily routines.

### What is being done well?

- The partnership with parents. Parents feel involved in their child's learning and confident in the ability of staff to meet the needs of their child.
- Interaction between staff and children. Staff take time to listen to and value children's contributions. This promotes children's self esteem and confidence.
- Children are engaged in activities which promotes their learning across the curriculum.
- Staff provide an environment that is warm, welcoming and conducive to children's learning.
- Available space is well planned and a wide range of resources are accessible

to children.

**What needs to be improved?**

- The snack and mealtime arrangements.
- The system to monitor children's chosen activities during planned periods of 'free choice'.
- The system to ensure that all staff are up to date regarding the delivery of Foundation Stage education.

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

Since the last inspection the weekly planning has been revised to clearly show what children are expected to learn from the activities provided. This clarifies the learning objectives for the planned activity and the weekly plan is displayed on the noticeboard for all staff and parents to see.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are confident through discussions, role play and activities. Children take turns and share experiences, views and ideas. Staff effectively foster children's confidence and self esteem and interaction between staff and children is good. Children's behaviour is generally good during planned activities whilst some children's behaviour deteriorates during snack and mealtimes. Children are aware of the needs of others and respect personal space.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children have a good grasp of language. Staff use activities and impromptu opportunities to challenge and develop language and communication skills. Children have ongoing access to writing and handwriting materials although do not readily choose these activities. Children are confident to talk amongst themselves and to the larger group. Children are read to and are beginning to link sounds with letters. Children are learning to write their names and form recognisable letters in handwriting.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are recognising numbers up to 10 and use counting in familiar context. Children incorporate mathematical learning across the curriculum. Children are learning to compare numbers and are developing an understanding of addition and subtraction. Children are beginning to develop their understanding of shape, space, volume and measure and are learning to use mathematical language appropriately.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children use a range of resources that encourage exploration and investigation for example in planting seeds and exploring items that sink and float. Children are beginning to become aware of other cultures and beliefs. Children have access to I.T equipment but some children choose not to use this during periods of 'free choice'. Children access a range of resources to promote their design and making skills.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children access a range of equipment, tools and materials across the curriculum to promote their physical development. Children confidently move around the available space and show a good awareness of themselves and others. Children have a good awareness of their health and bodily needs for example in knowing why they get hot after physical activity.



CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children explore their imagination through a range of resources, materials and planned activities across the curriculum for example through music and movement. Children show enthusiasm in their experimentation with ideas and freely bring their own to the process for example when designing objects in craft activities. Children have access to a generally good range of resources which enables them to express their feelings.	

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

## **OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION**

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally 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: THE KEY ISSUES**

- Review the snack and mealtime arrangements so that children's opportunities for social and behavioural development are maximised.
- Establish a system to monitor children's chosen activities during planned periods of 'free choice'. This should be reviewed to ensure that children access a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Establish a system to ensure that all staff involved in the delivery of Foundation Stage education meet at regular intervals to review and discuss the planned arrangements for children's 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.*