



Office for Standards
in Education

DAY CARE INSPECTION REPORT

URN 311839

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 23/04/2003
Inspector Name Cilla Burdis

SETTING DETAILS

Setting Name Stepping Stones Nursery
Setting Address Market Lane
Gateshead
Tyne and Wear
NE16 3ED

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Jacqueline Muers

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 Nursery opened in 1997. It operates from a self contained building which was originally a church. The nursery has four main base rooms: the Baby Nest for under ones, the Ducklings for ones to twos, the Cygnets for two to three year olds and the Swans for three and four year olds. The nursery is situated in Swalwell, Gateshead, close to the A1 and the MetroCentre shopping complex. The nursery serves a wide area of the North East. The nursery is registered to provide care for 72 children aged from birth to under five years; no more than 24 children may be under two years of age. There are currently 107 children on roll, aged from five months to four and a half years; this includes 23 funded three year olds and 12 funded four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports two children who have special educational needs; currently no children attend who speak English as an additional language. The group opens five days a week all year round, closing only on bank holidays. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. There are four part time and 15 full time staff working with the children; of these, 14 have early years qualifications and one staff member is currently on a training programme. The setting receives support from an advisor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and an early years special educational needs support coordinator (SENCO).

How good is the Day Care?

Stepping Stones Nursery provides good quality care overall for children aged from birth to 5 years. Staff give high priority to ensuring that children are safe both inside and outside the nursery. Regular risk assessments are undertaken and appropriate safety procedures followed. Closed circuit television monitors the front of the premises and key pad entry systems restrict access to the children's rooms. Staff ensure that the environment is suitably adapted to enable children with special needs to be fully included in activities. Staff meetings are held on a regular basis which ensures a consistent approach. Staff are encouraged to attend a variety of training sessions in order to update and develop their skills. The range of experiences and activities for children in all areas of the nursery are good and have a positive impact on children's learning. Effective recording systems ensure that staff know children well and are able to monitor development appropriately. The key worker system enables staff to establish consistent and good relationships with children and parents. Staff interact well with the children, offering a warm and secure environment in which the children can develop and learn. Parents are welcomed into the setting and encouraged to share information about their children by using the

home contact diaries. Information about their child's day is recorded in the diaries and shared with the parents when they collect their child. Parents are also encouraged to share any specialised knowledge or experiences which would be of interest to the children.

What has improved since the last inspection?

No actions were given at last inspection. However, the manager continues to monitor and develop practice.

What is being done well?

The setting places great emphasis on making sure that children are protected. Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place and are put into practice; included is the regular undertaking of a risk assessment. A closed circuit television is used to monitor the front of the premises and visitors' access to all children's rooms is restricted by the fitting of key pad entry systems. (Standard 6) The setting is committed to providing a suitable environment for all children's needs and will make adaptations to do so, the aim being to enable all children to be fully included in activities. (Standards 4 and 10) The setting provides a range of activities and experiences in all the rooms to support children's learning and development. The approach of the staff is warm, caring and sensitive to the needs of each child. Staff know the needs of the children they care for well and monitor their development effectively. (Standards 3 and 5) Parents are welcomed into the setting and are encouraged to spend time with staff during the settling-in period. Staff aim to develop a good relationship with parents to help them feel comfortable and relaxed. It is hoped that this will help parents to feel happy when leaving their children, confident that they and their children know the staff quite well. Staff value guidance from parents and contributions to their child's development records are encouraged. (Standard 12)

What needs to be improved?

children's access to resources reflecting positive images of culture, ethnicity and disability. (Standard 9) provision of written details to parents to inform them of child protection issues. (Standard 13) availability within the nursery of Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) guidance and procedures of those local authorities in which children live. (Standard 13)

Outcome of the inspection

Good

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person must take the following actions by the date shown

Std	Action	Date
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The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
13	Ensure ACPC guidance is obtained from local authorities in which children live.
9	Ensure children in all areas of the nursery have easy access to resources reflecting positive images of culture, ethnicity and disability at all times.
13	Provide parents with written details of child protection issues.

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.