

Stepping Stones Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	27/01/2011
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Stepping Stones playgroup is committee run and opened in 2000. It operates from Surbiton Children's Centre. The premises consist of a main play room and a smaller room for quiet activities. There are toilet facilities and a small kitchen area. Children have access to a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The playgroup open five days a week, term time only from 8.45am to 11.45am. The playgroup serves the local area.

The playgroup is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 24 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. There are currently 36 children aged from two years and six months to under four years on roll, some in part-time places. Of these, eight receive funding for early education. The playgroup supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children with English as an additional language.

There are eight members of staff, of whom seven hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least National Vocational Qualification level two.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are secure and happy at the playgroup as staff interact with children as they play. Positive relationships with parents and outside agencies have been established, but this is not extended to other childcare providers. Management encourage staff to embrace training opportunities and include staff and parents in their self-evaluation process. Planning of activities for children is in place, but this is not done for individual children based on their next step notes. The playgroup has breached regulations in respect of documentation by not recording children's hours of attendance. All recommendations from the last inspection have been adhered to.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- ensure a daily records of children's hours of attendance is maintained (Documentation).
- 27/01/2011

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- analyse observations to help plan 'what next?' for individual children, and use

this information to plan their activities

- combine the knowledge, skills and expertise of children's other childcare providers to support their learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children play in a safe and secure environment where regular risk assessments are carried out and any hazards found dealt with by centre staff. Management have made sure staff have kept up to date with first aid training and maintain a well stocked first aid box to deal with minor accidents. Written consent are in place for all children allowing staff to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. The playgroup has an evacuation procedure that is regularly practised with children to ensure they know how to leave the premises quickly and safely. Fire detection equipment is in place within the facility to further ensure children's safety. All staff have been vetted for suitability. Staff have a sound understanding of the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child in their care, as they have all attended training in this area. The playgroup has a designated person appointed to deal with child protection issues and there are safeguarding procedures in place for referral.

Management encourage staff to embrace training opportunities. Many staff attended internal training courses within the Children's Centre to improve their practice and outcomes for children. Children play with a wide range of good quality resources when they are at the playgroup. Children self-select items from boxes and shelves and make a choice in their play. The playgroup establish children's starting points with parents, using a form that helps staff build on what children already know and can do. Inclusive practice is promoted by the relationships the managers and staff have with parents. Twice yearly meetings with parents keep them informed of their children's progress and parents are invited in to share skills and experiences with the children. Daily verbal feedback with parents ensures they are informed of what their children have been doing. Work completed by children is either sent home or displayed to show it is valued. This boosts children's self-esteem. The manager has established relationships with outside agencies to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, but has not extended this to the children's other care providers.

The management self-evaluates their practice and includes parents and staff in this process. Regular questionnaires are sent to parents to gauge opinion and from comments on these managers strive to improve practice. Staff have regular meetings with the managers, where an evaluation of practice is discussed and their opinions valued. Most regulatory documentation is in place, but the children's attendance registers do not show their hours of attendance. At the last inspection three recommendations were made to improve outcomes for children. The playgroup now makes sure boxes of tissues are left out for children to clean their noses. Children have learnt the hygiene procedure of disposing of these and washing their hands afterwards. The main room where children play has been refurbished and is now organised in a way that attracts children to resources, with space to play on tables and the floor. Children now have an area to help them

make and design from their own ideas. In the corner of the room there are containers and a table where children can independently access masking tape, paper, cardboard and other resources.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children play in a room where age appropriate toys are available for them to make a choice in their play. Staff are on hand to support children, engaging with them during role play and reading stories to them on request. Children make connections with real life experiences as they play in the role play area that is currently set up as a café. They busy themselves serving muffins they have got from the play oven to other children sitting at the table as customers. Children have opportunities to mark make as paints are left with paper and an easel and work on the wall shows children have attempted to write their names on their artwork.

The playgroup has resources that reflect diversity in the forms of play people, dolls, puzzles, books and cooking implements and these are used as part of children's integral play. The playgroup regularly celebrates the festivals of others. For example, children have celebrated Diwali by making diva candles and hearing the story of the festival of light from a member of staff. These activities help children become aware of the diverse mix of people in the world.

Children have daily access to the outside area that is very well equipped and provides a stimulating learning environment for children. The apparatus enables children to practice their physical skills. The nursery class at the centre also have free flow into the garden and the playgroup children join up with children not familiar to them to play. They also visit the local park for fresh air and exercise where they run off energy in open spaces. Staff respond to children's choice in play by sitting on the floor with them or encouraging children to join them on the floor or at tables to enhance their experiences. For example, two children sit with a member of staff to look at some objects in a tray. The member of staff covers them with a cloth and removes one. Children have to identify which one has been removed. During this time they are encouraged to count the items which introduce them to numbers and simple subtraction.

Children have healthy snacks provided such as fruit and breadsticks and come to the table and choose their name to show they have eaten. Milk or water is provided at this time and children speak and use sign language to indicate if they want water or milk. A water fountain within the room enables children to have a drink whenever they feel thirsty. The playgroup notes children allergies and intolerances to make sure they are not given food not suitable for their diets. Children are encouraged to wash their hands before meals, after being outside, after using the toilet and after blowing their noses, They are provided with hot and cold water, soap and paper towels. These hygiene procedures help children learn good routines and reduce the risk of cross-infection. Children are helped to feel safe within the playgroup with staff reiterating boundaries of not running indoors

and not running too wildly outside. These warnings are followed with explanations as to why they need to abide by this general rule. During tidy up time children help put toys away in a calm manner and are reminded of the consequences of throwing toys. During outings staff remind children about how to cross roads safely using designated crossings if possible and acting as good role models. This helps children to not only feel safe, but understand issues relating to safety.

The staff of the playgroup undertake meaningful written observations on children as they take part in activities and these are collated in children's learning journeys. However, they do not show children's next step of development. Activity planning is done for the whole group of children with very few examples of children's individual planning based on their next steps.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong
Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound
Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:

Not Met (with actions)

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report. 27/01/2011

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report. 27/01/2011