

Stepping Stones Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 148626
Inspection date 24/03/2011
Inspector Mandy Gannon

Setting address 152 Nine Mile Ride, Finchampstead, Wokingham, Berkshire,
RG40 4JA
Telephone number 0118 932 8117
Email steppingstones@completechildcare.co.uk
Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

Stepping Stones Day Nursery opened in 1994 and are part of the Kingsclere group of nurseries which is also part of complete childcare limited. They operate from a converted residential building in Finchampstead and serve the local and wider area.

The nursery is registered to care for 34 children. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 58 children on roll, all in the early years age group. This includes seven children in receipt of nursery education funding. The setting is able to support children with learning difficulties and or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery is open from 8:00 a.m to 6:00 p.m, Monday to Friday for 51 weeks a year. There are currently 11 members of staff who work with the children, nine members of staff have early years qualifications to level 2 or 3 and two members of staff are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The nursery employs a cleaner and a cook. The setting receives support from the local Early Years Advisory team.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children thrive in a setting where they play a dynamic role and their individual needs are highly valued. A dedicated staff team show commitment to promoting the unique child as they accurately recognise their interests and identify the next steps in their learning, working exceptionally well with parents and carers. Ensuring a highly successful setting where children make exceptional progress. Although, partnerships with some other providers requires further attention.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- developing further the links and two-way flow of information between other providers.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are protected as all staff have a thorough awareness of safeguarding, and comprehensive policies and procedures are in place and reviewed on a regular

basis. The majority of staff have completed training and a designated person is appointed. Excellent security procedures are in place to check persons entering the premises and an accurate record of times of arrival and departure for children, staff and visitors are maintained. Accurate records are maintained for the safe and efficient management of the setting and to ensure children's individual needs are met. A highly effective safer recruitment procedure is followed and thorough detailed records are in place. Children have an exceptional understanding of keeping themselves and others safe and show care for others, they are skilfully supported by staff to develop their understanding of sharing and taking turns.

Partnership with parents is excellent. Highly effective communication channels between the setting and parents ensure that the individual needs of each child are met and are always a top priority. Children benefit from the success of partnership with parents where a collaborative approach ensures that the child's interests are identified and next steps are planned together. All parents spoken to at the inspection could not praise the nursery enough as they stated 'the staff go out of their way to meet my child's needs' 'nothing is too much trouble, as they are fully flexible around my working pattern to meet my needs'. Partnership with parents is an integral part of the setting as parents are fully informed about their child's day through diaries, verbal discussion and contributing to development records. Inclusion for all children is at the heart of this setting, ensuring they actively promote equality and diversity and tackle discrimination. Staff effectively use Makaton as a form of communication. Children with English as an additional language are successfully supported as staff work closely with parents and access key words to support their understanding which are displayed throughout the setting. Highly effective steps are taken in identifying gaps in children's achievements and necessary steps are taken to narrow achievement gaps through working together and if necessary putting in place individual learning plans. Links with other professionals and schools aid transitions, although links with settings such as pre-schools have been initiated, they have not been fully developed.

The inspiring leadership and management team successfully motivate and drive further improvements to ensure the best possible outcome for children. A happy, dedicated staff team work seamlessly together in a setting where staff morale is high and all are valued. Highly effective monitoring and analysis of the provision ensure that the setting has an excellent understanding of its strengths and areas for further development, which involves contributions from staff, parents and children. Targets for further improvement and action plans are in place to further enhance this dynamic provision. Staff's professionalism in ensuring the best possible outcome for children in their care is exceptional. Appraisal systems are in place and staff's professional training and the attending of courses is encouraged and supported. A highly conducive learning environment is provided to meet the needs of the children, where they freely access toys and resources making choices and decisions. The deployment of staff is highly effective to meet children's needs and the staff work well together to ensure they provide an environment where children flourish.

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

Children's health and well-being is met exceptionally well due to meticulous hygiene practices. Children are aware to wash their hands when coming in from the garden, after toileting and before food. Staff's exceptional practice ensures that the spread of infection is minimised as they use anti bacterial gel on their hands after wiping noses, follow robust nappy changing procedures, wear aprons when serving food and children have their own identified cots and separate bedding. Children gain an awareness of healthy eating as they are provided with a varied, nutritious, balanced diet throughout the day provided by the cook; specific dietary requirements are successfully met. Children confidently access their own water to drink when they are thirsty and younger children are reminded to drink frequently in order to remain hydrated. Children are thrilled and animated as they eagerly access a superior outside environment. Children dig with trowels, fill buckets and sit on a digger, as they search for treasure, they hide in a den and straw house which has been built in the woods, they dig, plant and harvest fruit and vegetables in their own designated garden. Children excitedly look for bugs and confidently pick them up and watch them as they crawl up their arm, and comment that ' their feet tickle me'. Staff extend children's learning as they are encouraged to identify characteristics of the insects as they count the spots on the ladybird and identify it has wings as it flies onto a leaf. Children are safe, secure and happy with adults they can trust. Babies actively explore the environment both inside and outside and show staff through body language when they are feeling tired or need a cuddle. Babies and young children build positive relationships and strong attachments to adults.

Children benefit from a highly stimulating and welcoming environment and are eager to attend the setting, making significant gains in their learning. They make outstanding progress in developing the skills which will help them in the future. Teaching and learning is rooted in the staff's expert knowledge and understanding of the learning and development requirements with robust observations and assessment processes in place to ensure the best possible outcome for each child. Children are independent and inquisitive learners and play a full and active role in their learning as they explore and show curiosity. For example, it is a warm and sunny day and children play with ice cubes they describe how they feel and watch what happens as they melt, ' it has all gone now it has melted into water'. Staff have an accurate understanding of each child's interests and a collaborative partnership with parents celebrates achievements both at nursery and at home and are recorded on the 'special mention tree'. For example, 'was a wonderful helper and helped his friends to tidy up the toys' ' ... is confident in the 2-5's room ' 'was extra beautiful at the weekend as she was a bridesmaid '. Children's have an exceptionally strong sense of belonging promoting high levels of self-esteem and confidence. Their behaviour is excellent and they show high level of care and concern for others as they co-operate well and negotiate.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
--	---

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

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

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