

# Stepping Stones Day Nursery Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	254643
<b>Inspection date</b>	24/03/2011
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<b>Type of setting</b>	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 Day Nursery opened in December 2000. It operates from purposely converted single storey buildings including the old Nursery School situated in the city centre of Nottingham. All children share the use of secure outdoor play areas. The nursery serves the local community and surrounding areas. There is disabled access to the buildings.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 149 children aged from birth to under eight years may attend at any one time and there are currently 104 children on roll. This setting is registered to provide out of school care. Opening times are from 7.45am to 6pm each week day for 51 weeks of the year.

The setting is in receipt of nursery education funding and supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs 28 members of staff working with the children all of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff know the children very well and work as an enthusiastic, informed team to ensure that children's individuality and needs are recognised and met. Outstanding partnership with parents, local schools and other agencies are established to ensure that all children are fully provided for and they get any additional support they need. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures is in place to support the safety and welfare of children and staff demonstrate good understanding of how to use these effectively. Efficient systems to monitor and evaluate the setting's performance are in place to secure a capacity for ongoing development.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

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

- ensure that observations of what children can do are used effectively to check that learning is secure in all areas and planning is consistently informed to promote children's next steps in their learning and development.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

The management team is well-qualified, experienced and share positive vision with the provider. This has enabled this setting to establish a good quality service to children and their parents to meet their individual needs. They lead a knowledgeable, enthusiastic team of workers committed to a common aim of

promoting children's welfare and helping them to make good progress in their learning. Robust recruitment and vetting systems ensure that all adults working with children are suitable to do so and a commitment to training and development informs and promotes up-to-date practice. A comprehensive and detailed range of operational policies and procedures is in place and regularly reviewed. Staff demonstrate sound understanding of these documents, how to use them effectively to safeguard children and describe clearly how to take appropriate action to report any concerns they have.

Safety is carefully considered in this setting and detailed risk assessments indoors, outside and on their numerous outings ensure hazards are identified and minimised. Security of the setting is ensured by robust finger print technology vigilantly implemented to protect children from unauthorised visitors. The provider and staff have created a vibrant, exciting, challenging environment where children enjoy innovative planned and spontaneous opportunities to learn through their play and exploration indoors and outside. The routines and resources are arranged effectively to offer stimulating play and learning opportunities within easy reach to promote independent choice and child-led activities.

Excellent communications and information to parents ensures they have clear understanding of the operational and regulatory responsibilities of the setting and the services provided to children and their families. In discussion and by feedback questionnaires, parents express their praise and appreciation of the setting and key persons. Their comments inform they feel totally included and involved in every aspect of their child's care, development and learning. Every effort is made to work with all agencies involved in the children's care and welfare and positive partnerships are established. Exceedingly effective systems are in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and to ensure children with English as an additional language are fully included in all aspects of the nursery. This supports children's overall development and progress.

All recommendations made at the previous inspection have been addressed. Reflective, ongoing self-evaluation by the management and staff ensures that priorities for future development are clearly identified and action planned to drive improvement.

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

Staff have sound awareness of the Early Years Foundation Stage and understand how children learn through their play. They spend time getting to know each child, their likes, dislikes and interests. Careful attention is paid to keep up-to-date with details of children's interests and significant events in their lives. Good systems are in place to observe and assess children's progress. The information gathered is used efficiently by key persons when planning for individual children to ensure that each child is offered targeted and relevant opportunities to extend their learning. Key workers know their children well which means that most children become confident and eager to join in as they develop positive attitudes towards learning. However, although, available, important information about children's achievements

is not kept consistently up-to-date throughout the nursery to efficiently inform all staff working with the children.

Babies receive excellent levels of support as staff tempt and encourage them with carefully placed toys to promote rolling, stretching and crawling. Their smiles and giggles signal their pleasure as they experience, such as, early learning opportunities. Any frustration or distress is soothed by gentle support from staff always ready to comfort or help them settle when separation from their carer is difficult. Toddlers enjoy activities suitable for their age and ability, for example, they are learning to use small equipment to create pictures, models and collages which they proudly display. They enjoy the closeness of a story told one to one and are learning to sit in small groups to share news, songs and action rhymes. Spontaneous opportunities to practise problem solving or safe routines are captured well by staff to promote children's learning.

Older children enter the playrooms confidently and eagerly settle into the daily routines, anticipating their indoor and outdoor activities with interest and enthusiasm. The pre-school environment is well-organised and thoughtfully arranged to offer children activities, equipment and resources kept at child height to support learning across the curriculum. Children are encouraged to select and move between resources as they play, developing their interest and extending activities. In this way, children are involved in play and experimentation across different areas of learning using the environment fully to promote their learning. Children are confident to ask for help or select a favourite story which they enjoy sharing and adding their own contributions. They speak comfortably in a group as they eagerly recount their news and adventures. For example, describing the traffic survey they conducted outside the setting or the weekly outing to the local park to explore and learn about the natural environment.

All children are encouraged to explore and learn about the natural world, how things grow and the world around them and have hands-on opportunities to plant and cultivate vegetable and fruit crops. They are learning to show concern and care for others as they develop friendships, help each other and raise funds for others less fortunate in their community and the wider world. Throughout the nursery daily communication is practised in sign and key words from others languages. Positive images and resources abound to help children recognise and value differences. Parents and families are welcome visitors to share their knowledge, skills and talents, for example, reading a story in their home language or playing a musical instrument. The exceedingly well-planned and resourced outdoor play areas are used daily to promote children's learning and development.

Staff demonstrate positive role models and intervene promptly and sensitively if required. They promote acceptable behaviour with praise and encouragement which leads to a happy, harmonious learning environment. They offer appropriate help and support whilst knowing when to stand back and let learning develop from the children's initiative and imagination. They demonstrate good role models and help children learn about keeping safe and healthy as they practise appropriate behaviour in activities and daily routines. Overall, children in this setting make good progress through the programme of activities provided.

## 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

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

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	1
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	2
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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:

Met