

# Stepping Stones Private Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 323016  
**Inspection date** 04/05/2011  
**Inspector** Lisa Patterson

**Setting address** 351 Leigh Road, Leigh, Lancashire, WN7 1TN

**Telephone number** 01942 605 481  
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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 Private Day Nursery is a privately owned nursery. It has been registered since 1991 and operates from the ground floor of a large detached house. Children have access to three main play rooms with a large conservatory room shared between the pre-school and toddler rooms. There are two enclosed outdoor play areas. The nursery is in a residential area on the outskirts of Leigh, Wigan. It is open each weekday from 7.45am till 6pm, throughout the year, excluding bank holidays.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 36 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 59 children aged from birth to under five years on roll, some in part time places. The nursery supports children with special educational needs.

There are 10 members of staff, all of whom are qualified to at least level 3. The manager is qualified to level 5 and is working towards Early Years Professional Status. Three of the remaining staff are qualified to level 4. The nursery provides funded nursery education places for three- and four- year-olds.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff have a well developed knowledge of the children's needs, gained through observations and close liaisons with parents. This ensures that their individual needs are effectively catered for. Stringent safety procedures ensure that children remain safe and secure both on and off the premises. Partnerships with parents are well established and information gained is well used to enhance provision in nursery. This means that children make good progress given their age, ability and starting points. Regular self-evaluation highlights areas for development and maintains focus in the drive for improvement.

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

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

- clearly state in the record of the risk assessment by whom it was carried out, the date of review and any action taken following a review or incident. 03/08/2011

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

- use observations more effectively to identify learning priorities and to track children's development towards the early learning goals.

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

Children are effectively safeguarded because staff have a secure knowledge of the indicators of abuse and the procedures to follow should they have a concern. All staff receive regular updates in this area. There is a comprehensive set of policy documents outlining procedures for all areas of the nursery and shortened versions are available for parents. All required documentation is in place and well organised to allow ease of access should the need arise. Children are safe and secure and risk assessments are updated regularly. Information about who carried out the risk assessment is not recorded and this is a breach of welfare requirements.

Continuous monitoring of provision and practice takes place and changes are made. Recent changes have included the relaying of the lawn outside to provide a more attractive and safe play environment. Fundraising events and competitions have also taken place in order to purchase larger pieces of equipment. The nursery has recently achieved 'Healthy Early Years Setting' status. The Ofsted self-evaluation form has been completed and updated. Staff attend a wide range of training, including enhancements to their qualifications and this is well used to enhance provision.

The nursery is incredibly well resourced and staff make very good use of the learning environment indoors and out to promote development. Resources are attractively displayed in easily accessible boxes labelled with words and pictures and children are able to self-select. Walls and ceilings are adorned with examples of children's creations and they talk excitedly about their pieces of work. There is a freeflow between indoors and out for the older children, with continuity of provision in both outdoor play areas.

Parents receive a wealth of information prior to their child starting at the setting. There is a daily information exchange both verbally, and for younger children, in writing. Information about development is shared regularly and parents feel fully included in their child's experiences. They are invited into the setting to share their skills and enhance educational provision. There are regular home link activities to provide continuity between the home and the setting. Parents value the experienced staff, the information about development, and that they really care about the children. The nursery enjoys close links with other agencies involved with the children. This means that their individual needs are well supported.

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

Children thoroughly enjoy playing in the bright and airy play spaces. They move freely from task to task and independently interact with the resources. Provision inside the nursery is as important as outdoors and children thoroughly enjoy snuggling up in the shaded comfy area outside to read a story. They chase bubbles and squeal with delight as they pop on their hands and noses. Older and younger children enjoy planting seeds in their gardens and watching as they grow. Visual

aids of plants, mini-beasts and animals provide a talking point.

They take risks but learn to stay safe through clear explanations from staff about why an activity is dangerous. Children make an assault course which includes climbing on a toy car. Staff talk to them about the safest way to incorporate the car into their activity. Hygiene standards are very high and children are learning the importance of washing hands, which is closely monitored by staff. Babies' individual needs are well met and sleeping times mirror those used at home in order to maintain their routines and increase their sense of security. Children enjoy delicious, home produced meals and snacks with seasonal menus to provide variety. They brush their teeth following their meals with staff role modelling for them.

Children's progress is monitored and information is used to plan. Next steps are not always identified for individual children and the assessment scales are used for tracking as opposed to the stages of development outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This means it is not always clear how much progress children are making towards the early learning goals. Clear starting points are developed after one month, however these are stored in the office. This means they are not used to provide an overall picture of the child's progress and learning.

Children behave very well. There are clear boundaries and routines, to which the children respond well. They talk kindly to their friends and are learning to take turns with nursery toys. They thoroughly enjoy the exciting stories read to them by staff, joining in with rhyming sequences or discussing the ending. There are plenty of opportunities for making marks both inside and out and every play space is equipped with a mark-making caddy complete with paper, pencils and various other implements. Staff discuss shapes and colours with the children as they play with the modelling clay. They talk about quantity as they explain that they can only put in a little clay or the squeezer will not work. They count and sing number rhymes.

Children are very proficient in the use of the computer and mouse, expertly directing shapes to the correct places on the screen. There is a good selection of programmable and push button toys across the nursery. They learn about different cultures through a good selection of resources and displays including musical instruments, books and other artefacts. They enjoy topics about different cultures and talk about looking after the world through not being wasteful. Physical activities are a priority and children thoroughly enjoy times outside. They expertly steer their toys cars without crashing and park them safely. They make their own assault course using mats, balancing beams and hoops, then successfully complete the course trying not to put their feet on the playground. There is a wealth of creative activities available, including painting, making models with reclaimed materials and music.

## 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	1
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	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	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	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

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