

# Stepping Stones Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

EY279030

**Inspection date**

27/10/2011

**Inspector**

Laura Hoyland

**Setting address**

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**Type of setting**

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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 Nursery is a privately owned and managed nursery. It was registered in 2004 and operates from the ground floor of a two storey industrial unit on a main road, approximately one mile from the centre of Carlisle. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery serves the local area and is registered for 28 children in the early years age group. There are currently 35 children on roll. The nursery provides funded early education for three and four year olds.

The nursery is open five days a week from 8am to 6pm and is open all year round apart from bank holidays and several days around the Christmas and New Year break. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. There is a team of six staff, including the manager, of whom all staff members hold relevant childcare qualifications. The manager has gained Early Years Professional Status. The setting is supported by the local early years team.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate.

Overall the early years provision requires significant improvement.

The setting does not effectively safeguard children as staff are not effectively deployed in the setting. The settings policies and procedures are not effective in safeguarding children's welfare as medication is not administered in accordance to the setting's policy and procedures.

Children progress sufficiently in all six areas of learning as staff have a generally good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff have developed partnerships with parents, carers and other professionals to ensure children's welfare needs are generally met. Staff are aware of the settings weaknesses but do not strive to secure improvement effectively.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

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

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the following action by the specified date:

- ensure staffing arrangements are organised to ensure 10/11/2011

safety and to meet the needs of the children (Suitable people)

- ensure an effective policy is implemented on administering medicines (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare)

10/11/2011

To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- continue to develop a systematic and routine approach to plan the next steps in children's development
- ensure decisions on staff suitability are made using evidence from references
- ensure self-evaluation clearly identifies key aspects to improve the provision and outcomes for children.

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

Children are inadequately safeguarded in the setting as staffing arrangements do not meet the needs of children and ensure that they are safe at all times. This means that children are not safeguarded effectively and this is a breach of regulations. All staff have had enhanced background checks. However, there is no evidence of references from previous employers for the staff employed at the setting. This means that recruitment procedures are not robust. Risk assessments have been carried out and are reviewed to ensure the premises and outdoor area is safe. This means that children are able to move freely and safely around the premises.

Staff generally understand the Early Years Foundation Stage and use this to support children's learning. Children can access a range of resources independently and staff also set up activities and support their learning. Staff are aware of children's preferences when selecting activities. For example, staff know that a particular children engage well when playing educational games on the computer and they use this to develop their skills further in all six areas of learning. However, deployment of staff is poor and as a consequence not all children receive adequate support in order to meet their individual needs.

The staff have taken steps to evaluate the setting and use parents comments to change different aspects. For example, the staff complete regular progress reports for parents following parent wishes, which detail their child's their learning and development while in the setting. However, self-evaluation fails to identify a number of weaknesses in the setting and as a result the capacity to continually improve is extremely limited.

The staff have formed positive relationships with parents and communicate verbally with each parent about their child's time in the setting. This means that parents are becoming actively involved in life of the setting. Partnerships with outside agencies have been formed and the staff welcome professionals into the setting. For example, staff work alongside a physiotherapist and speech therapist

to develop planning together to support individual children's learning and development.

Staff offer sensitive support to children who have special educational needs and or disabilities. Staff plan generally well for all children's individual needs. This means that children are involved in all aspects of the setting's life.

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

Children are settled in the setting and are excited to engage in activities. For example, children build castles with wooden blocks and are careful that the area is safe when they knock them down. Most children understand safety rules and the behaviour that is expected. However, some children need reminding by staff not to climb on resources as they may fall and hurt themselves. Although most children are developing an awareness of how to keep themselves safe there times staff deployment impacts negatively on children's behaviour because children are receiving little or no attention. For example, younger children paint the furniture while a staff member washes the hands of another child in a small adjacent room.

Staff promote outdoor play with all children. Children self-select from a range of resources and are excited and eager to make a train out of large wooden blocks as they laugh with their peers. Children are beginning to show an understanding of healthy lifestyles through following personal hygiene routines, for example, older children and more able children independently wash their hands before snack and mealtimes and after toileting. This is because staff actively promote good hygiene and role model good practice by washing their hands with the children. Children are starting to understand healthy eating and have recently taken part in a competition to design a healthy lunch box meal. Staff talk to the children about healthy and nutritious foods while they sit at the table and eat their snack. This means children are beginning to develop an understanding of healthy lifestyles.

Staff regularly observe children and use this to plan activities and learning opportunities to ensure children progress in all six areas of learning. However, staff are in the process of further developing planning systems to ensure that children's next steps are effectively identified. Children enjoy playing educational games on the computer and take pride in their achievements encouraging other children to come and play with them. Children are able to independently access a range of resources to develop their mathematical knowledge, they choose jigsaws and threading which staff support them with if necessary. Children show enthusiasm when staff read stories to them, they become excited and when the story has finished they take it in turns to stand up and sing their favourite song. This demonstrates that children are developing positive self-confidence and self-esteem.

The majority of children behave well in the setting as staff give clear explanations of the boundaries. As a result children are developing respect for themselves, their

peers and staff as they take turns and share resources. Children show pleasure in role playing in the hospital area and discussing the role of the doctors. This shows that children are developing self-esteem as they play in friendship groups.

## 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>	4
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	4

### 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>	4
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	4
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	4
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	4
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	4
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	4
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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