

Stepping Stones Day Nursery (Stanground)

School Bungalow, Oakdale Avenue, PETERBOROUGH, Cambridgeshire, PE2 8TD

Inspection date	06/02/2013
Previous inspection date	17/03/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- An effective key person system promotes children's sense of security and helps them to form strong emotional attachments and bonds. Staff are kind, caring and interested in what children say and do.
- Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of how children learn. Planning of activities ensure children access a broad range of experiences. Teaching methods, including skilfully questioning children during activities, enables staff to extend learning and provide effective challenge overall.
- Close partnerships with parents have been established and their input during their child's time at the nursery is highly valued. Parents are well informed of all aspects of their children's care and make a good contribution to their ongoing learning and development.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There are limited opportunities for older children to further enhance and develop their learning, through accessing outdoor play opportunities more independently.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the Frog and Dolphin rooms.
 - The inspector held a meeting with management and spoke to the manager at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation,
- evidence of suitability of staff working within the nursery, the provider's self-evaluation form and a range of other documentation.

Inspector

Carly Mooney

Full Report

Information about the setting

Stepping Stones Day Nursery (Stanground) was registered in 1989 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It is situated in a bungalow in the grounds of Oakdale Primary School in Peterborough, Cambridgeshire. The nursery serves the city and is accessible to all children. There is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The manager holds a level 4 qualification. The nursery

opens Monday to Friday all year round, except for one week at Christmas. Sessions are from 8am until 5.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 22 children attending who are within the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a small number of children who speak English as an additional language.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- increase opportunities for children to access the outdoor learning environment to support their all-round development.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children make good progress in their learning and development, due to staff's secure knowledge of the learning and development requirements and how to implement them effectively. In general, teaching techniques are strong with clear modelling from the manager who works directly with the children. Planning is effective in providing a broad range of interesting daily activities, based on children's interests and individual learning needs. Staff observe and assess children, with summaries of children's learning providing an accurate account of their current stage of development. Tracking systems show that children are making progress given their starting points and any gaps are quickly identified and planned for. Parents are given good opportunities to share their child's learning from home, both through a 'post it note' system and when summaries of progress are shared. Activity sheets are easily accessible, for parents to gain ideas to support learning and they spend time in the setting. For example, they volunteer to help children make salt dough pirates. Favourite books and toys are regularly taken home to use.

Children are well motivated and eager to learn; they join in activities with enthusiasm and enjoy their time in the nursery. The nursery is well-resourced indoors, with thoughtfully planned play spaces that are organised effectively to promote children's independence. However, although there is opportunity for children to independently access the outdoors from the frog room, staff are not utilising this effectively to enhance learning. This means that children are limited in their choice of when they would like to play outdoors to fully support their all-round development. Children's communication, language and thinking skills are promoted well throughout the nursery. Staff constantly talk to children in activities; they encourage conversations and effectively question children. For example,

staff ask, 'Why do we need to sit down when using scissors? Accessible writing materials and resources to create pictures, means that children have good opportunities to be creative and express their ideas freely. Children concentrate hard to make snips in their paper, supported well by staff who model the correct way to hold them, when children struggle with the concept. Older children's emergent writing skills are evident around the nursery on interesting wall displays. Resources, such as self-registration and mealtime name cards, support name recognition and an environment rich in text helps children understand that print carries meaning.

Children attend the nursery who speak English as an additional language. They are well supported to help them settle and have opportunities to see and hear their home language in their play. For example, staff use dual language labelling, books and songs. Children participate in a number of regular activities, which helps them gain a good range of skills to support their next stage of learning, such as going to school.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children play in warm and welcoming surroundings, with the whole nursery providing a 'home from home' feel. There is a real family atmosphere with children forming close bonds and attachments with all staff. An effective key person system enables children to feel safe and secure and promotes a good level of well-being within the nursery. Younger children's care routines are adhered to and a clear exchange of daily information is shared with parents, so that changing needs are constantly met. Children of all ages demonstrate good levels of confidence and self-esteem. Older children enjoy being helper of the day. They set the table for mealtimes and choose the book to read before lunch. Children cooperate well with their peers and wait patiently to take their turn in activities, such as measuring ingredients to make their cakes. Children gain a real sense of belonging, as family photographs are displayed in both rooms. Younger children talk excitedly about the members of their family they can see and those of their peers.

Transitions within the setting are effective with updated information gathered from parents and quality time spent in the next room before any permanent move. The nursery is situated within school grounds, and as a result, relationships are effective. Reception teachers visit the nursery and children are invited to attend events, which aids a smooth transition into school life.

Children are given plenty of opportunity to develop their independent skills and recognise their own needs before starting school. For example, children pour their own drinks and cut their own fruit at snack time. Children of all ages are encouraged to be responsible for essential tasks, such as tidying away resources. Older children gain a sense of responsibility as they independently access a dustpan and brush to sweep up sand that has fallen on the floor. Staff encourage children to think about their own safety. Young children tell staff that their dinner knife is sharp and they understand why they must not put it in their mouth. Children's awareness of developing a healthy lifestyle is promoted

through the provision of healthy meals and snacks and through indoor and outdoor physical play opportunities. For example, children use a trim trail to practise their balancing skills and enthusiastically engage in music and movement sessions.

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

The owners and manager of the nursery are clearly dedicated to providing a high quality provision, which enables children to receive the best possible start in life. Ongoing self-evaluation ensures areas to improve are quickly recognised. The nursery has clear plans in place to develop their outdoor environment, which includes a kitchen and sensory garden, to enhance children's experiences. Parents' feedback is highly valued and as a result of the most recent questionnaire; they wanted to know more about the activities their children participated in. Therefore, staff now display photograph scrap books in the entrance hall for parents to view. Children also like to look at the photographs and talk about who and what they can see. For example, they enjoy recalling the Christmas party or a recent pirate themed week. Staff demonstrate clear knowledge of the learning and development requirements and provide a broad range of activities that support children's good progress. Management monitor staff performance formally through supervision meetings and informally through observation of practice.

Robust strategies are in place to safeguard children, strengthened by secure partnerships with families and other agencies. Staff have a good understanding of local safeguarding procedures and know how to identify and report concerns that they may have about children in their care. Clear recruitment and vetting of staff helps to ensure children are cared for by a suitable staff team. Thorough induction procedures ensure staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities and the general running of the nursery. The nursery is securely maintained and staff use an effective process of risk assessment to ensure potential hazards are identified and minimised quickly.

Close partnerships with parents have been established and their input during their child's time at the nursery is highly valued. Staff also have good experience of liaising with other professionals to support children and their families who have been identified with additional needs. Overall, the nursery is organised well to create a warm and welcoming environment in which children feel safe, secure and happy.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
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Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children’s learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	256828
Local authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	818533

Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	17
Number of children on roll	22
Name of provider	Janet Baker and Kay Nichol
Date of previous inspection	17/03/2009
Telephone number	01733 563 116

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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