

# Stepping Stone Day Nursery and Woodland Adventure Holiday Club

Manor Farm, Upper Slaughter, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL54 2JJ

<b>Inspection date</b>	24/06/2013
Previous inspection date	20/02/2009

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	2
	Previous inspection:	3
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

- All children, including those learning English as an additional language, make good and sometimes very good progress across all areas of learning.
- The nursery benefits from the strong core of senior staff members who model good teaching skills and successfully encourage children to learn.
- Staff offer stimulating, accessible resources that include 'forest school' facilities on site to promote children's all round learning and development.
- Staff foster strong relationships with parents and carers, who have clear wishes and expectations, to keep them well informed about their children's achievements and progress.
- The management is fully committed to children and their families to tailor and adjust the nursery to be inclusive and to meet their individual needs.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff have do not always use all available space to fully encourage the older children's imaginative play on a large scale indoors.

## **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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled 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 voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

## **Inspection activities**

- The inspector observed activities of children in the four age units and in the outside learning environment.
- The inspector had discussions with the provider, administrator, staff, children and parents and took account of information in a telephone call with a parent.
- The inspector undertook a joint observation with the deputy leader in the older baby room.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation including the self-evaluation form and improvement plan, children's records, planning, safeguarding procedures and policies.

**Inspector**  
Angela Cole

## Full Report

### Information about the setting

Stepping Stones Day Nursery and Woodland Adventure Holiday Club has been established since 1984 and moved to the site in 1995. The present owner registered in 2005. The setting operates from five rooms in converted barn buildings near the village of Lower Slaughter in Gloucestershire. Children have access to three enclosed outdoor areas and a woodland area. The nursery is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year. The woodland adventure club opens in school holidays from Easter to October half-term from 9am to 3 or 4pm. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are 67 children aged from three months to under five years on roll. The nursery currently supports children who are learning English as an additional language. It receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are 14 members of staff working with the children. Of these, seven staff hold appropriate early years qualifications and three are working towards a qualification. There are two staff members who hold qualified teacher status, including one with an early years degree. The owner-manager has an Advanced Diploma in Childcare and Education.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- plan to make more frequent use of all available areas indoors, to give pre-school children more space for large scale imaginative role play indoors

## Inspection judgements

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

The staff have a strong impact on children's learning and development. As a result, each child makes good and sometimes very good progress in relation to their starting points. Staff gain much information from new parents and focus on early observations so they are well aware of new children's capabilities. Key persons continuously talk with their parents and observe children's interests and achievements. From these activities, they know what children need to learn next each week so they plan and promote learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage effectively. Staff have a good understanding of the required two-year-old progress check. They compile clear, detailed reports and know to include parents' and carers' comments and share these with parents. Babies and young children have good support to achieve in their personal, social and emotional development. They successfully extend their communication and language skills through the constant attention and conversation of attentive staff. They enjoy challenges to develop physically using

stimulating large and small equipment.

The nursery staff demonstrate good teaching skills. They engage in children's chosen play and respond to their ideas. They effectively support and extend children's thinking through interested comments about the resources and what children are doing with these. Staff give children time to carry out their own ideas, while being attentive to offer support where children need this. For example, when young children explore the texture of shaving foam, staff talk about the different objects placed in this, including glitter, spoons or farm animals. Staff are effectively aware of each child's needs in the small group situations and encourage their individual responses well. For example, they support all children to make music and join in songs so that they learn to recognise rhythm and rhyme. Older children eagerly recall the story line of a familiar book and ask their own questions about it. As a result, all children practise good communication and language skills in enjoyable routines and group activities. Children learning English as an additional language receive particularly good support to develop their confidence and their English language skills. Staff show a real interest in their countries of origin and this makes them feel included and able to gain confidence to share about their families. However, while children have space to move and explore, staff do not always use all available rooms to encourage pre-school children to fully extend their imaginative play on a larger scale indoors. For example, children play with a builders' site that they have set up themselves but do not fully extend this activity to create large structures.

Effective approaches to teaching children to develop early reading and writing skills have a good impact on children's learning. Babies enjoy looking at books, respond to animal sounds and become engrossed in making marks by dribbling paint and a mixture of corn flour and water. Children aged two years enjoy drawing outdoors on an easel and make marks in red jelly with raisins that they call 'ladybirds'. They name songs from pictures and easily recognise their names under their drinks. Adults are attentive and skilfully extend children's literacy skills. Children who are ready progress to writing words and numbers that have meaning for them, including some associated with favourite story books.

Staff take much thought and care over moves so that children make smooth transfers into the next nursery room and onto school. Children become confident in organising their time and activities and develop into keen, confident learners who concentrate well. From an early age, children engage in a wide range of activities to gain mathematical and technology skills. Younger children experiment with shapes and explore quantities, for example through sand and rice play. Older children confidently use mathematical words in their conversation, recognise complex shapes and count objects to high numbers. Babies and children have ample opportunities to develop understanding of their environment as they explore the natural world at first hand. They plant soft fruits, search for named parts of plants and trees in the woods and proudly feed the nursery fish. Young children try on different hats and use a toy telephone while older ones negotiate about their role play in a 'builder's yard'. Such activities successfully enable children to make sense of the world around them.

Staff are skilled and sensitive in helping children form secure emotional attachments. They provide a strong base for children's developing independence and exploration. As a result, the support for children's well-being is good. Settling visits result in sharing of information and early observation of new children so staff get to know them and their backgrounds well. Staff work closely with parents to help children to settle. This means children feel safe at the nursery, including the babies and toddlers. Children also receive strong support to gain confidence and self-esteem and to successfully cope with the different challenges they face in their lives.

Children benefit from good relationships with the small groups of adults in their room and with all staff in this compact nursery. They develop friendships with other children and often engage in imaginative play with them. Children increasingly show good levels of self-control during activities to share and take turns. They receive consistent support to behave in ways that are safe for themselves and others, for example responding to clear guidance so they move outdoors safely. Staff are good role models, giving calm, positive praise for desired behaviour, such as saying 'please' and 'thank you'. They effectively plan opportunities to nurture children's cooperation. For example, the staff encourage children of different ages to play alongside each other at quieter times so they care for and learn from one another. Children choose from good quality resources and play materials that the staff make available to cover each area of learning and to reflect children's interests. These include a good range of resources that reflects positive images to extend children's understanding of differences. Much equipment is stored to encourage children's self-motivation to make decisions about resources they want to play with.

Staff effectively support children's growing understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. Children have good opportunities to manage risks and challenges relative to their ages. Outdoors, babies have their own special area, which enables them to feel safe. Older children take risks as they explore the garden with its sand pit and challenging physical equipment. They frequently investigate woodlands to seek treasures, make shapes with twigs and leaves and use the parachute for energetic games to enhance their outdoor learning. Children successfully gain a sense of responsibility. According to their abilities, children capably and competently manage their personal hygiene and efficiently dress in outdoor clothes. They use tools appropriately, including table cutlery to serve themselves at meal times. They make healthy choices about what they eat and drink, and discuss foods that are best for them, which supports their understanding about healthy lifestyles.

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

The owner-manager effectively leads the nursery and all staff are dedicated to meeting the needs of children. Successful team-working fosters children's well-being and the positive atmosphere contributes to a nursery that is welcoming and supportive to all families. All required policies, procedures and practices are in place to assist in the smooth running of the nursery and the well-being of children. The senior management team

regularly monitors the delivery of the educational programmes. As a result, all staff consistently implement the observation and assessment system to robustly support children progress.

Staff strongly prioritise children's safety. Staffing ratios are always met and adults are deployed so that children receive plenty of personalised attention. Across the nursery, staff have suitable experience and at least half of the staff are appropriately qualified. Designated adults attend specialised safeguarding training and all established staff hold current child protection course certificates. This means that they demonstrate a strong knowledge of child protection procedures, including of how to respond if they have a concern about a child. A qualified staff member gives any child who has an accident first aid to help them feel comfortable. The indoor and outdoor environments are risk assessed carefully each day and the nursery building is secure so that children play safely. Staff check the garden and woodland area for hazards before children go into these areas. They reduce hazards as far as possible and children receive reminders to help keep them safe.

The nursery has effectively addressed the action and recommendations from previous Ofsted visits. Staff make all policies available to families so that they may have a good knowledge about the provision for their children. They have significantly improved their understanding of children's learning needs and interests to support and monitor these through their planning and interactions with individual children. Staff have improved children's access to outdoor play and the wide range of resources to extend opportunities for children's choices and independent learning. The owner-manager and her staff team use robust self-evaluation to identify other areas for improvement and a wide range of action plans are in place to bring about continual development. These include further communicating with parents and other providers and refurbishing the pre-school rooms.

Staff work well in partnership with others. They have an effective system to develop relationships with other early years providers caring for children. This is through conversation and sharing of information to support children's learning. Parents and carers are warmly welcomed into the nursery and feel comfortable with the staff. They share much information in conversation with staff about children's care and activities with staff who show a genuine interest in them and their children. Staff invite families to take learning journeys home and strongly encourage parents to comment about the provision and their children's progress. Attractive displays demonstrate interesting ways in which families may continue their children's learning at home, including a slide show of each day's photographs. Parents particularly appreciate the nursery's flexible support and the emphasis on outdoor play and learning which meets their children's learning needs.

### **The Childcare Register**

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

**Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are

**Met**

## What inspection judgements mean

### Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
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 action. 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY301590
<b>Local authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	924234
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 8
<b>Total number of places</b>	75
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	67
<b>Name of provider</b>	Claire Louise Wilson
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20/02/2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01451 820345

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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, which are usually the childminder's 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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