

Stepping Stones

Mondeor, Hoddlesden Road, Hoddlesden, Darwen, Lancashire, BB3 3LR

Inspection date

19/08/2013

Previous inspection date

05/05/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

4

Previous inspection:

2

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend 3

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children 4

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision 4

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is inadequate

- Children's well-being and safety is compromised because there are breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Some staff do not understand the consequences of failing to maintain accurate records in regard to the recording of accidents or injuries to children.
- Monitoring of staffs understanding of the legal framework and the unpinning legislation is not robust enough, to ensure they fully understand the reason for all policies and procedures to be followed to safeguard children and why parents need to be provided with the correct information relating to accident or injuries to children.
- There are insufficient links made between the indoor and outdoor environment, within planning, to ensure all areas of learning are covered outdoors, so as to further enhance children's learning and development.

It has the following strengths

- Children enter the nursery happily. They are confident and settled in the nursery rooms as they make choices about what they want to do and how they wish to spend their time.
- Children enjoy a balanced and broad curriculum where they are able to access a range of exciting and challenging activities in most areas to progress them in their learning and development.

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 in the nursery room and the outside learning environment and viewed toys, equipment and resources.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager of the provision and members of staff and spoke to a number of parents.
- The inspector looked at children's records and a range of policies.
- The inspector and manager took part in a joint observation of practice within the pre-school room.

Inspector

Janet Singleton

Full Report

Information about the setting

Stepping Stones is an established nursery and was registered in 1994. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register and is situated in Hoddlesden, Darwen, being managed by nursery manager. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from three main rooms and a fourth library room, in converted premises and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, two at level 4 and one at level 6. There is also an Early Years Professional employed. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 8am until 5.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are currently 43 children attending, who are within the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two- three and four-year-old children. The nursery receives support from the Early Years Quality Development team at the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- ensure staff have appropriate skills and a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities with specific reference to accident recording; in order to ensure children's well-being and to ensure parents are provided with accurate information regarding any accident or injury sustained
- improve arrangements for monitoring staff to ensure they are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities and the underpinning legal requirements to safeguard children at all times.

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

- develop the use of the outdoor area to ensure links are made between the indoor and outdoor environment, for example, planning for all areas of learning outdoors to further extend children's learning and development.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff and managers are generally secure in their knowledge of the learning and development requirements. They are able to provide children with a range of interesting and challenging activities to engage and motivate them. Staff have a suitable understanding of the seven areas of learning. As a result, children are well supported in the prime areas of learning and therefore, better prepared for the next stage in their development. Through individual planning, based on the identification of children's next steps, children are making suitable progress in their learning and development considering their starting point, age and capabilities. Staff complete observations and assessments on children and consistently track their progress. Consequently, planning fully reflects their individual needs, in order that they continue to make suitable progress and any identified gaps in their development are closing. All information gained from the assessment on children is used to complete a six weekly summary of where they are in their development, in order to effectively plan and track for their progress.

There is a focus on helping children develop their skills in communication and language. Staff talk to children about what is taking place and engage in some lovely conversations with them. Staff, who work with the babies, use repetition and constant explanations to help babies make sense of the situation and the world around them. Staff help children to develop an understanding of mathematics through filling containers in the sand and counting as children play. The opportunities provided for children to practise their physical skills, such as, climbing, running and riding wheeled toys in the outdoor area, means that they are supported to explore, be active and energetic in their play. However, outdoor play it is not freely available during the day to give children the choice of where to play to meet their individual learning styles. Children take part in registration, group work and by sitting together at mealtimes, they are developing their social skills and learning to make relationships with their friends. These skills are important for their future learning and for their progression onto school. Staff skilfully support children as children decide that they are going to make a train, from chairs, to go on a journey. They extend this activity to make an aeroplane as they learn to work together, take turns and solve problems. They use language to express their thoughts and to plan and organise their journey. Additionally, they use their imagination and creative skills to develop their project and ideas while these are still important to them. Staff provide lots of opportunities for children to use books. They delight in using the nursery library and this, combined with the lending book system for older children, helps children to build their skills in early reading. As a consequence, children develop their literacy skill and build a love for and enjoyment of books.

Staff build appropriate relationships with parents and carers sharing meaningful information regarding children's educational needs. This enables an accurate identification of children's starting points for staff to build on and to provide a consistent approach to children's learning. This relationship is further enhanced by sharing daily communication sheets and discussions with parents reinforces a culture of working together to assess and contribute to each child's learning and development record. Therefore, children are fully

prepared for their next steps in their learning and for their progression onto school.

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

On one occasion, nappy changing arrangements resulted in an accident to a child and the consequent inaccurate recording of the occurrence, means that children's health and emotional well-being is potentially at risk. This is because it has implications relating to any further medical treatment that may be needed and for sharing accurate information with parents. On this basis, children are afforded a false sense of security within the nursery and therefore, their well-being needs are not met. However, there is a secure key person system in place and children are forming warm attachments to staff. The staff work with parents to follow the child individual routines, especially in the baby room, to ensure children are supported in their growth and development. There is a solid transition process, including children visiting each room before they make the move, so they become aware of, and comfortable with that room and key person, before moving. Each room completes a summary assessment of the child and this is updated with the parent also contributing, to ensure learning from home is included.

The staff fully promote children's development in the prime areas of learning and ensure children are able to socialise and make friends. Additionally, they constantly talk to children and build their communication skills. Through the provision of outdoor play, climbing, sliding and riding wheeled toys, children's physical needs are addressed and they learn to manage risk. Children play and learn in a welcoming, mostly well-resourced nursery where they make choices and decisions about what they want to do. However, the outdoor environment is much under used. Children do go out but cannot choose to do so freely. Staff do not make the best of the resources for outdoor play, this is because they limit the resources to mostly physical play. As a result, it is less effective as a learning enabling environment. Additionally, children are not able to explore the world around them and engage in more outdoor type activities relating to the natural world.

Staff support children in managing their behaviour because they use praise and give clear explanations of what is expected. This results in children understanding the behavioural expectation and consequently, they are well behaved. They follow rules and listen to staff when getting ready at mealtimes. Staff use music to signal tidy up times to help children to finish off their play and to prepare them for lunch. During lunch time, conversations take place to support children's understanding of healthy options and the effect on their bodies of good foods to make them big and strong. In the bathroom, children learn to manage their personal needs and become independent.

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

The manager and some staff have too little an understanding of their roles and responsibilities with regard to the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, they have a suitable

understanding of the learning and development requirements to ensure children are provided with a broad range of experiences. As a result, children are suitably progressing in their learning and development and a targeted approach to their individual learning is taken.

The inspection was prioritised by Ofsted because concerns were raised about the arrangements for accident recording, information given to parents and staff, who have not been cleared being left unsupervised. It was found that the accident record, on one occasion, had been incorrectly completed and this was misleading and has potential to put children at risk. The inspection also found that parents have not, on this occasion, been informed of the misleading information. This means that they have not been fully informed of the full circumstances of the accident that occurred resulting in a minor accident to a child. This is a breach of a legal requirement. Although, the manager was aware of the full circumstances, the provider had not been informed of this situation and was herself, unaware that the accident record had been incorrect until informed of the concern. On being informed, she immediately took appropriate action regarding the staff involved. The discussion with the provider and her clear action following this breach of the requirement demonstrates her commitment to address the issue to prevent a reoccurrence. The inspection found no evidence to support that staff, who have not been cleared, have ever been left unsupervised with children. All staff are suitably cleared and documentation was seen to evidence.

The monitoring of staffs understanding and implementation of the nursery's policies and procedures is ineffective to ensure that these circumstances cannot happen again. From the evidence examined, it is clear this could have been prevented and there is no valid reason why this accident recording was falsified. Some staff, have shown a lack of understanding of the legal framework underpinning the reason for all policies and procedures to be place, that is, to protect children. This is a breach of legal requirements. Evaluation of the nursery has been undertaken, however, it is not effective because it has failed to identify and to address some staff's limited knowledge of the legal framework. As a result, staff weaknesses have not been identified for training to be put in place to address these areas. However, there is a programme for professional development, including a training programme to cover the learning and development aspect of the legal framework. Training to ensure all staff are fully qualified in first aid, food hygiene and specific training for the special educational needs coordinator is sought. The staff's suitability is monitored through the supervision and appraisal system but this is ineffective for the above reasons. Team meetings are undertaken and staff are able to contribute to the process of the development of the setting. Staff are fully aware of any action they need to take to safeguard children, for example, to record and report any concerns. The supporting policies are accurate and available to staff at all times to ensure they are able to take clear action should they have any concerns regarding a child in their care.

Partnerships with other agencies are promoted and arrangements for sharing information are in place to support and contribute to the child's learning and development. Parents are able to share information pertaining to their child's learning. Parents spoken to are happy with their child's care and feel their children are making progress in their learning and development.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

To meet the requirements of the Childcare Register the provider must:

- keep accurate records of accidents which occur on the premises (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- keep accurate records of accidents which occur on the premises (voluntary part of the Childcare Register).

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

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Unique reference number | 301673 |
| Local authority | Blackburn |
| Inspection number | 927718 |
| Type of provision | |
| Registration category | Childcare - Non-Domestic |
| Age range of children | 0 - 17 |
| Total number of places | 26 |
| Number of children on roll | 43 |
| Name of provider | Stepping Stones Nursery (Hoddlesden) Limited |
| Date of previous inspection | 05/05/2010 |
| Telephone number | 01254 702 013 |

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance '*Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

