

# Childcare @ Stepping Stones

9a George Street West, LUTON, LU1 2BW

<b>Inspection date</b>	21/02/2014
Previous inspection date	21/02/2012

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

- Staff use a range of skilful interventions to engage children and to develop their understanding. This ensures that children's learning is extended at every opportunity.
- Good planning ensures that activities are thoughtfully matched to children's interests and needs. Therefore, they are enthusiastic about their play and learning.
- Excellent safeguarding procedures and checks ensure that those working with the children are suitable to do so. This ensures that children are protected at all times in the setting.
- Staff communicate and interact sensitively with parents. This ensures that parents are kept fully informed about their children's learning and care needs.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- There is room to extend the range of age-appropriate stories and literature that will support children in exploring their feelings and behaviours.
- There is scope for children to have opportunities to use images and props to support them in discussing their feelings and emotions.

## 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 indoor area.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the deputy manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the deputy manager.
- The inspector spoke to staff throughout the inspection as necessary.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of staff working with children and the manager's evidence of self-evaluation.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.

## Inspector

Anne Bell

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Childcare at Stepping Stones registered in 2008 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The setting operates from The Stepping Stones building near the centre of Luton, Bedfordshire. Children attend the setting via referral only. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The setting opens Monday to Friday all year round with the exception of bank holidays. Sessions are from 9.30am to 12.30pm, and from 1pm to 4pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting can accommodate up to 19 children at any one time. The setting supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The setting employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications, including one with Early Years Professional Status and one with Qualified Teacher Status.

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

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

- extend the range of age-appropriate literature to include books and stories that will help children to explore their feelings and behaviours
  
- strengthen opportunities for children to use images and props to talk about their feelings and emotions.

### Inspection judgements

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

Teaching is good because staff understand how to promote children's learning during play and as a result, children's progress is good, given their starting points. Staff use skilful questioning and interventions to extend children's learning. Children are encouraged to explore activities and to follow their interests. This means that children develop confidence and their interest is sustained. Staff are skilful in knowing how and when to support children's learning needs, while also encouraging children's independence at the appropriate times. There is detailed planning in place for each session. This planning is based on staff's knowledge of the Statutory framework for the Foundation Stage and on children's interests. Planning is then evaluated and adapted on a daily basis. This means that the activities are planned to closely match the changing needs of the children.

Relevant information is collected from parents when their children start attending the setting and this is then built upon by staff. Staff carry out regular observations of the children which are used to inform planning. Children's records are accurate and informative. Children who are learning English as an additional language and children with special educational needs are well supported and therefore, make good progress.

Children are extremely engaged in their learning, due to the purposeful interventions of the staff. Staff model and join in with role play activities in a 'hardware shop', which helps children to develop their imaginations and learn mathematical concepts. Staff extend children's ideas and language as they engage in small world play with a castle and figures. Staff show children how to use pencils using effective grips and then to use them to draw their own pictures. Staff encourage children to use coloured paper and glue to make collages. Children prepare and enjoy their own healthy snack and pour their own drinks. They enjoy interacting with an adult-led story of the 'Gruffalo' and join in with the refrains, which helps them to develop their language skills. Staff are skilful in monitoring the needs and achievements of the children within the session and then adapting the activities accordingly to support learning.

Parents are kept fully informed of their child's learning and development. Staff ensure that they communicate with parents on a daily basis. Records of their children's achievements are shared with parents and then given to parents to take to the child's next setting or school. This ensures that there is good communication among all those involved with the child's learning and development. Children are well prepared for the move to their next setting. They develop the skills of exploration and active learning and are encouraged to develop their independence. The organisation of the setting gives the children opportunities to have sustained periods of time to concentrate and become engaged in their activities. They are also supported to develop their thinking skills. All of these approaches help children to become ready for the next stage of their education.

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

The key person system works well. Staff know their key children very well and skilfully adapt routines and activities to meet the needs of individual children. Relationships between staff and children are warm and harmonious, which enables children to feel secure and develop confidence. Children are happy and thriving at the setting. Behaviour is well managed by staff, although there is scope to extend the use of resources, including books, images and props to support children in talking about difficult feelings and emotions. Parents and staff communicate well regarding the care needs of the children. Comprehensive records are kept of children's care and routines, including what children have eaten and when they have rested or been changed and this is communicated to parents at the end of the session. There is also good communication with other settings that the children may attend, including the sharing of children's records. This ensures that children's progress and well-being is sustained.

Children are careful and considerate in their use of resources. They play and interact together, share resources and take responsibility for their environment by helping to tidy

up. The setting has achieved the 'Healthy Under 5s Award' and has carried out a range of activities to teach children about healthy eating. These include learning about the fruits in storybooks and learning about looking after their teeth in a dentists' role play. The children are provided with nutritious, well-balanced snacks and meals, all of which are prepared and cooked on site. Children learn how to use eating and cooking utensils safely and are taught to wash their hands before handling food.

The setting is well laid out with bright, attractive age-appropriate resources. Displays are interesting and colourful and include a 'wow' board where children's achievements can be celebrated. Activities are well planned and are adaptable to the needs of the children who may attend on any particular session. Routines are flexible, so that they are supportive to the specific needs of the group of children who are present.

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

Leadership and management is effective. The provider and managers work closely together and are ably supported by a well-qualified, skilful staff team. There are excellent safeguarding systems in place that promote the safety of the children at all times. There is a robust recruitment process that ensures that staff are suitable to work with children. High priority is given to the security of the setting, with access systems on each of the doors. This means that no unauthorised person can enter the childcare rooms. All staff have completed safeguarding training at levels appropriate to their roles. Staff are aware of procedures to follow in the event of a safeguarding concern. A high adult-to-child ratio is maintained, so that staff can respond to the age-ranges of the children who attend on any one day. A record is kept of each session that a child attends. There is a comprehensive range of policies in place that promote the health and safety of the children, including daily risk assessments.

Teaching and learning is monitored on a regular basis as part of staff's daily evaluation. Staff have regular supervision and appraisal and have access to a broad range of training opportunities. This results in a well-motivated staff who are up-to-date with current educational policies and procedures. The manager has effectively addressed all the issues for development that arose out of the previous inspection. There is good evidence of ongoing self-evaluation, which reflects the drive towards continuous improvement. Parents' feedback is welcomed and included in the daily evaluations.

Records are kept of the children's routines during the session and these are communicated to parents. This means that parents are kept fully informed about any issues that may affect their child's well-being. The setting works closely with a range of outside agencies, including the children's centres across the local authority. This ensures that the needs of the children and their families are supported in an appropriate and timely fashion.

### **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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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>	EY435517
<b>Local authority</b>	Luton
<b>Inspection number</b>	853658
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 17
<b>Total number of places</b>	19
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	100
<b>Name of provider</b>	Stepping Stones (Luton) Community Interest Company
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21/02/2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	07530 425 154

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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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