

# Stepping Stones Day Nursery

23 - 25 Ashcroft Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 1RA

<b>Inspection date</b>	04/11/2014
Previous inspection date	10/11/2009

<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 their observations of children effectively and they involve parents in opportunities for shared home learning. This all helps children to achieve a good level of progress.
- An effective key-person system is in place, enabling children to bond with staff and settle quickly.
- The management foster a culture of reflective practice and self-evaluation, which results in positive outcomes for children.
- Staff give high priority to the safety of children and effectively support children's growing understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- The outdoor environment does not consistently promote opportunities for babies to extend their learning in all areas.
- Occasionally, the organisation of activities means that children have to wait for too long to join in; as a result, their time is wasted, they become restless and disengaged.

## 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 children in all areas of the nursery.
- The inspector held discussions with the nursery manager, the early years quality improvement manager and regional manager, staff and children
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector reviewed paperwork including children's records, samples of their work, policies, risk assessments and suitability checks on staff.

## Inspector

Victoria Weir

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Stepping Stones Day Nursery is managed by Bright Horizons Family Solutions Limited. The nursery was first registered in 1995 and became part of the Bright Horizons Family Solutions Limited group of nurseries in 2006. The nursery operates from detached premises in the centre of Cirencester, Gloucestershire. Children receive care in three main rooms; two of these have direct access to the outdoor play area. The nursery serves children from local and surrounding areas. Children from birth to under-eight years of age attend the nursery. There are currently 69 children attending who are in the Early Years Foundation Stage age range. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children who are learning English as an additional language. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6pm all-year round. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery employs 13 staff who work with the children. Of these, two hold recognised qualifications at level 6, nine staff hold early years qualifications at level 3, and two staff are unqualified. The nursery also employs a chef, a cleaner and a peripatetic music teacher.

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

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

- extend further the range of outdoor materials and resources for babies to support their exploration and development in all areas of learning when using the outside area
- review the organisation of some activities, so that children do not have to wait for long periods to participate.

### Inspection judgements

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

Staff know children well and have a good understanding of how to promote children's learning and development. They carry out ongoing observations and use the information effectively to tailor planning and help children move onto the next steps in their learning. The successful assessment and tracking systems help staff to quickly identify any gaps in children's learning. This enables key persons to organise specific activities to support children's learning and development. Parents receive regular updates from the staff about their child's progress and are encouraged to become involved in their learning through home-observation sticker sheets and daily feedback. Staff organise formal meetings to go

through children's developmental records with the parents. They discuss how parents can further support their child's learning at home, such as reading familiar signs in the environment to promote children's language, letters and sound skills. Staff have effective systems to complete the required progress check for two-year-old children, working closely with parents to include them in the process. This effective partnership helps parents feel fully involved in their child's learning.

The quality of teaching is good, which means that children are making good progress in their learning and development. Staff use skilful questions to extend children's thinking, for example, to enable older children to compare measure and numbers. Children work out they will need at least two more scoops of sand to fill a large container after they have established how many fill a small container. Staff model different resources for younger children so they become independent in their play. This maximises learning as children fully engage in activities. For example, two-year-old children learned how to press the right buttons on an electronic tablet to return to the home screen. Staff are skilled at adapting activities to include and engage children who are at different stages in their learning. For example, staff sung rhymes with babies who enjoyed the rhythm by tapping and jiggling, while older children acted out the rhyme using props, and looked at a rhyme book. Staff support children's interests well; as a result, children develop their learning in fun ways. For example, staff built on children's spontaneous interest in rockets to enhance their imaginative play. Children built rocket models and role played being in space. They read books about space, created a space picnic, chose the food, created shopping lists, shopped and then mapped a route to the moon so they could eat their picnics.

Children's early communication and language skills prosper due to the attentive staff. They play alongside the children, offering gentle support and encouragement, extending children's learning with individual attention. Staff provide commentary on children's play, ask simple questions and model language well. Staff use gestures and picture timetables to help children know what comes next in the daily routine. This is especially beneficial for those children learning English as an additional language. Staff promote children's early reading skills very well. Staff read stories animatedly, which captures and sustains children's attention. The environment is rich in print and children are beginning to recognise their names by using their meal placemats and the self-registration system. Staff provide lots of opportunities for children to practise their early writing skills. Babies make marks using their fingers as they play with paint, while toddlers make marks on chalkboards and at the easel. Older children enjoy writing in the role-play area, using pencils and clipboards in the construction area and they practise forming their letters as they write their names on their artwork. Children learn to count competently and recognise numbers as staff sing number rhymes, engage children in number card games, such as dominoes and help children count in their play. Staff use sand and water activities to encourage children to measure and children enjoy exploring shape through jigsaws and games.

Older children enjoy a wide variety of activities in the large, enclosed garden. They develop their large muscles, learn to balance, throw and catch. Staff set up many activities, which help them to learn about the natural world, create imaginary worlds and paint. However, staff do not fully use the outdoor area to support the babies' all-round development as there are fewer resources to extend their learning and physical

development outside. For example, toddlers who are developing their walking skills have limited furniture and resources to support them as they cruise round the area.

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

The well-established key-person system helps children settle quickly as they receive a good standard of care. For example, on the inspection day newly admitted babies benefited from special attention and a high level of vigilance from their key person. This enabled them to settle quickly and show an interest in their surroundings. Staff consistently support children to prepare for their move to their next stage of learning. Children visit their new room with their key person over a period of time. This means that they can become familiar and comfortable with their new room and the staff. Children are encouraged to develop a good level of independence and to do things for themselves. All older children serve themselves food at lunchtime. They take some responsibility for their personal hygiene, such as hand washing, attempting to put on their coats, and to use and dispose of paper tissues when wiping their nose.

Children have an excellent understanding of safety, which they explore through the nursery toy, 'Candy Floss, the safety hero'. He stimulates children's interest in safety and they take responsibility for creating a safe environment. This supports children to handle equipment carefully, walk around the indoor area sensibly, and hold hands together when going down the steps into the outdoor area. Staff are clear of their role to provide a safe and secure environment for children. They carry out risk assessments of areas used by children, which helps to identify and minimise any hazards to children. Staff are careful to ensure that children with allergies or dietary preferences receive appropriate and safe food by carefully planning their meals and following strict procedures. Children learn the benefits of eating healthily and they eat the appetising food with enthusiasm and enjoyment. Children have free access to drinking water. Staff ensure that children have plenty of opportunities to exercise in the fresh air to support further children's understanding of a healthy lifestyle.

Staff are caring, speak gently and kindly to the children and act as good role models. They use effective strategies to help the children learn how to manage their own behaviour. The praise and encouragement they receive from the staff boosts children's confidence and self-esteem. Children generally understand the importance of sharing toys and taking turns with others, such as waiting to talk during group activities. However, occasionally, some children have to wait an inappropriate time to take part in popular activities. For example, staff did not organise children's turns fairly as they waited in a crowd for a turn on the electronic tablet. As a result, some children became despondent and gave up waiting for their turn, and some jostled other children out of their way.

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

Arrangements for safeguarding are strong. As a result, all staff fully understand their individual responsibility to protect children. Managers demonstrate an in-depth knowledge and ability to follow through any concerns in order to protect vulnerable children. Robust recruitment procedures ensure all staff undergo suitability checks and complete a thorough induction process. As a result, all staff have the required knowledge, skills and confidence in their roles and responsibilities. All staff show a sense of enthusiasm and pride in their work. Regular performance management provides close monitoring of staff and helps them to extend their skills by attending training. Peer observations mean the staff team is reflective in their practice, which benefits children. For example, staff identified through reflective discussions that quieter children needed more encouragement to fully participate in construction activities. Clear policies and procedures support staff in their practices and are consistently discussed at staff meetings. Management regularly review and update policies and procedures to ensure they are in line with current legislation and guidance. All required record keeping is well maintained and stored securely.

The manager regularly monitors planning of the educational programme and the assessment of children's learning. This ensures all children make good progress relative to their starting points. The manager implements effective systems for self-evaluation that inform the nursery's priorities and set challenging targets for improvement. For example, the current plans include the provision of training to target further support for children with English as an additional language, and to develop the outdoor play area through purchasing further resources. The organisation's early years quality improvement manager also supports development of the provision as she demonstrates a commitment to quality improvement through consistent monitoring and evaluation. Management seeks the parents' and staff's opinions to support this process, so that everyone helps drive improvement in the outcomes for children.

Good partnerships with parents exist, which benefits children's care, learning and development. Parents receive good information through regular newsletters and by way of information on display on the notice boards. Staff have effective systems in place to develop communication links with other provisions. Children receive support in their transitions to school, as teachers visit the nursery to meet children. This enables the key person to discuss children's individual learning and development, and any special educational needs and/or disabilities children may have, ensuring continuity of care and learning.

### The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	<b>Met</b>
The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	<b>Met</b>

## 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	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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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>	EY331414
<b>Local authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	828170
<b>Type of provision</b>	Full-time provision
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 8
<b>Total number of places</b>	32
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	69
<b>Name of provider</b>	Bright Horizons Family Solutions Limited
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10/11/2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01285 642 460

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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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