

# Stepping Stones Day Nursery

13 Plato Rd, Brixton, London, SW2 5UP

<b>Inspection date</b>	18/11/2014
Previous inspection date	06/12/2013

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

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision requires improvement

- Staff demonstrate sound knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children and the procedures they would follow in the event of a concern about a child's welfare.
- There are good recruitment and vetting procedures to make sure that staff are suitable and understand their role and responsibility when working with the children.
- Staff follow younger children's home routines to enable them to feel comfortable and secure.
- Children benefit from outings in the community, and further afield, to explore museums and other places of interest.

### It is not yet good because

- The organisation of large group time, particularly in the morning, does not provide sufficient staff or space to enable children to play and learn comfortably.
- Staff are not always consistent in their approach to behaviour management, which results in children receiving mixed messages and not being clear about the boundaries and expectations.
- Staff do not always fully support parents in sharing information about their children's achievements from home and how they can work together with staff to support their children's learning.
- Staff are not always consistent in their approach to teaching and, therefore, the quality

varies and children are not always fully supported in their learning.

### **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.

### **Inspection activities**

- The inspector observed interaction between staff and children in the indoor and outdoor environments.
- The inspector tracked the progress of several children.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation and held a discussion with management.
- The inspector spoke to parents, staff and children and considered their views.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.

### **Inspector**

Lorraine Sparey

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Stepping Stones Day Nursery is one of two privately-owned nurseries run by the same owner. It is situated in a residential area in Brixton, in the London Borough of Lambeth. It was registered in 2009 and operates from three rooms in a converted house. An enclosed play area is available for outdoor play. The nursery is open five days a week and operates from 7.30am to 6.30pm, 49 weeks of the year. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register. There are currently 28 children on roll, some in part-time places. The nursery supports children who are learning English as an additional language. The nursery employs eight members of staff, including the manager, with six staff holding a suitable early years qualification. One of these is a qualified teacher and the registered person has Early Years Professional Status.

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

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

- ensure staff are deployed effectively to support children, particularly at the start of the day when children are grouped together in large groups
- ensure that staff manage children's behaviour consistently to enable children to learn the boundaries and expectations and behave appropriately

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

- strengthen the systems to involve parents in their child's learning and development and share their child's achievements from home
- review staff performance to ensure a more consistent approach to the quality of teaching.

### Inspection judgements

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

Staff create a welcoming and well-maintained learning environment where children are grouped together at different times during the day to create a family atmosphere. For the majority of the day younger children are cared for on the first floor. Older children are on the ground floor enabling them to move between the indoor and outdoor environment freely. However, on occasions when children are grouped together first thing in the

morning, or during garden play, there are too many children for the space available. In addition, at times there are insufficient staff to meet the needs of the children. Therefore, the quality of teaching is not fully effective at all times. Staff show a genuine interest in what children say and do. However at times, because they are working with individuals or small groups of children, they do not notice when other children's behaviour is deteriorating. This affects children's ability to learn. For example, during role play children decided to use water in their play and a disagreement broke out which resulted in water being tipped on the floor. Staff did not establish what had taken place by talking to the children, which resulted in the incident being dealt with unfairly. Consequently, some children were left disappointed

Staff plan and provide activities across all areas of learning and generally take account of children's interests and abilities. They are able to identify how young children learn and the purpose of the activities. For example, during sand and water play staff wanted the children to gain knowledge of letters, sounds and colours. They also wanted the children to communicate with each other to develop their language skills. However, at times staff overloaded the children with questions and did not give them the opportunity to think and form their response. Staff complete observations and use the information to plan the next steps in children's development. The children's key person completes the required progress report for children aged two to three years. This enables staff to plan learning opportunities for children. There is sound evidence of how staff incorporate individual children's needs into the planning. In general, most children are making steady progress in their learning and development.

Children's communication and language development is progressing steadily. They are keen to share their ideas during activities. During sand and water play children identified fish that had letters on them and began to make the sounds. Some children identified words that begin with that letter. Babies and toddlers enjoyed playing with different coloured ducks. They waved the ducks in the air, saying 'Duck' and a member of staff extended this by saying 'Baby duck, where's the mummy duck?' Children watched as the member of staff showed them the big duck and then the smaller duck. Children throughout the nursery enjoy singing and completing the actions to simple nursery rhymes. This supports their communication and language development.

Staff gather information about children's individual needs and where they are in their development when they first start at the nursery. Some parents have had the opportunity to view their children's learning records and contribute. However, others are not fully aware of the children's learning records and how they could contribute. This means that parents are not always aware of how they can be involved and support their children's learning at home.

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

Children are building positive relationships with their key person and, in general, the staff know their individual key children well. This supports children in gaining confidence and builds their self-esteem, helping them to develop secure relationships with other children

and adults. Babies, toddlers, and older children are confident to approach their key person for reassurance. Staff working with the younger children know their individual needs well, such as when they are becoming tired or hungry, and are able to respond to the children's needs. However, early in the morning when the older and younger children are grouped together, children's emotional needs are not always fully met because there are too many children in the one area.

Children's behaviour varies. Some children are beginning to take responsibility for their actions and know and understand the boundaries and expectations. However, some children do not receive clear messages from staff about their behaviour and, consequently, it deteriorates. This has an effect on other children's learning and their emotional well-being. At other times, staff are inconsistent in their approach to managing behaviour. For example, one member of staff will ask the child not to put sand in the water tray and then another member of staff will allow the child to do so. The member of staff then uses the opportunity to extend children's learning by suggesting they make marks and try and form letters. Therefore, children are not always familiar with the expected behaviour.

Children benefit from a welcoming learning environment where they can make choices in their play. In all playrooms there are age-appropriate resources that are stored on the floor and low-level shelves for easy access in order to promote children's learning. At mealtimes, older children sit together and babies and toddlers have their highchairs close together to create a social environment. Staff provide support, enabling children to follow good hygiene routines, such as washing their hands before meals and feeding themselves. This promotes their independence. Staff use this opportunity to talk about why it is important to follow good hygiene routines. In general, children are learning how to keep themselves safe. Younger children learn to come down the three steps from one playroom to the other backwards to promote their independence while keeping them safe. When younger children get carried away and throw resources staff remind them to be careful because they may hurt their friends and they need to put the toys away carefully.

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

Management and staff demonstrate a sound awareness of the learning and development requirements and the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff demonstrate a suitable knowledge and understanding of how to support young children with their learning and development. However, at times they do not always use effective teaching methods to enable children to learn and develop at their own pace. For example, at times when children were exploring resources staff instructed them on how to use them which did not enable children to fully investigate or promote their learning. On other occasions, staff recognise that the grouping of the children is not enabling all children to be involved in good learning opportunities. However, they do not always take action to split the children into smaller groups.

There are clear recruitment and vetting procedures to enable management to employ staff

that are suitable and appropriately qualified. The registered person and the manager are both qualified early years professionals and are committed to staff's professional development. They encourage staff to attend training to increase their knowledge and skills. All staff complete safeguarding training and understand the setting's policy and procedure to follow in the event of a concern about a child's welfare.

There are appropriate methods to monitor and evaluate the provision. These include meetings where staff can reflect on the daily practice and visits from the local authority early years worker who supports them in assessing their strengths and areas they need to develop. There are some systems to monitor staff performance; however, these do not always identify areas for development, such as being consistent in their teaching to enable children to make more progress. Management and staff have addressed the previous recommendations and staff are gathering information about children's development when they first start to enable them to plan the next steps in children's learning. Staff now provide children with healthy and nutritious meals that take into account their dietary needs or any allergies. This supports children's health and general well-being.

Staff build positive relationships with parents. They provide a daily written diary for the younger children and use various methods to communicate with parents. For example, they use a parent notice board, informal discussion at the beginning and end of the day and email. Parents are confident to share their views about the service offered through discussions with management and staff and through a parent questionnaire. Parents report that their children's speech and language development has progressed well and that the move between the playrooms as their children progress is managed well. Parents report that the staff are welcoming and nurturing and that their children enjoy attending. However, the systems to involve parents fully in their children's learning and to share their children's achievements from home in order to support their children's progress are not completely effective. Consequently, there is not always a clear partnership to promote children's learning in the setting and at home.

## 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. 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>	EY400334
<b>Local authority</b>	Lambeth
<b>Inspection number</b>	962873
<b>Type of provision</b>	Full-time provision
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	32
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	30
<b>Name of provider</b>	Quinary Ltd
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	06/12/2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	02073267246

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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2012

