

# Stepping Stones Day Nursery (Bolton Ltd)

Methodist Church, Chorley Old Road, Bolton, Lancashire, BL1 6AH



## Inspection date

9 October 2015

Previous inspection date

13 November 2014

|   | <b>This inspection:</b> | <b>Requires improvement</b> | <b>3</b> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| <b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b> | Previous inspection:    | Requires Improvement        | 3        |
| Effectiveness of the leadership and management                |                         | Requires improvement        | 3        |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment                  |                         | Requires improvement        | 3        |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare                   |                         | Requires improvement        | 3        |
| Outcomes for children   |                         | Requires improvement        | 3        |

## Summary of key findings for parents

### This provision requires improvement. It is not yet good because:

- Self-evaluation is not accurate because the providers are unaware that they are not meeting some of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, such as not notifying Ofsted of a significant event.
- The recording of children's hours of attendance is always not reliable.
- The quality of teaching is variable because the feedback staff receive is not improving the teaching of the weaker members of staff. Not all staff model accurate speech, or give children enough time to answer questions or carry out instructions.
- Risk assessments do not always identify risks clearly or show how risks are reduced.

### It has the following strengths

- Assessment is accurate and shows that children make expected progress. Staff work well with parents to prepare children well for school or the next steps in their learning.
- Most of the staff team have up-to-date knowledge of the indicators of a wide range of harm children may experience, which helps to protect children.
- Older children are developing good independence skills, for example, when confidently laying tables for lunch. All children develop healthy habits as they enjoy nutritious, home-cooked food and daily opportunities to exercise in the garden and in the hall.

## What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

|   | <b>Due Date</b> |
|---|-----------------|
| ■ ensure that Ofsted is informed as soon as possible, or at the latest within 14 days, of any allegations of harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children on the premises and of any actions taken in respect of these allegations  | 16/10/2015      |
| ■ maintain an accurate record of children's hours of attendance   | 16/10/2015      |
| ■ improve the risk assessment of activities both in the nursery premises and on outings, in order to identify risks in detail and show how the risks will be removed or minimised   | 16/10/2015      |
| ■ improve the quality of teaching by improving arrangements to manage staff performance, for example, by giving weaker staff precise feedback to ensure that they give children enough time to answer questions or carry out instructions and to improve how staff model accurate speech to children. | 27/11/2015      |

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

- improve the accuracy of self-evaluation by taking more account of the quality and impact of teaching across the whole staff team on children's learning and development.

**Inspection activities**

- The inspector observed staff interacting with the children and the impact this has on children's development and learning in every age group, both indoors and outside.
- The inspector carried out four formal joint observations with the providers. One of the providers also accepted the inspector's invitation to observe practice alongside the inspector throughout the inspection.
- The inspector spoke to four members of the staff team, including the manager and deputy, about safeguarding and about arrangements for managing their performance and helping them to improve.
- The inspector spoke to some parents and children and took account of their views.
- The inspector discussed the providers' self-evaluation and arrangements for the safeguarding and the appraisal of staff with the providers.
- The inspector reviewed a sample of documentation. This included children's assessment records, planning, accident and incident records. The inspector also reviewed a broad selection of policies and procedures underpinning the practice, including those supporting safeguarding.

**Inspector**

Linda McLarty

## Inspection findings

### Effectiveness of the leadership and management requires improvement

The providers show their ambition and commitment to give children the best start in life by ensuring their staff regularly update their training in early years and safeguarding. They model good practice with children and have created a very happy environment for learning. Leaders fully admit that they inadvertently committed an offence when they failed to inform Ofsted after referring an allegation about a member of staff to the authorities. However, other than forgetting to inform Ofsted, the provider acted swiftly and appropriately to protect children. Overall, safeguarding is effective. Staff receive regular observation and supervision but providers have not successfully tackled some weak teaching in their team. The providers' evaluation of their setting's effectiveness is too generous, partly because they have not sufficiently taken into account the impact of their weaker staff on children's learning. The providers know the groups in their nursery most at risk of falling behind. They have sensible plans in place to use additional funding such as the Early Years Pupil Premium to support these children.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

The stable, experienced staff team use knowledge from their qualifications and training well to provide a calm, welcoming place for children to learn. Assessment is used well to plan children's next steps in their learning and development. Staff work effectively with parents and external professionals when children need additional support. There are strong staff working in each age group. They work alongside weaker staff members to mentor and support them. In general, the staff team are helping children become keen learners by being enthusiastic themselves about the activities provided. However, sometimes staff answer their own questions so quickly children do not get time to think. Several staff do not give children a good example of how to speak clearly and well. Some staff working with children in the two-three year old age range do not give children time to complete simple instructions such as sorting bowls by size during the 'Three bears' story. Visits to nearby schools helps to ease older children's move to full-time education.

### Personal development, behaviour and welfare require improvement

The setting is spacious and well-resourced with a good selection of interesting activities for children to explore both indoors and outside. Staff have a growing understanding of how to keep children safe and can explain how to protect them from many different types of harm. However, the risk assessment processes do not identify precise risks and are unclear about how these risks will be removed or reduced. In general, the staff team are helping children become keen and confident learners by being enthusiastic themselves about the activities provided. Children behave well and staff build close relationships with children and families. Many staff have training specifically to support the learning and development of children between birth and two. They use this well to meet babies' and toddlers' care, learning and development needs.

### Outcomes for children require improvement

The providers have made a sound start in ensuring that all children, including those from low starting points, make expected progress and reach typical levels of development.

## Setting details

|                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>     | 315937                                   |
| <b>Local authority</b>             | Bolton                                   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>           | 1023114                                  |
| <b>Type of provision</b>           | Full-time provision                      |
| <b>Day care type</b>               | Childcare - Non-Domestic                 |
| <b>Age range of children</b>       | 0 - 5                                    |
| <b>Total number of places</b>      | 60                                       |
| <b>Number of children on roll</b>  | 74                                       |
| <b>Name of provider</b>            | Stepping Stones Day Nursery (Bolton Ltd) |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b> | 13 November 2014                         |
| <b>Telephone number</b>            | 01204 456 778                            |

Stepping Stones Day Nursery (Bolton Ltd) was registered in 1996 and is on the Early Years Register. The nursery operates from a large converted church, close to the town centre of Bolton, Lancashire. It has links with Oxford Grove Children's Centre. The nursery is open from Monday to Friday, between the hours of 8am and 6pm all year round with the exception of public holidays and one week at Christmas. There are currently 74 children attending in the early years age range. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children and the Early Years Pupil Premium. The nursery employs 23 members of childcare staff, of whom one has a level five qualification, four have early years qualifications at level four and 14 have qualifications at level three. Two childcare staff are qualified to level two and a further two are unqualified. The nursery also employs a cook, a cleaner and an administrator who do not work directly with children.

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