

# Inspection of Stepping Stones Nursery

55 Glanville Road, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX4 2DD

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Inspection date: 3 October 2022

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Inadequate</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Inadequate</b>
Personal development	<b>Inadequate</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Inadequate</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## What is it like to attend this early years setting?

### The provision is inadequate

Significant weaknesses in safeguarding impact on children's safety and health. Children's safety cannot be assured, as the nursery operates daily with no staff who hold valid and up-to-date paediatric first-aid certificates. This means that there are no staff trained to administer emergency treatment, if needed. Children's safety and well-being are further compromised as young children are left unsupervised when eating. Furthermore, most staff have a poor understanding of child protection and wider safeguarding issues.

Staff show a poor regard for children's learning. They fail to provide any purposefully planned activities for children and, generally, children are left to amuse themselves. Older children do not concentrate and are not engaged at activities for long. Additionally, children wander from one activity to another or sit with nothing to do. Staff fail to provide a language-rich environment for the children. Too often they talk between themselves and not with the children. Children can hear some songs and spoken words. However, staff supporting the children do not give them sufficient time and interact with them enough to support individual learning.

Children separate from their parents with minimal upset and go into the room with the staff. Younger children demonstrate that they feel secure, as they drift peacefully to sleep at their rest times. However, children do not demonstrate a positive attitude to learning. They are at risk of falling behind in their learning, as staff fail to plan and provide a curriculum and learning environment that helps all children make the progress that they are capable of.

### What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The manager, who is also the owner of the nursery, demonstrates a poor capacity to improve. She has failed to ensure policies and procedures are maintained to assure the safety, well-being and curriculum for the children. Staff recruitment is not followed through. Although staff have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check in place, there is no documentation to show that their identity and references have been checked before employment. Furthermore, records about children are also incomplete. The manager has failed to recognise the weaknesses in practice and has done little to ensure that the requirements of the early years foundation stage are maintained.
- The manager has failed to ensure that the staff are trained and suitable to care for children. She does not ensure that there is a suitable staff member on duty with paediatric first-aid training when they are operational. The manager has failed to ensure staff have a sufficient understanding of all safeguarding matters. In addition, staff are unable to identify and respond to possible indicators of

radicalisation and extremism.

- The manager has failed to notify Ofsted of a significant event as required. This compromises children's safety and welfare. Weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements mean that children's well-being is undermined.
- The quality of teaching is poor. Staff do not know the children well and do not plan sufficiently for children's individual learning. Additionally, staff do not understand what they want children to learn and fail to offer educational programmes that offer sufficient challenge for the children. As a result, learning is not targeted to build on what children know and can do.
- The manager has an insufficient awareness of staff's professional development. This impacts significantly on staff's effectiveness to fulfil their roles and responsibilities. Staff's performance is not effectively monitored. This results in a poor quality of teaching and lack of direction on how to improve. Staff comment that they receive no support, and some comment that this affects their own well-being. This is not conducive to effective working.
- Children enjoy a variety of healthy meals. However, there are ineffective procedures in place to maintain children's health and well-being. For example, younger children are left unsupervised while they are eating small items, such as blueberries. This puts children's safety at risk, particularly because there is not always a first aider on site.
- Parents comment that they are satisfied with the care that their children receive and that they have no concerns. Overall, children demonstrate appropriate behaviour towards each other.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The manager does not ensure there are robust safeguarding procedures in place to keep children safe from harm. The management team and staff have an insufficient understanding of their role and responsibility to safeguard children. They do not understand the signs and indicators that may mean a child is at risk. Furthermore, not all staff understand the referral procedures to follow in the event of a concern. Children's safety is further jeopardised due to breaches in the requirements and the incomplete records in place about children's welfare. In addition, poor organisation of documentation, including children's registration information, means that in the event of an emergency staff would not be able to access vital information that may be needed.

## What does the setting need to do to improve?

**The provision is inadequate and Ofsted intends to take enforcement action.**

**We will issue a Welfare Requirements Notice requiring the provider to:**

	Due date
ensure that a staff member who holds a paediatric first-aid certificate is on site at all times so that they are available to respond to emergencies quickly and paediatric first aid can be administered whenever needed	02/11/2022
ensure all staff, including those with lead responsibility for safeguarding, know how to implement the setting's safeguarding policy and procedures and are confident in how to make a referral if concerned about a member of staff or a child's welfare	02/11/2022
ensure staff have sufficient understanding of the government's statutory guidance, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015' and the 'Prevent' duty guidance for England and Wales 2018, with particular regard to being able to identify and respond to possible indicators of radicalisation and extremism	02/11/2022
ensure staff are effectively deployed, particularly at mealtimes with young children, so that any risks and hazards to children's health and well-being are identified and minimised	02/11/2022
ensure safer recruitment policies and procedures are understood and implemented, to make sure that all staff working with children are safe and suitable to do so	02/11/2022
implement regular staff coaching and supervision to review the quality of teaching, identify training needs, and ensure all staff have the skills and knowledge to fulfil the requirements of their role	02/11/2022

take action to improve knowledge and understanding of those with oversight and governance of the setting, to help ensure they understand their roles and responsibilities, maintain requirements and can develop the overall quality of provision	02/11/2022
ensure all records are readily available for inspection.	02/11/2022

**To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:**

	<b>Due date</b>
implement an ambitious educational programme that inspires, challenges and consistently supports children to make good progress.	02/11/2022

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY276264
<b>Local authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10257256
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	1 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	25
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	15
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Greatbatch, Natalie Alexandra
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP514285
<b>Telephone number</b>	01865 717139
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20 August 2018

## Information about this early years setting

Stepping Stones Nursery registered in 2003 and is privately owned. It is situated in Oxford, Oxfordshire. The nursery opens from 8am to 6pm, each weekday, for 51 weeks of the year. There are six members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate childcare qualifications. The nursery receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Tracy Bartholomew

## Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager explained the nursery curriculum during a learning walk with the inspector.
- The manager and the inspector completed a joint observation of an activity together and discussed the quality of teaching and learning afterwards.
- Children spoke to the inspector about the activities they took part in.
- A number of parents provided feedback about the nursery through discussions with the inspector.
- The inspection was carried out following the risk assessment process.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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