



**Office for Standards
in Education**

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 145881

DfES Number: 540030

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 29/11/2004
Inspector Name Beryl Baggs

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Out of School Day Care, Full Day Care
Setting Name Steps Ahead Day Nursery and Nursery School
Setting Address Bradley Road
 Trowbridge
 Wiltshire
 BA14 0RG

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs Janine Elizabeth Collishaw

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

Steps Ahead Day Nursery and Nursery School is a privately owned full day nursery which opened in August 2000. It operates from a large single storey building behind the District Council buildings off a main road in Trowbridge. It has an enclosed rear garden providing both paved and grassed play space. There are separate play rooms for babies, toddlers and pre-school children.

The nursery is open from 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday throughout the year except for one week at Christmas and Bank Holidays. The nursery does not provide overnight care.

It is registered to care for 104 children under eight years. There are 140 children on roll of whom 20 three-year-olds and four four-year olds receive nursery education grant. Two children have special educational needs and six children use English as an additional language

The owner employs two managers and 30 childcare staff of whom 24 hold or are working towards a childcare qualification. A maintenance man, a cleaner and a cook are also employed.

The nursery is supported by the Early Years teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

Steps Ahead Day Nursery and Nursery School is of good quality and children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

Teaching is generally good. Most staff are aware of the early learning goals. Plans identify the learning aims of the activities, but not suggestions of how to adapt the activities for more or less able children. There are no clear links between the planning for the main unit and the teacher's session. Effective questions help children think and remember. Staff play with the children and respond to their interests. There is good support for children with special educational needs. Good behaviour is praised. Assessments of children's achievements are used to plan the next steps for children. Resources are generally good, but books are poorly presented and multi-cultural books are not easily accessible to the children.

Leadership and management is generally good. Good team work recognises staff skills. Monitoring of the educational provision is generally effective. Staff performance is monitored and appraisals are carried out. The setting is generally good at recognising its strengths and weaknesses. Staff attend training and implement new ideas to improve the care and education for all children.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Parents share information about their children on a daily basis. They complete information sheets when children enter the nursery which are updated as children move through the units to the pre-school. They have termly opportunities to see children's work and hear about their progress. They have newsletters about the topic to be covered in the sessions. They do not have information about the Foundation Stage, the early learning goals or what children learn through play. They do not add their own comments to children's records and have no information on how to extend their children's learning at home.

What is being done well?

- Children are confident and eager to learn. Children show self assurance, for example, sitting at the front of the group and taking the register, greeting children as the staff member does.
- Children link sounds to letters very well. Children easily identify words and objects beginning with the sound and written letter.
- Children count very well, can calculate one more and one less with ease. They match numbers of objects to numerals with success.
- Children have good opportunities to co-operatively create large models with boxes and glue, and finish the effect with emulsion paints and large brushes.
- Children with special educational needs are well supported. Staff adapt their approach to learning, identifying interests, developing concentration and

valuing progress. Staff work well with parents and professionals to identify the needs of children and develop play plans.

What needs to be improved?

- the staff's presentation of the books and positive images of others in society to encourage children to use this area more
- the children's understanding of the effect of exercise on their body and healthy living
- the links between all the staff's plans for children's learning, and the inclusion of ways to adapt the activities for those who learn more or less quickly
- the parents understanding of the Foundation Stage, the early learning goals, and how to extend children's learning at home.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable as this is the first inspection.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident and eager to play. They listen in group time and talk clearly in a familiar group. They ask for help when needed. They play well together, sharing, taking turns and considering the needs of others. They behave well and know what is expected of them. They choose their activities, pour drinks and put their own coats on with growing self-assurance. They talk about events outside nursery.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children talk well using expressive words such as splodge and slimy. They listen well and join in with stories. They link sounds to letters, identifying objects and names beginning with the initial sound. They use writing in everyday play, labelling their own work. Children write recognisable letters by copying adults. Some children write their name clearly. Children do not use the book corner frequently and do not have easy access to books reflecting positive images of others in society.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children count well to ten and beyond. They can calculate one more and one less. They correctly place the number of toys to match the numeral and understand how to use number in play such as only two can play at the sand tray. They know the names of shapes and can identify shapes in the world around them. They weigh ingredients in cooking and sequence size and colour with pegs. They complete jigsaws matching colour and shape.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children explore the world around them, growing bulbs and examining tadpoles. They build towers with wooden blocks and planes with Lego. They use the computer well to find the initial letter of words and use the phone and typewriter in role play. They learn about changes over time through life cycles and stories from long ago. They learn about people who help them, animals in their lives, and of their own and others' celebrations such as St Patrick's Day and Poppy Day.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children run, pedal and balance with delight and growing skill. They negotiate other bike riders, furniture and activities in the play room and line up well without pushing. They use tools and materials with assurance, rolling hoops, carrying storage boxes together, spooning icing on biscuits and popping bubble wrap. Children know about germs and the parts of the body. They have limited opportunities to talk about the effect of exercise on their bodies and the importance of healthy living.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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| Judgement: | Very Good |
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Children explore colour and texture in their art. They mix paint to find different colours, print with leaves and make models from clay and boxes. They paint with large and fine brushes, rollers and sponges. They enjoy music with instruments, for dancing and to sing enthusiastically. They use their imagination in role play and small world toys. They respond to experiences with laughter, squeals of delight and a serious face for concentration.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- improve the planning of activities to ensure there are good links between the plans of all the staff, include how to adapt activities for children who learn more or less quickly
- improve the presentation of the books to make the area more attractive to the children. Ensure children can see clearly the range of good quality books which include positive images of other cultures, disability and gender role
- review the information sharing with parents so that they begin to understand about the Foundation Stage and early learning goals, how children learn through play, and have ideas on how to extend children's learning at home.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.