

# Stepping Stones Day Nursery

224 Canterbury Road, Urmston, MANCHESTER, M41 0QF

<b>Inspection date</b>	15/01/2015
Previous inspection date	23/07/2014

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	
	Previous inspection:	
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**

- Practitioners plan a wide range of interesting play opportunities and activities, to support the next steps in children's learning. As a result, children make good progress in their learning and development in relation to their starting points.
- The key-person system is effective in helping parents and practitioners work together well to ensure children receive consistency of care. Practitioners are loving and sensitive to children's individual needs. Consequently, children feel safe, secure and are happy.
- Practitioners have a secure knowledge and understanding of safeguarding practices. As a result of this, children are very well protected and their safety is assured.
- The manager and provider are highly committed to developing a high-quality provision for all and self-evaluation is robust. Effective systems are implemented to inform priorities for improvement and are used to set challenging targets for the future.

### **It is not yet outstanding because**

- The process for peer observations has not been fully evaluated to ensure that the high-quality practice already achieved is sustained and ongoing.
- Information provided by practitioners to parents for home learning is not fully maximised to further enhance children's learning at home.

## 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

- Observations of childcare practitioners and their interactions with children were carried out throughout the day.
- The inspector examined a selection of documentation related to children's learning and welfare, along with the nursery's plans for self-evaluation and improvement.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager in the baby room and outdoor area and with the deputy in the sensory room.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and the provider and spoke with practitioners, children and parents at appropriate times during the inspection.
- Evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners was checked.

## Inspector

Marina Howarth

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Stepping Stones nursery was registered in 2006, and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in converted detached premises in the Urmston area of Manchester, and is managed by a private provider. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There are enclosed areas available for outdoor play. The nursery employs four childcare practitioners, including the manager. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and one holds a level 2 qualification. The nursery opens 51 weeks a year from Monday to Friday. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently seven children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

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

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

- consolidate systems to evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of the recently introduced peer observation process to extend the good practice already achieved, so that it is sustained and constantly improved upon
- strengthen partnerships with parents further by focusing more precisely on developing a shared approach to children's learning by providing enhanced information about how they can continue this at home.

## Inspection judgements

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

Practitioners now demonstrate a strong understanding of how to promote the learning and development of children and engage and capture their interests. Systems to assess children's starting points on entry are robust. Practitioners work closely with parents during the settling period; obtaining detailed information to establish what children can do and define initial targets linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage. Regular progress reports are shared with parents, with identified targets, along with a variety of photographs; illustrating the children engaged in a broad range of activities. Practitioners complete regular observations and keep clear records of children's progress, which means they have a good understanding of children's individual abilities. This enables practitioners to see if progress is as expected, above, or below that for children's age and stage of development. Consequently, practitioners are able to address any gaps in learning that may become apparent, so that early intervention can help support greater future progress. The nursery has implemented the progress check for children between the ages of two and three years, and these assessments are thorough, in order to plan in detail for

children's next steps in learning. Children's interests are used to inform planning, which results in children being active learners and demonstrating enthusiasm for the activities they are engaged in. Parents are encouraged to share observations of their children from home and contribute ideas to the planning for their children's learning on a regular basis. Practitioners share some ideas about how to continue children's learning at home. However, this is not fully maximised, resulting in some missed opportunities for suggested home activities to reflect individual priorities for children's future learning.

Teaching techniques are now consistently strong across the nursery resulting in all children being effectively supported to acquire the skills and capacity to learn and develop effectively. Children are enthusiastic learners and are provided with a wide range of opportunities to experience a balanced variety of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Practitioners demonstrate a good understanding of how to engage and capture children's interests. For example, babies demonstrate high levels of curiosity when participating in a range of messy play. Practitioners encourage them to explore resources using their senses and give them time to discover how things work. For example, babies watch with interest as they create marks using chunky paint brushes which are easy for them to hold. They discover that by tapping the paint brush on the paint container they create sounds. They explore the bristles with their fingers and squeal with delight. Older children are encouraged to plan and think critically about what they want to do, showing the characteristics of effective learning. They eagerly engage in role play as they make 'slug soup' using dried pasta, water and mud and laugh as they exclaim 'this is soggy nonsense'. Practitioners enhance their imagination by providing additional resources, such as, potato mashers which children use to create patterns in the mud. They problem solve as they discover the need to break up the long dried spaghetti for it to fit in the pan. They learn about the natural world as they dig for worms and talk about the changes in the weather.

Children's communication and language skills are well promoted as practitioners successfully engage and focus children in good-quality conversation to promote their language skills. Young infants are captivated and enthralled, as they observe practitioners signing to their favourite songs and eagerly try to copy the actions, and develop an understanding of what the actions represent. Older children's learning and development is challenged by practitioners through sensitive questions that enhance their critical thinking skills. They are given time to think about what they want to say and are introduced to new words. Children enthusiastically explore a dedicated sensory room filled with soothing sounds, colourful lights and bubble tubes. This enables children of all ages to explore with their senses and engage in small group activities, promoting hand and eye coordination, and the development of social and language skills. All children benefit from a print-rich environment and are learning that print carries meaning. Young infants explore hardback books with textures and enjoy lifting flaps to reveal different images. Practitioners combine story telling with puppets and aids, which capture children's interests and sustain their attention. Children are provided with extensive opportunities to make marks using a variety of media. This helps them to develop their hand and eye coordination skills, necessary for early writing. Older children confidently recognise letters in their name. They pronounce each letter sound and are able to form letters, identifying them accurately. Many older children are able to write their own name without support.

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

All children and their families are warmly welcomed by friendly, attentive practitioners. Consequently, they happily separate from their parents and settle well as they engage in their chosen activities. The key-person system is well established and practitioners know children well. This enables children of all ages to form secure emotional attachments and successfully promotes their developing independence and exploration. Practitioners gather detailed information from parents when their children first start attending to ensure they are fully aware of children's care needs, interests, likes and dislikes. A development assessment is also completed with parents to identify what children can do on entry. Children feel secure with practitioners as they seek reassuring glances and cuddles in the presence of visitors to the nursery. Transitions are carefully planned for and children are well supported when they move into a new room and in preparation for a move to another setting or school. This approach helps children to feel confident about the changes ahead.

Children demonstrate a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe as practitioners provide opportunities to manage risk in a safe but controlled environment. Children learn to use a variety of tools and equipment safely, such as, scissors when involved in creative activities. Older children demonstrate how they climb the stairs safely and recite safety rules confidently. Young infants who have recently started walking are encouraged to explore their environment holding onto hands and furniture. Soft surfaces are provided to enable them to be mobile and safe. Practitioners now demonstrate a good understanding in supporting children's understanding of boundaries for appropriate behaviour. They act as positive role models as they offer simple explanations and are consistent in their approach. This means children have a good understanding of what is expected from them. Meaningful praise and encouragement are used to reward good behaviour. Children delight in showing their reward stickers and demonstrate they are acquiring good social skills, such as, sharing and are gaining personal confidence. These are personal attributes that will help children when they move onto school. Children are effectively supported to respect each other's differences, which supports their understanding of diversity.

The learning environments are highly stimulating and rich in children's photographs, creative work and interactive displays. A wide range of good quality, developmentally appropriate resources are provided throughout the nursery, which further promotes children's curiosity and interest. Resources and toys are located in low-level storage units, which are clearly labelled. Consequently, children are able to make choices and develop their independence, because they are able to reach what they want to play with. Children are provided with regular opportunities to play in the outdoor environment, which gives them opportunities to take reasonable risk in their play, with careful supervision, such as climbing and exploring wide open space. They benefit from fresh air and learn the importance of healthy lifestyles as practitioners talk to them about the benefits of exercise. Children learn about healthy foods through a variety of opportunities to handle and taste a variety of fresh fruit and vegetables. They are provided with a balanced diet of healthy meals and snacks. Practitioners place a great emphasis on children managing their personal needs. For example, they are encouraged with dressing skills, dependent upon their age and stage of development. Babies are encouraged to feed themselves and are

sensitively supported when needed. Consequently, all children demonstrate high levels of independence.

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

Policies and procedures are now well established and continuously reviewed to ensure the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are well known and effectively met. Daily registers now record the hours of attendance for children and practitioners, and are monitored to ensure that practitioners are well deployed and that ratios are maintained at all times. The majority of practitioners are trained in paediatric first-aid ensuring children's safety. Accident records are maintained and monitored and parents are now informed on the same day of any accident or injury sustained by a child. This ensures that appropriate interventions are sought where needed and that children's safety and well-being is promoted. Risk assessments are now effectively completed and appropriate action is taken to minimise identified hazards. Systems have been extensively reviewed to ensure that the risk assessment process is continually evaluated to ensure that the areas and equipment are safe for children, both indoors and outdoors at all times. Practitioners are well aware of their safeguarding responsibilities, as they receive training as part of their induction programme. The training is regularly updated to strengthen their knowledge. The manager effectively implements robust systems to monitor their knowledge and ensure they are kept fully informed of current procedures. As a result, they are confident with procedures to follow in the event of a concern arising involving another colleague or professional. They know who to contact as they have access to the necessary information and telephone details. A comprehensive recruitment policy is in place to ensure all practitioners are safe and suitably qualified to enable them to support children in making good progress in their learning and development. All practitioners have undergone meticulous suitability checks including enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service checks and the taking up of professional references. Declarations of health and suitability to work with children are regularly updated.

The management team demonstrates a good understanding of the responsibility in meeting the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Since the last inspection by Ofsted, where the nursery received a number of actions to improve, effective actions have been implemented to overcome all weaknesses. For example, practitioners have attended a variety of training both in house and through support from the local authority. Consequently, the quality of teaching and the management of children's behaviour has significantly improved. Children's learning is now supported more effectively, resulting in them being keen and enthusiastic learners. In addition, the monitoring of the delivery of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage is more robust and effective. The manager now rigorously monitors the quality of the educational programme, the implementation of planned learning and its impact on children's progress. This ensures any gaps in the educational programme are identified and addressed and any children falling behind their peers or below their expected achievement level are quickly identified. The manager now conducts regular observations on practitioners and shares expertise in practice and skills to ensure the good practice already achieved and its continued success. However, as this

is a recent enhancement, procedures are yet to be fully consolidated. The manager now conducts regular supervision sessions with individuals, which allow opportunities for coaching. This contributes to annual appraisals, which also identify future training needs. Less experienced practitioners are well supported and comprehensive training is provided with the expertise of a mentor. Self-evaluation is well embedded in practice and includes the views of practitioners, children, parents and carers. Priorities for improvement are correctly identified and action plans are put into place and monitored on a regular basis. The management team show a strong commitment to bringing about continuous improvement through evaluation. This is demonstrated by how they have addressed all the actions from the previous inspection.

A commitment to partnership working with parents and external agencies is evident and well established and contributes to meeting children's needs. Practitioners work closely with a range of professionals, such as, doctors, community fire service and police. The nursery has effective links with the local authority's early years quality team, and their evaluations are incorporated into the planning for enhancing practice. Close liaison with local schools and sensitive support provided by practitioners ensures that children are prepared for their move on to school. Practitioners have established warm and effective partnerships with parents. Parents speak highly of the loving attention bestowed on their children and the flexible service offered, such as, accommodating shift patterns to meet individual needs. They are kept fully informed of the nursery's policies and procedures and their views are sought through discussions, written comments and questionnaires.

### **The Childcare Register**

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

## 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>	EY321200
<b>Local authority</b>	Trafford
<b>Inspection number</b>	984864
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 17
<b>Total number of places</b>	33
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	7
<b>Name of provider</b>	Shabina Kausser Mughal
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	23/07/2014
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 748 2548

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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.

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.

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