

Stepping Stones Nursery Inverurie Day Care of Children

Unit 11
Blackhall Industrial Estate
Inverurie
AB51 4FS

Telephone: 01467 625295

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 29 September 2016

Service provided by:
Stepping Stones Nurseries (Peterhead)
Limited

Service provider number:
SP2004939139

Care service number:
CS2009195510

About the service

Stepping Stones Nursery, Inverurie was registered with the Care Inspectorate in November 2009. The service is provided by Stepping Stones Nurseries (Peterhead) Limited. It provides a day care of children service to a maximum of 30 children aged 0 to not yet attending primary attending primary school of whom no more than 6 may be aged under 2.

The service operates from an adapted unit on Blackhall Industrial Estate, Inverurie. There are two playrooms available to the children and an outdoor play area. The service may operate between the times of 7.30am to 6.00pm, Monday to Friday.

The aims of the service included:

A broad statement of aims and objectives had been developed which include:

- To create a welcoming, caring, safe, secure and stimulating environment for all children in our care. This quality of care will also be promoted in the outdoor environment.
- The setting is committed to improve the service, through rigorous self-evaluation, responding to views of staff, parents, children and partners.
- Respecting the rights of child, the needs of all children are met and their learning progressed responsively using the guidance provided by GIRFEC, Pre-birth to Three and Curriculum for Excellence.
- To have effective systems in place to promote continuity of care and progression in learning during key transition periods.
- To have a well-trained staff who have clearly defined responsibilities, feel valued and are supported to further their professional development.

The Care Inspectorate check services are meeting the principles of Getting it Right for Every Child (also known as GIRFEC); Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes and wellbeing for children by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. It supports them and their parent(s) to work with services that can help them. There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of Getting it right for every child: safe; healthy; achieving; nurtured; active; respected; responsible; and included.

What people told us

There were around 16 children present at the time of the inspection aged from 15 months up to those not yet attending primary school. We observed the children and saw that they were happy and contented. They displayed affection for the staff. We talked to a few of the children about their experiences and they told us they liked coming to nursery:

- "Like the castle and that's it."
- "We like fighting with the dinosaurs."
- "I am being a pirate; they go 'arrgh'."

Seven parents returned completed questionnaires to us before the inspection indicating that they were happy with the service and felt involved with any new developments. We also spoke to three parents as they dropped

off and collected their children who were also happy with the nursery, they commented on the positive progress their children were making and the caring action taken when children became unwell in the setting.

Self assessment

The Care Inspectorate received a fully completed self assessment from the provider. The provider identified what it thought the service did well and identified some key areas for improvement and how the service intended to take these forward. The provider told us how the people who used the care service were involved in the self assessment process and how their feedback directed the development of the service.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	4 - Good
Quality of environment	4 - Good
Quality of staffing	4 - Good
Quality of management and leadership	3 - Adequate

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

The quality of care and support provided for children at Stepping Stones Nursery was good. Relationships between staff children and families were warm and friendly. Children were happy to come to nursery and well supported by staff. Praise and encouragement helped to build children's self-esteem. Effective communication was established with parents to support children's care; good personal plans and child friendly pictorial 'all about me's were now in place.

Staff had created a positive learning environment for children, they engaged with children in their play extending their ideas. Small groups of children engaged well with story telling and looking at the cycle of growing plants on a tablet computer. They joined in enthusiastically with action songs and rhymes. Small group work was more successful than large group work which did not suit the range of children's abilities. **(See recommendation 1).**

Outdoor play was child-led with opportunities to investigate tyres, sand play and develop their skills with balls. A fun game with the parachute included helping children to learn about colours.

Staff engaged children well in planning using mind maps and a talking tree. Floor books were used very well to document children's interests and meaningful observations of their learning. Staff were now beginning to record more relevant observations of children's learning. Children were proud of their learning journey folders and talking about their experiences. However, they contained too many adult pages. Methods used in floor books could also be used in children's learning journeys to involve children more and show relevant learning.

Snack times and lunchtimes were a pleasant social experience for the children. Children's independence and self-help skills were encouraged through the routines. Menus reflected healthy eating choices and children were actively involved in preparing and learning about some of the foods. On the day of the inspection most children did not like the cold chicken pasta salad, but only the baby was offered an alternative of beans on toast.

Unfortunately on the day the pudding was unsubstantial. Offering a simple alternative would have been best practice. **(See recommendation 2).**

After lunch children who were tired had a comfortable sleep in the quiet of the smaller room. Quieter restful activities were planned for all children. This supported their development well.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 2

1. The manager and staff should ensure that some activities are different for the very youngest or more able children in order to support their individual development.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare Up to the Age of 16 - Standard 4: Engaging with Children

2. The provider should ensure that children are always offered an alternative meal to sustain their nutritional needs if they totally refuse the main meal offered.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare Up to the Age of 16 - Standard 3: Health and Wellbeing

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The quality of environment provided for children at Stepping Stones Nursery was good. The environment was safe and secure indoors and out. Staff extended the environment for children and help them get to know their local community on walks and outings. Children were involved in checking pictorial risk assessments.

In response to the previous inspection the manager and staff had prioritised plans and made positive changes to the layout of the playroom to provide better experiences for the whole group of children. Children played imaginatively in the role play area with the new kitchen and real resources. Books were more easily accessible in the book corner and children enjoyed reading books on their own and in group. Foam and colour interested children to experiment in the water play. Opportunities for children to use programmes independently on the computer and tablet computers needed to be improved.

Staff engaged with children to support their choices however more could be done to enable children's independent access to resources. The creative area and the presentation of arts and crafts could have offered more challenge and opportunities for creativity to children. **(See recommendation 1 in Quality of Care and Support).**

The manager and staff had begun to develop the outdoor area; a play house, kitchen and tyres provided contexts for learning. Children could make choices from boxes of toys; however, children needed more loose parts and natural materials to extend their play and creativity. Procedures had been improved to support children's safety and welfare. A new kitchen had been fitted which supported good hygiene. Children had been helped to understand the importance of hand-washing using videos on the tablet computer, songs and relevant picture prompts. As a result children could do this well independently. Staff followed improved practices to help prevent the spread of infection between children.

We noted that the surface of babies' cot mattresses were not waterproof and therefore could not be cleaned quickly. **(See recommendation 1).**

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. The provider should ensure that all cots provided for the children are in sound condition and mattresses have waterproof coverings to enable thorough cleaning and control of infection.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare Up to the Age of 16, Standard 2 - A Safe Environment

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

The quality of staffing supporting children at Stepping Stones nursery was good. We found that staff were enthusiastic and hard-working. They were caring and supportive with the children.

Staff had accessed a range of internal and external training. They described positive learning on child protection which had made them think more deeply about information technology and safeguarding children. Other training had improved outcomes for children in relation to infection control and food hygiene procedures. Training on 'Getting it Right for Every Child' had resulted in improved attention to children's next steps in learning and development. One member of staff had developed the use of 'talking and thinking floor-books' very well. These are a method of engaging with children in planning activities and talking about their learning. She was now sharing this knowledge with the staff team.

There was more that staff could learn about the steps in children's learning in numeracy and literacy and how they could extend children's learning to its full potential. Not all training had been implemented to improve children's experiences, for example staff had attended training on children's schemas; however, staff were not yet confident in recognising and supporting patterns in children's play and interests. The manager could support this process better. **(See recommendation 1).**

Since the previous inspection recruitment procedures had been improved to ensure that all required checks were carried out on staff before starting employment; contributing to ensuring children are safe and protected from harm.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. The manager and staff should seek more in-depth training on how children learn and use this to develop children's experiences and support their progress.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare Up to the Age of 16 - Standard 12:
Confidence in Staff

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

The quality of management and leadership at Stepping Stones Nursery was adequate. The manager was continuing to build her own knowledge through studying for a further qualification.

The manager had established a friendly and happy environment for children and staff. Good relationships were established with parents and staff. Parents were welcomed into the nursery and information sharing communication supported children well. Parents were involved in nursery developments through information shared on Facebook which also included opportunities to put their views forward.

Further ideas and suggestions about what activities parents liked to do when they were young had been gathered by survey monkey and used to add to children's experiences outdoors. Staff had used a child friendly computer tablet application called 'Sock Puppet' to help children talk about what they liked in the nursery and what they wanted to do. We saw that children enjoyed participating in this.

Staff had begun to evaluate the success of planned experiences and reflect on outcomes for children with reference to 'Building the Ambition'. They observed children to evaluate their progress however these needed to be more frequent and play based.

At the previous inspection a requirement had been made to implement effective quality assurance systems to improve safety and improve outcomes for children. Action plans had been taken forward that had ensured that most requirements and recommendations had been met and children's safety had improved. However, this had been a slow process. As a result the environment indoors and out had begun to improve. The manager and staff had begun to familiarise themselves with 'How Good is Our Early learning and Childcare', however, the

manager had not continued to use quality assurance effectively to identify next steps in improvement plans. This requirement was not fully met and is continued in this report. **(See requirement 1).**

Management monitoring had ensured better infection control procedures and hand-washing routines to better protect children's health and wellbeing. More regular and in-depth monitoring and support now needed to be implemented to focus on children's learning and progress. The manager should do more to role model and support staff in sharing knowledge within the play room.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 1

1. To ensure children's and improve outcomes for children in the service the provider must implement an effective quality assurance system.

This is in order to comply with:

Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2001/210) Regulation 3, Regulation 4(1)(a).

Timescale: Within 3 months of receipt of this report.

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 3 – adequate

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Previous requirements

Requirement 1

The provider must ensure personal plans are in place for children clearly detailing how the health, welfare and safety needs of the child will be met. The plans must reflect the current needs of each child.

This is in order to comply with:

Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210) Regulation 4(1)(a) and 5(1).

Timescale: Within 4 weeks of receipt of this report.

This requirement was made on 1 April 2015.

Action taken on previous requirement

At this inspection we found that personal plans were more detailed and known to all staff. Children's individual needs were met and their learning better supported.

Met - outwith timescales

Requirement 2

To ensure children are safe and healthy the provider must develop and implement effective quality assurance systems for:

- a) Checking and monitoring completed medication records.
- b) Ensuring all medication in the premises is clearly labelled.
- c) Ensuring staff are competent in completing medication records and managing medication brought into the service.

This is in order to comply with:

Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210) Regulation 4(1)(a).

Timescale: Within 2 weeks of this report.

This requirement was made on 1 April 2015.

Action taken on previous requirement

We looked at a sample of medication forms and found these were clearly completed with all the necessary information recorded. Monitoring had ensured consistent procedures were well-known to staff.

Met - outwith timescales

Requirement 3

To ensure children's safety and health needs are met the provider must ensure appropriate procedures are implemented for the prevention and control of infection.

This must include ensuring:

- a) Children are properly supervised and supported whilst washing and drying hands.
- b) Children's hands and faces are cleaned after eating.
- c) The snack table is cleaned before use by each child.
- d) Staff follow best practice guidance when supporting children with personal care and following toileting accidents.
- e) The door between the toilets and where children eat snack is kept closed.
- f) Where items are stored in the toilets, this must be in such a manner that they are not open to aerosol contamination.
- g) Push button bins are not used.
- h) Open bins are only used to dispose of paper towels.

This is in order to comply with:

Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210) Regulation 4(1)(d).

Timescale: Within 48 hours of receipt of this report.

This requirement was made on 1 April 2015.

Action taken on previous requirement

All aspects of the requirement were now embedded into staff practice. Children were very good at washing their hands independently. The risks to children were minimised.

Met - outwith timescales

Requirement 4

In order to protect children the provider must ensure all the required checks are undertaken before staff start in employment.

This is in order to comply with:

Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210) Regulation 9(1) and (2)(a-c) and Regulation 13(1).

Timescale: Within 24 hours of receipt of this report.

This requirement was made on 1 April 2015.

Action taken on previous requirement

Safe recruitment procedures had now been implemented to protect the children. All checks on staff had been completed before staff commenced in post.

Met - outwith timescales

Requirement 5

To ensure children's safety and improve outcomes for children in the service the provider must implement an effective quality assurance system.

This is in order to comply with:

Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210) Regulation 3, Regulation 4(1)(a).

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare Up to the Age of 16 - Standard 5: Quality of Experience, Standard 12: Confidence in Staff, Standard 13: Improving the Service, and Standard 14: Well-Managed Service.

Timescale: To start within 2 weeks of receipt of this report.

This requirement was made on 1 April 2015.

Action taken on previous requirement

Progress had been made towards meeting this requirement. A range of monitoring had been undertaken in the service by the manager. This had mainly focused on areas that had been identified at the last inspection as needing improvement. Priority plans had supported improvements in children's experiences at snack and lunchtimes, the playroom layout and children's experiences and infection control procedures.

Since meeting these the manager had not carried out further quality assurance audits to identify future improvement plans. There needed to be a greater focus on the quality of children's learning experiences and improving outcomes for all children attending the nursery. Therefore this requirement is not fully met and will be reviewed again at the next inspection.

Not met

What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

Previous recommendations

Recommendation 1

Staff should develop the observation and assessment of children's learning and development to ensure:

- Activities and experiences are planned at the right level to support children's continued progress.
- Information about children's learning and development can be shared with parents.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare Up to the Age of 16 - Standard 4: Engaging with Children

This recommendation was made on 1 April 2015.

Action taken on previous recommendation

We found further progress had been made towards meeting this recommendation. The structure of observations had a greater focus on what children were learning and next steps in learning and development were often identified. A few observations were not meaningful and as a result we have recommended that staff access further training to help them identify and plan more securely to ensure children make progress.

This recommendation had been met

Recommendation 2

The service should develop snack and lunchtimes to:

- Be a social, learning experience for children.

- Include them in the preparation and tidying up.
- Ensure staff bottle feeding babies and young children warmly hold, engage with and support them.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare Up to the Age of 16 - Standard 2: Health and Wellbeing

This recommendation was made on 1 April 2015.

Action taken on previous recommendation

We found snack and lunch times had been developed and were now a social and learning experience for all children together. There was good interaction between staff and children and staff used the opportunity to extend children's learning. Children were involved in preparing for snack and independence was encouraged.

Recommendation 3

In order to provide good quality experiences for the children the manager and staff should ensure the environment is stimulating and challenging.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare Up to the Age of 16 - Standard 5: Quality of Experience

This recommendation was made on 1 April 2015.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Good progress had been made towards meeting this recommendation. The playroom now met the needs of toddlers and pre-school children as one group. Reducing duplication of activities meant that a greater range of activities were available. Children could now easily access books in the book corner and enjoyed reading books alone and in small groups with staff. The mark making table was improved and interested children in mark making. The children used the home corner well for their imaginative games. This recommendation had been met.

Recommendation 4

In order to meet children's welfare needs an effective quality assurance system should be put in place to ensure children's nappies are changed as required and a record of this is kept.

This recommendation was made on 22 April 2015.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The changing of children's nappies was now recorded and showed that nappies were changed regularly. Management monitoring had ensured that good practice was now embedded. The recommendation was met.

Complaints

Please see Care Inspectorate website (www.careinspectorate.com) for details of complaints about the service which have been upheld.

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
7 Dec 2015	Unannounced	Care and support	Not assessed
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
18 Dec 2015	Re-grade	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	3 - Adequate
		Staffing	2 - Weak
		Management and leadership	2 - Weak
1 Apr 2015	Unannounced	Care and support	2 - Weak
		Environment	1 - Unsatisfactory
		Staffing	2 - Weak
		Management and leadership	1 - Unsatisfactory
3 Apr 2014	Unannounced	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
10 Apr 2013	Unannounced	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	3 - Adequate
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
16 May 2012	Unannounced	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
8 Jun 2011	Unannounced	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	3 - Adequate

Date	Type	Gradings	
		Staffing Management and leadership	3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate
1 Mar 2011	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	2 - Weak 2 - Weak 2 - Weak 2 - Weak
24 Aug 2010	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	1 - Unsatisfactory 3 - Adequate 2 - Weak 1 - Unsatisfactory

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