



Inspection Report

Stepping Stones Little Nippers Day Care

**Golden Gate
Ty Glas Avenue
Llanishen
Cardiff
CF14 5DX**



Date Inspection Completed

18/05/2021

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About Stepping Stones Little Nippers Day Care

Type of care provided	Children's Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Provider	Stepping Stones 4 Schools LLP
Registered places	50
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	This is the first inspection of this service since registration.
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	This is a service that does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh Language. It does not anticipate, identify or meet the Welsh language needs of children who use, or intend to use the service. We recommend that the service provider considers the Welsh Government's 'More Than Just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh Language in social care.'

Summary

This is an inspection undertaken during the Covid 19 pandemic; therefore, we have focused on the priority areas for this nursery and not the full quality framework.

Children are happy and enjoy their time at the nursery. They are able to make choices and decisions about their care and play. Children have opportunities to become independent and develop their individual skills through a range of quality experiences and play. Children form close relationships with staff and make friends with each other. This makes them feel safe and secure.

Staff have a good understanding of how to keep children safe and healthy. They are friendly, kind and attentive to children. Staff plan for a wide variety of activities and keep very effective records of children's progress.

The environment is clean, welcoming and secure. It is well organised to support children's play and independence. There is a good assortment of toys and resources to promote children's development.

People who run the nursery have suitable policies and procedures in place, although a small number of these would benefit from reviewing and updating. Staff management requires some improvement to meet the National Minimum Standards.

Well-being

Children express themselves confidently and are listened to which makes them feel valued. They move around easily and quickly engage in the activities available to them. Children are able to make suggestions to influence their play. For example, during their water play, one child asked if they could put some toy animals in the water, a staff member took them to find some sea creatures.

Children enjoy being with the staff and their friends. Younger children climb onto staff members' laps to enjoy a cuddle and cosy story time session. Children play happily together or alongside each other. We saw a group of children excitedly role play a trip to the beach. The group cheered and giggled as one child said, 'Yippee, it's time to go swimming'. Children are familiar with the daily routines of nursery. They line up calmly before lunchtime and outdoor play.

Children have fun and receive good play opportunities. Activities provide challenge and encourage children to problem solve. Children concentrate on their play for an appropriate amount of time. We saw one child persevere in building a tall tower, changing how they stacked the blocks to make the tower more stable. They clearly valued the encouragement and praise from a staff member. Children are beginning to understand their feelings and are becoming sensitive to the feelings of others. We saw children readily sharing and taking turns on scooters outside.

Children learn self-help skills and are encouraged to carry out tasks independently, which enhances their self-esteem. Older children put on and take off their own coats and shoes. Younger children attempt tasks such as pouring paint into pallets, and take pride in their achievements when they succeed. At meal times, children are learning to or can already feed themselves. Children help to tidy up when they have finished playing.

Care and Development

Staff have good knowledge of how to keep children safe and healthy. They have adapted well to new policies and procedures to help keep children safe during the Covid 19 pandemic. Staff use good hand hygiene and effectively implement rigorous cleaning procedures. They ensure that children frequently wash their hands for an appropriate amount of time. Meals provided are healthy and nutritious. We saw children thoroughly enjoy a home cooked meal of chicken curry for lunch. There are robust systems in place to manage children's food allergies and individual dietary requirements. Staff know how to raise safeguarding concerns. They speak confidently about safeguarding procedures and know that the manager will respond to any concerns raised. Regular fire drills practices ensure that staff and children are aware of how to evacuate the premises safely.

Staff interact with children well. They care for children in a warm and responsive way. Staff have a sound understanding of child development, and its impact on children's behaviour. They give children clear and simple explanations to reinforce positive behaviour and discourage any unwanted behaviour. We heard staff praise children when they help tidy up, are kind towards their friends and succeed at a task. Staff act as good role models at all times.

Staff know children well and understand their individual needs and likes. They speak knowledgably about the children in their group. Staff plan a very good range of activities that appeal to children. They evaluate activities, based on children's engagement and enjoyment, which helps them to plan successfully for future activities. Staff regularly observe children's play and learning. They keep detailed individual records to ensure that children develop and progress well. Staff play alongside children and naturally promote their learning. For example, we saw a staff member helping a child to recognise numbers, asking '*what number is this?*' as they played with numbered beakers in the water tray.

Environment

The environment is safe and secure and provides ample space for children to play and learn. There are risk assessments in place for all areas of the nursery and for specific toys and resources. Staff are risk aware and deal with potential hazards promptly. We saw a staff member quickly wipe up a water spill to prevent anyone from slipping. Routine maintenance checks for the building and appliances are undertaken. Staff maintain a record of visitors and lock external doors and gates to keep children safe.

The environment is clean and well maintained. It provides light, bright and spacious areas for children to explore. Staff display children's work attractively around the nursery. This gives children a lovely sense of belonging and values their achievements. Indoors there is a wide range of good quality resources for all ages of children. Playrooms are organised to promote different areas of learning and include cosy book corners, role play areas and water play. The outdoor area lacked a variety of equipment and clearly defined areas to promote children's all round learning and development, particularly for babies. Staff meeting minutes identify the outdoor area as a priority for development.

Toys and equipment are cleaned and alternated regularly, which is especially important during the current pandemic. The environment is equipped with suitably sized furniture and resources. For example, child sized tables and chairs and named pegs for children's belongings. Low level storage units enable children access their playthings with ease, which further supports their independence.

Leadership and Management

People who run the nursery are motivated to develop good quality care provision for children and their families. The statement of purpose provides an accurate reflection of the nursery giving parents the information they need to make an informed choice. Required policies and procedures are in place and most are up to date and contain the required information.

In general, the nursery runs smoothly. Staff receive regular individual supervision meetings providing them with time to reflect on their strengths and discuss any training needs. They have completed mandatory training in first aid and child protection. Staff also receive further opportunities for learning and development. For example, staff told us that recent training in 'person centred approach', 'transition to play' and 'baby room leader', has been beneficial to their role. However, we found there was no named deputy in place to oversee the running of the nursery in the managers' absence. The staff to child ratio is maintained, but on a small number of occasions staff are not deployed effectively within the nursery to ensure the safety, welfare and well-being of children. Managers told us they were keen to rectify these issues with immediate effect.

People who run the nursery plan appropriately for improvement. They have systems in place to monitor the quality of care provided effectively. Regular staff meetings enable staff to reflect on practice and procedures and identify areas for improvement. There is a complaints policy in place. The nursery have not received any complaints. Parents we spoke to told us that they know what to do if they need to raise a complaint.

People who run the nursery ensure staff share daily information with parents. Parents receive a written record of their child's daily activities and are able to discuss any issues with staff at the end of their child's session. Parents we spoke to said that they were very happy with the nursery; their children are eager to attend and making good progress.

Recommendations to meet with the National Minimum Standards

R1. Continue to develop and resource the outdoor area to provide varied play opportunities and experiences for all children.

R2. Review and update policies.

R3. Review deployment of staff to ensure the safety, welfare and well-being of children at all times.

R4. Ensure there is a named deputy who is able to take charge in the absence of the person in charge.

Areas for improvement and action at, or since, the previous inspection. Achieved

Areas for improvement and action at, or since, the previous inspection. Not Achieved

None	
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Areas where priority action is required

None	
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Areas where improvement is required

None	
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