Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Step By Step Llanrumney Hall

Ball Road, Llanrumney, Cardiff, CF3 4JJ

07837798509

The inspection visit took place on 04/06/2026

Service Information:

Operated by:	Step By Step Childcare Limited
Care Type:	Children's Day Care
Registered places:	40
Main language(s):	English
Flying Start service:	Yes
Receive funding to provide early years part time education:	No
Promotion of Welsh language and culture:	The provider makes an effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and culture or is working towards a bilingual service.

Ratings:

Well-being	Good
Care & Development	Good
Environment	Good
Leadership & Management	Adequate

Summary:

Children are confident and settled, showing a strong sense of belonging within the setting. They make choices and express their views, which are listened to and acted upon by staff. Children form positive relationships with staff and peers, supporting their emotional well-being and helping them feel safe, valued and secure.

Staff promote children's health, safety and development effectively. They follow appropriate procedures for hygiene, safeguarding and daily routines, ensuring children's needs are met. Interactions are positive and supportive, helping children build confidence and develop social skills. Staff provide engaging experiences, supporting children's learning through play and encouraging their curiosity.

The environment is safe, welcoming and well organised, supporting children's play and development. Leaders ensure secure access and implement regular safety checks. Indoor and outdoor areas are well maintained and provide an interesting range of opportunities. Resources are of good quality, accessible and suitable, enabling children to explore, learn and develop effectively.

Leaders manage the setting appropriately and maintain positive relationships with staff, parents and external professionals. They have suitable systems to support day-to-day practice, review the quality of care and identify priorities for improvement.

Findings:

Well-being — Good

Children have good opportunities to make choices and express their preferences throughout the day. They confidently ask to access different areas of the setting, such as the garden, and staff respond positively. Children freely choose resources and activities, including selecting whether to have milk or water at snack time, which supports their ability to make simple decisions. Children happily express their likes and dislikes as they know these will be listened to and acted upon. For example, when a child said they did not like crackers, staff provided an alternative.
Children are settled, relaxed and show a strong sense of belonging within the setting. They form positive relationships with practitioners, confidently approaching them to share their achievements, such as proudly telling staff when they have used the toilet on their own. Children clearly feel safe and valued, demonstrated through their willingness to seek reassurance from staff when they feel unsettled or upset. Children develop close, trusting relationships with staff and enjoy sharing items and experiences with them.

Children interact well with one another and show positive social skills for their age. We observed children cooperating during play, such as working together to build an obstacle course and taking turns to complete it. Children develop friendships and enjoy shared experiences, for example, greeting each other with high fives and playing side by side. They show emerging empathy and are beginning to understand the needs of others.

Children are engaged, motivated and show enthusiasm in their play. They enjoy a range of activities, including exploring outdoors, caring for dolls and investigating natural items such as bugs and insects. Children sustain concentration for appropriate periods, for example, when carefully dressing dolls or engaging in imaginative play. They show curiosity and enjoyment in activities that reflect their interests.

Children develop good independence skills in line with their age and stage of development. They are encouraged to complete tasks for themselves, such as pouring drinks, using cutlery, and helping to tidy resources. Older children take responsibility for small tasks like handing out plates and returning items after use, while younger children are supported to feed themselves and practise self-care skills such as wiping their faces after eating. Children demonstrate growing confidence and self-reliance in daily routines such as lining up to go outside and sitting on the carpet during circle time.

Care & Development — Good

Staff promote children's health and safety through effective systems and consistent day-to-day practice. We saw staff following appropriate infection control procedures, including encouraging children to wash their hands before snacks and cleaning tables prior to mealtimes. Children are supported to manage their own hygiene, such as using nose wiping stations independently, which helps reduce the spread of infection. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of safeguarding responsibilities and confidently describe the action they would take if they had concerns about a child. Clear systems are in place to record accidents and incidents, capturing relevant detail and ensuring parents are informed. Sleep arrangements are managed safely, with regular checks undertaken for babies and toddlers.

Staff interact with children in a warm and positive manner, providing a caring and supportive environment. They act as good role models, consistently praising children for their efforts and reinforcing positive behaviour. For example, staff acknowledge good manners, sharing and children's attempts at new skills, helping to build confidence and self-esteem. Staff manage behaviour calmly, explaining expectations clearly when children speak over one another and encouraging respectful communication. They show a good knowledge of individual children, noticing when a child may be unsettled and offering comfort and reassurance. These thoughtful and responsive interactions help children feel understood and valued. As a result, children respond well to guidance and develop positive attitudes towards others.

Staff support children's play and learning effectively. They provide engaging, child-led experiences and often join children in their play. Staff extend learning through simple interactions, such as singing songs and talking to children about their play. These interactions support communication and development which encourage children to explore and be creative. Staff provide responsive, child-centred opportunities for play and learning. They are beginning to strengthen planning systems that will help clearly show how children's progress is monitored and how next steps are identified.

Environment — Good

Leaders make sure the setting is safe and secure for children. The front door is kept locked and parents must ring for attention before entering. Gates are used inside the setting to keep areas separate and help staff supervise children safely. Leaders regularly check for risks in areas such as the outdoor space, toilets and daily routines, and staff complete daily health and safety checks. They ensure fire safety is managed well, with regular fire drills and alarm tests that are clearly recorded.

Leaders provide a welcoming environment that meets children's needs effectively. The setting is light, bright and inviting, creating a positive first impression for children and families. Staff thoughtfully organise the indoor areas into age-appropriate zones, allowing children to move freely to access suitable activities. Leaders ensure the environment is child-centred, displaying photographs of children at play and their work, helping to create a sense of belonging. Leaders provide comfortable furnishings, including sofas, rugs and soft seating, to create a homely atmosphere where children can relax. Outdoor spaces offer a variety of opportunities for creative and physical play, such as messy play, den building and exploring nature. For example, younger children enjoy using clay in the art area, while older children talk enthusiastically about the different insects they regularly see on the plants outside. Some newer outdoors areas introduced to the setting, are not always used fully by children.

Leaders ensure children have access to a broad range of good quality resources that meet their developmental needs. We observed a variety of toys and equipment that are well maintained and most are readily accessible, enabling children to make independent choices in their play. Resources include real-life objects and natural materials, such as loose parts, plants and herbs, which encourage curiosity and sensory exploration. Staff provide meaningful opportunities for children to learn about the wider world through multicultural resources, including books, maps and dressing-up items. This supports children's awareness of diversity in a natural and engaging way.

Leadership & Management — Adequate

Leaders demonstrate an appropriate understanding of their responsibilities and maintain the day-to-day running of the setting effectively. The statement of purpose reflects the service provided and helps inform parents about the care available. Children's records are well organised and contain the relevant information, supporting continuity of care. Leaders ensure staff hold appropriate qualifications, with a clear overview displayed. During the inspection, we found that required ratios were not consistently maintained at busier times of the day. This may affect the quality of supervision and how quickly children's needs are met.

Leaders have suitable arrangements to review the quality of care and gather feedback. This review includes views from parents, staff, children and others, collected through methods such as questionnaires and informal discussions. Leaders have identified clear priorities for improvement, including working towards recognised accreditations to further enhance children's care and developing the use of a digital app to improve communication with parents.

Leaders manage staff appropriately on a day-to-day basis and staff report feeling supported in their roles. This contributes to a stable team and consistent care for children. Leaders complete annual appraisals with staff; however, not all staff have received formal supervisions. This means outcomes for children require improvement, as regular supervision helps staff strengthen practice, address development needs and provide consistent, high-quality care.

Leaders develop positive partnerships with parents and external professionals, supporting outcomes for children's well-being. Parents we spoke to gave very positive feedback, highlighting their trust in the staff team and satisfaction with the communication they receive. Leaders share regular updates about children's daily experiences, helping parents stay informed and strengthening positive relationships. Leaders also work appropriately with external agencies, such as the local authority to support children with emerging additional needs.

Areas identified for improvement

Where we identify **Areas for Improvement** but we have not found outcomes for people to be at immediate or significant risk, we discuss these with the provider. We expect the provider to take action and we will follow this up at the next inspection.

Where we find outcomes for people **require significant improvement** and/or there is risk to people's well-being we identify areas for **Priority Action**. In these circumstances we issue a Priority Action Notice(s) to the Provider, and they must take immediate steps to make improvements. We will inspect again within six months to check improvements have been made and outcomes for people have improved.

The table(s) below show the area(s) for priority action and/or those for improvement we have identified.

Summary of Areas for Improvement	Date identified
Children are potentially at risk because the provider does not formally monitor and review staff performance on a regular basis to ensure effective service delivery and children's safety.	04/06/26

CIW has not issued any Priority action notices following this inspection.

National Minimum Standards

Where we find the provider is not meeting the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care but there is no immediate or significant risk for people using the service, we highlight these as Recommendations to Meet National Minimum Standards.

We expect the provider to take action to address these and we will follow these up at the next inspection.

Standard	Recommendation(s)
Standard 7 - Opportunities for play and learning	Develop planning to consistently support children's next steps in development.
Standard 15 - Staffing ratios	Ensure a sufficient number of suitably qualified staff are deployed at all times to maintain required staffing ratios and support children's safety, supervision and well-being.

Best Practice

Where we think it helpful, we may make best practice recommendations. These are to encourage settings that are doing well to become even better at helping children thrive.

Recommendation(s)
Further develop the outdoors to ensure all areas are fully utilised by children.

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