Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Stepping Stones Playgroup C.I.C.

Libanus Primary School
Libanus Road
Blackwood
NP12 1EH



Date Inspection Completed

19/05/2022

Welsh Government © Crown copyright 2022.
You may use and re-use the information featured in this publication (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government License. You can view the Open Government License, on the National Archives website or you can write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk
You must reproduce our material accurately and not use it in a misleading context.

About Stepping Stones Playgroup C.I.C.

Type of care provided	Childrens Day Care Full Day Care
Registered Provider	Stepping Stones Playgroup C.I.C.
Registered places	18
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	First inspection since registration
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	No. 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 people /children who use, or intend to use their service.

Well-being	**Good**
Care and Development	**Good**
Environment	**Good**
Leadership and Management	**Good**

For further information on ratings, please see the end of this report

Summary

Children are happy and content at the setting. They very much enjoy their play and learning experiences, making their time at the setting interesting and fun. They have warm and positive relationships with staff who care for them and are developing friendships with their peers.

Care and development is good. Staff provide nurturing and effective care and interactions with children are consistently positive. Staff promote children's social development in a calm manner and ensure that children have access to a wide range of age-appropriate play activities.

The environment is safe, providing children with bright and spacious play areas. There are timely and effective health and safety checks and good maintenance of internal spaces. The rooms are bright and designed with children's needs in mind. Children also benefit from an enclosed outdoor area providing them with space for physical play activities.

Management of the setting is effective. Staff are appropriately qualified with opportunities for on - going training. Parents highly value the setting and the support they receive from staff.

Well-being Good

Children very much enjoy the time they spend at the setting. They know what to expect during sessions, as the daily routines are familiar to them. All children cope well with snack and lunchtime routines and use this time to chat with friends and staff. There are warm interactions between children and staff, and it is evident that there are warm bonds of affection. On numerous occasions, children engaged staff in conversations and approached them for reassurance.

Children enjoy and gain considerable pleasure in the play and learning opportunities available to them. There is a wide variety of play experiences and children enjoy the flexibility of choosing different things to do throughout the day. Children have good opportunities for imaginative play and enjoy sharing a range of role-play activities such as making food and drinks in the home corner, using building and construction materials and engaging in craft work. As sessions are primarily child led, children are therefore able to follow their interests and play preferences at all times.

Children are considerate of others and in line with their age and stage of development, learning to share, co-operate and take turns when playing. They show sensitivity towards others and enjoy playing with their peers. We observed children playing together building a tower and sharing craft resources. We also saw children settle well to listen to a story, enthusiastically joining in with familiar parts and phrases.

Children enjoy being independent and their self-help skills are developing well. Many children enjoy taking responsibility for tidying toys away and all children enjoy selecting their own toys without adult assistance. Children find their own belongings and help to clear away after eating. Nearly all children understand socially acceptable behaviour and show kindness and respect to others.

Care and Development — Good

Staff understand their roles and responsibilities within the setting. In relation to safeguarding, they are aware of their role in keeping children safe and reporting concerns they may have to managers. Staff have current paediatric first aid training so can deal with minor injuries. They complete daily health and safety checks of the premises to identify and minimise possible risks to children. Accident and incident records are kept, however they are stored in one file and not evaluated regularly. Staff carry out fire evacuation drills at suitable intervals so that children are aware of how to leave the building safely.

The behaviour management policy outlines positive strategies to use with children and staff follow this guidance, always treating each other and children with respect. We heard positive language from staff and praise of children's behaviour and accomplishments to promote children's confidence and self-esteem.

Promotion of children's play and learning is good. Staff understand the importance of a broad range of play experiences for children, so that their time at the setting is interesting, stimulating and fun. There is effective activity planning and staff use observations to track the progress of children. Staff keep records of children's learning and development and share these with parents. For children requiring additional support, staff work in partnership with other professionals to ensure best outcomes for children.

Environment — Good

The environment is safe, secure and suitable for the needs of children who use the setting. The setting operates from a demountable building within the school grounds. Currently parents do not access the building and there are alternative arrangements for drop off and collection of children. Registers record the times that children arrive at and leave the setting.

People who run the setting ensure the environment is clean and safe. Staff carry out cleaning and sanitising duties as needed throughout the sessions. Staff employed by the school also clean the facilities each day. The setting is welcoming and provides light and bright areas for children to explore. There is a good range of quality resources and a rich environment for play and learning. Children can access all furniture and equipment easily, which supports their independence. Equipment and resources are plentiful and are appropriate for the stage of development of all the children, promoting curiosity and discovery.

People who run the setting ensure that there is a good range of indoor and outdoor resources to promote children's all – round development. The outside area includes a small, dedicated area for the setting children, as well as use of the school yard, and woodland area. Children's work is celebrated within the setting with various displays based on seasonal themes. Resources and equipment are labelled at child height to enable them to choose when playing freely.

Leadership and Management — Good

The statement of purpose provides good information on the setting. This means that parents can make an informed choice about the suitability of the setting for their child. There is an organised policy file containing a good range of policies to support the smooth operation of the setting, however policies are not dated to show when they were last reviewed. There are appropriate record keeping systems in relation to contracts and parents sign permission for photographs and observations.

People who run the setting plan appropriately for improvement. As the setting is within the first year of operation, a quality of care report is not yet complete. However, the responsible individual has a vision for the setting and regularly evaluates the quality of the service provided. There is a complaints policy in place should parents wish to raise an issue.

Management of the setting is effective. The small staff team is appropriately qualified and as well as core training, have access to additional training to expand their knowledge and practice skills. There are regular team meetings so staff can discuss issues relating to the running of the setting. The staff team work well together to supervise and support children.

Partnership with parents and agencies are strong. Parents are appreciative of the setting and the service they provide. There are links with key professionals and agencies to ensure appropriate support is available for children.

Recommendations to meet with the National Minimum Standards

R1. Ensure policies and procedures are dated to show when they were last reviewed

R2. Store accident and incident records separately, and evaluate to identify any patterns

Summary of Non-Compliance	
Status	**What each means**
New	This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.
Reviewed	Compliance was reviewed at this inspection and was not achieved. The target date for compliance is in the future and will be tested at next inspection.
Not Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.
Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was achieved.

We respond to non-compliance with regulations where poor outcomes for people, and / or risk to people's well-being are identified by issuing Priority Action Notice (s).

The provider must take immediate steps to address this and make improvements. Where providers fail to take priority action by the target date we may escalate the matter to an Improvement and Enforcement Panel.

Priority Action Notice(s)		
Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A

Where we find non-compliance with regulations but no immediate or significant risk for people using the service is identified we highlight these as Areas for Improvement.

We expect the provider to take action to rectify this and we will follow this up at the next inspection. Where the provider has failed to make the necessary improvements we will escalate the matter by issuing a Priority Action Notice.

Area(s) for Improvement		
Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A

Ratings	What the ratings mean
Excellent	These are services which are committed to ongoing improvement with many strengths, including significant examples of sector leading practice and innovation. These services deliver high quality care and support and are able to demonstrate that they make a strong contribution to improving children's well-being.
Good	These are services with strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement. They consistently exceed basic requirements, delivering positive outcomes for children and actively promote their well-being.
Adequate	These are services where strengths outweigh areas for improvement. They are safe and meet basic requirements but improvements are required to promote well-being and improve outcomes for children.
Poor	These are services where important areas for improvement outweigh strengths and there are significant examples of non-compliance that impact negatively on children's well-being. Where services are poor we will take enforcement action and issue a non-compliance notice.

Date Published 21/06/2022