



First Steps Orrishmere Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 307139
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Inspector Janice Shaw

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Registered person First Steps Orrishmere Pre-School
Type of inspection Integrated
Type of care Sessional care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

First Steps Pre-school is managed by a voluntary management committee, made up of parents of children at the pre-school and members of the local community. The pre-school opened in 1992 and operates from the scout headquarters on the Orrishmere estate, Cheadle Hulme. The pre-school serves a wide area.

A maximum of 20 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 39 children from two to five years old on roll. This includes 15 funded children.

Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group opens eight sessions a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.15 until 11.45 each week day morning and from 13.00 until 15.30 on Monday, Tuesday. and Thursday. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

There are four part time staff working with the children, three of whom have early years qualifications and one member of staff is currently on a training programme. The setting receives support from a teacher from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very healthy and hygienic environment. Staff employ thorough routines and procedures to ensure all areas are clean and hygienically maintained at all times, ensuring children are kept healthy. Children gain an effective understanding of hygiene and a real desire to become increasingly independent in their personal care. They show a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy as they spend time washing their hands after the toilet or before snacks and are captivated whilst exploring the properties of the water and soap. Staff are available to support the younger children gain practical skills, such as turn off the taps to save water and putting on their own sun hats. Children's health is exceptionally well protected because all staff are well informed about their medical conditions and secure emergency procedures are in place.

Children make excellent progress in their physical development; they have daily access to an extensive range of physical play activities. Staff make excellent use of the main hall and outside play area to provide a vast range of large physical activities, which enable children to develop their skills extremely well. They competently climb, balance, travel over, under and through the large interesting equipment available, providing them with plenty of challenge. They develop self-confidence in their physical skills as they move with control and co-ordination. They enjoy running, using balancing pots and throwing balls outside, and they are beginning to recognise the changes that happen to their bodies when active. Staff are able to skilfully balance the supervision of children and equipment with the need to allow children to take risks and develop skills. The very good use of equipment and practical life exercises to develop competent small motor control ensures that children can confidently handle small tools, such as writing implements, brushes and small construction sets with considerable skill.

Children enjoy healthy snacks and drinks mid-session. They discuss and look at different fruit at snack time and conversations encourage children to understand the benefits of healthy eating. Effective arrangements are in place to cater effectively for children who have special dietary requirements. Children independently access drinking water regularly; they know that when they select cups of water from the round bowl they should place the empty cups in the square bowl. Staff are vigilant about offering children extra drinks during hot weather and children appreciate the

reminders to have a drink of water to refresh themselves.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well maintained, welcoming and child-friendly environment. They are highly motivated, excited and eager to participate as they arrive. Children have access to an extensive range of high quality toys and equipment which is continually built upon. They play with equipment which is safe and well made, many in natural materials. Children benefit from the meaningful organisation of equipment linked to curriculum areas. There are many useful artefacts and real objects allowing children to explore the world around them and are all attractively displayed at children's height. This wide range of resources supports an excellent programme of themes and activities.

Safety is given a high priority. Children are cared for within a safe environment as staff employ rigorous safety policies and procedures to ensure children's safety at all times. Children learn to keep themselves safe through discussion with staff, for example, about the importance of not running indoors or to use toys and equipment safely. Equipment is checked regularly for safety and hygiene ensuring children are safe at all times. Regular safety checks take place and whilst emergency evacuation practices are held they are not always appropriately recorded. Children are well protected as the staff have a secure understanding about their role and responsibility with regards to child protection issues. All relevant information and contact details to safeguard the welfare of children are in place.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are happy and settled and are eager to attend and relish their time in the setting. They learn through hands on experiences, investigation and questioning, and are encouraged to be actively involved in all areas of their learning. Children show high levels of independence, curiosity, and concentration and use all their senses to actively explore a stimulating range of developmentally appropriate indoor and outdoor experiences. They enjoy exploring different mediums, such as clay, paint, play dough and pulses, and use a wide range of appropriately sized tools effectively. All children access and benefit from the wide range of activities and opportunities, which promote their very good learning and overall development.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are fully involved and engrossed in an exciting range of highly innovative and developmentally appropriate indoor and outdoor activities. Children's learning is very well supported by a highly skilled and motivated staff team, and an extensive range of resources and play experiences. Children benefit greatly from the excellent staff communication and interaction. They are well challenged by a range of worthwhile activities linked to the

six areas of learning. Staff skilfully observe children's efforts and respond appropriately to them. For example, they sit with children on a one to one basis ensuring they can complete the chosen tasks satisfactorily. Staff have high expectations, explain clearly and encourage children to think. They have a very clear understanding of how children learn and of the next possible steps in their development. Teaching is rooted in expert knowledge of the Foundation Stage, varied and exciting. Staff continually observe, monitor and record children's achievements, and use these well to plan experiences that help children take the next steps in their learning. All adults working with the children give clear and suitable responses to their questions; for example, when looking at a tractor in circle time they discuss with a child the size of the wheels and how the large wheels at the back help the tractor to travel over rough and stony ground. Long, medium and short term plans, plus themes and activities, are evaluated promptly and discussed at regular staff meetings. Children's language is very effectively developed by staff maintaining a dialogue with them and the use of skilful questioning techniques to promote and extend their thinking.

All children arrive happy, excited and extremely confident showing an eagerness to learn and try the new experiences offered to them. Their independence skills are well nurtured as they play effectively on their own or with others. Children have a very positive attitude, they are keen to learn, try new skills and they make very good progress towards the early learning goals. Children show care and concern for one another as they ask each other how they are and greet a late arrival excitedly. Children's behaviour is very good; they are polite, well-mannered and show an eagerness in the activities and opportunities offered to them. They are inquisitive and interested in new experiences. Children have appropriate chances to reflect on others at play and staff support this learning in a positive manner, intervening only when necessary. They make independent choices and select toys and equipment from those on offer.

During circle time children sit quietly and listen to others as they speak and many children are keen to contribute, demonstrating how they communicate effectively and are confident, articulate speakers. They understand that learning to listen is very important and try very hard to listen attentively to one another. Children have in depth conversations with one another discussing what they did at the week-end and describing the plan of their play. Older children skilfully simplify their sentences to help younger children understand what is happening. Children adeptly use marks to represent ideas, to write their names and other small words. A few older children competently copied short sentences to illustrate their drawings.

In the programme for mathematics, children are developing an extensive understanding of number, size and space through activities and equipment, which are designed to build on what they know and challenge them to explore further. They are involved in developing their understanding of mathematical concepts, such as symmetry, sequencing, pattern making and consider questions, such as 'how many more', 'next to', through a variety of planned activities. Children gain confidence in using numbers in everyday happenings. During circle time children identify the date and look for the numbers to put in the calendar. They successfully count objects and match them to the wooden letters or the large number chart. Most children can count to 20 and many beyond; one child has a secure understanding of the properties up to

Children are engaged in a range of themes and activities that enable them to look at the wider world and the world they live in. A recent theme involved them looking at the animal homes linked to a visit to a children's farm. One child tells a visitor how much he enjoyed stroking the pot bellied pig and used his arms to illustrate how enormous it was. Whilst another describes the day old chicks and cups his hands to show how they should be held. The presence of a farm interest table and another for animal homes, further develops children's knowledge. Flexibility in the planning allows for changes in planned activities; in a particularly hot week, children make paper fans to keep them cool and experiment with waving them quickly, then slowly discussing with staff and other children the differences. Children talk about past and present events in their lives; they look forward to school in September and the leaver's concert later in the week. One child says he hopes he has wet, flat sand on his holidays as that is the best for castles; a member of staff reminds him that for the sand-wheel they had found that didn't work and needed dry sand children agree as they remember what happened

Children's imaginary play is exceptionally well developed. They use the large role play areas, which are well stocked, to allow children to develop their play in depth. Recipe books are available to help them plan menus, directories by the phone and three beds allowing a 'whole pretend family' to go to sleep at the same time. In the office area children write messages, make appointments, use the toy computers and fill envelopes for party invitations. Children access a wide and varied range of creative resources and produce interesting and unique pieces of art and craft work; this includes a variety of tactile materials and experiences. They draw pictures of their recent farm visit with credible accuracy.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Relationships are very effective at all levels. Children understand their own needs and begin to respect the needs of others as they help each other with their 'work' and show sympathy to a child who hurt himself. Children are confident, self-assured and can work and play well on their own or with others. They freely discuss their emotions with an adult and each other, and draw happy faces and discuss smiles knowledgeably. Staff are accomplished and sensitive in their management of children and their behaviour. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children's behaviour is exemplary. Their very good behaviour is a direct result of highly effective staff interaction and involvement with children in their activities. Children receive lots of positive praise and encouragement for their efforts, attempts and achievements, aiding the development of their self-confidence and self-esteem. Staff are excellent role models, showing respect and consideration for children, each other, and parents. Children are extremely polite, and can be heard saying please, thank you and excuse me frequently during the session.

Children develop a sense of belonging as the books and displays reflect the community from which they come. Children's equality of opportunity is given a very

high priority and is very well addressed. All children are included in all the activities provided, their individual needs and circumstances are well known and provided for by staff. Children are developing a good understanding of the wider world through various themes and visitors to the setting; for example, one parent came in to help children develop an awareness of Divali. Children show great care and concern for one another as they greet each other excitedly when a child arrives late. This very positive approach fosters children's understanding of equality extremely well.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. This contributes positively to the children's progress in their overall development, and in their progress towards the early learning goals. They receive plenty of very good information about the setting and what it has to offer in terms of care and education. Very good use is made of the communal entrance area, making this welcoming to children and their parents as they arrive. They speak very appreciatively about the way staff support children's care and educational needs, and can describe many areas in which their children have made good progress because of how staff encourage and support them. This highly effective communication between parents, carers and staff helps to promote children's learning and progress towards the early learning goals, along with their overall development and well-being.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management of the provision is outstanding. The person in charge, and along with all staff work effectively together to ensure that children are provided with high quality care and education. Staff are well deployed in the setting allowing children to receive appropriate adult attention. They are very clear about their individual roles and responsibilities within the group on a daily basis and staff team as a whole.

Knowledgeable staff understand and follow the setting's comprehensive policies and procedures to promote children's well-being and supporting them to develop their potential. Children are well protected because of the secure recruitment procedures in place. Children benefit from the positive and proactive approach of the staff, who have a strong commitment to the setting and the Foundation Stage curriculum. Outcomes for children are promoted effectively because staff are caring, knowledgeable about early years care and education, and committed to continually improving the service they offer the children. Staff knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework is secure, although it is not specifically included in the planning for children under three.

The planning ensures that children receive a well-balanced session with plenty of variety between quiet and more boisterous activities, both indoors and when playing outside. This allows all areas of children's development, care and learning to be fostered effectively. The playroom is very well organised and available space is well planned to maximise play opportunities for children. All legally required documentation, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being, is in place and is well maintained. The setting works well in practice to promote children's

health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides very well.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last combined inspection the setting was required to ensure that fresh drinking water was freely available to children. This is now provided on a table and children can freely choose when they need a drink which effectively fosters their independence skills. A point for consideration within the nursery education recommended that children have more opportunities to imitate sounds, discuss similarities in rhyming words and link sounds to letters of the alphabet. Children can now often be heard playing with sounds and they make very good attempts to link these to letters of the alphabet. They show interest in rhyming words when listening to stories and in discussion in small groups and spontaneously link this into their play.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that the emergency evacuation records are appropriately recorded.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk