

First Footsteps Limited (Leyland)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY257949
Inspection date	26 March 2007
Inspector	Christine Fraser Turner
Setting Address	53 Fox Lane, Leyland, Lancashire, PR25 1HA
Telephone number	01772 454640
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Registered person	First Footsteps Ltd
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

First Footsteps (Leyland) is one of five nurseries run by First Footsteps Ltd. It opened in 2003 and operates from six rooms in a detached listed building. The nursery is situated in Leyland. A maximum of 85 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The setting is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00 all year and closed for one week between Christmas and New Year. All children share access to two secure enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 85 children aged from birth to under five years on roll. Children come from Leyland and the surrounding districts.

The nursery employs 20 childcare staff including the manager. There are 14 staff with relevant childcare qualifications and six staff working towards a relevant qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are mainly well protected from infection and are well taken care of if they have an accident or become ill in the setting. They follow good hygiene routines, for example, washing their hands before meals. However, the organisation of the sleep areas and bedding does not promote best practice because there is insufficient space between the mattresses to allow staff to move freely and children are sleeping too close to each to reduce risk of cross infection.

Children are well nourished, they eat fresh vegetables and enjoy fresh food cooked on the premises. They benefit from a varied menu which is shared with parents. Children have their health and dietary needs met well because staff follow specific request from parents. The organisation of meal times is inconsistent and children are not always encouraged to become independent at meal times, for example, staff pour out the drinks for older children who are able to pour their own drinks. However, at lunchtime children are encouraged to serve their own vegetables enabling them to choose how much they want to eat.

Children are able to sleep and rest according to their needs. Individual sleep routines are followed and discussed with parents. Comfortable seating is available for older children, for example, child sized settees or large cushions enabling children to sit and rest whenever they feel tired. Additional drinks are available to children during the day.

Children enjoy physical activity both in and out of doors. Older children are confident to climb, slide and crawl as they use the climbing frame. They are able to negotiate pathways following the roadway as they ride bikes and scooters. They develop their small motor skills as they confidently cut with scissors, for example, cutting paper into tiny pieces.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure, safe indoor and outdoor environment. Suitable policies, procedures and risk assessments are in place. Clear fire evacuation procedures are displayed on the wall and there are clear records of the checks on fire fighting equipment and that fire doors are clear. However, fire drills are not recorded. There is information on display in the entrance hall on staff but not all the information is up to date. Examples of children's art work are on display in nursery, creating a bright environment.

Children use suitable and safe equipment which is checked regularly by staff. Children benefit from accessible resources, for example, toys stored in labelled containers on open shelves or staff making resources readily available to younger children giving them choices. However, there are no aprons to keep children dry when playing in the water tray.

Children are kept safe on outings and clear written procedures are in place. Children are learning to keep themselves safe, for example, as staff explain to children of the dangers in the kitchen when they are baking and tell them that it is out of bounds.

Children are safeguarded because staff understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into place when necessary. Staff have recently attended training on child protection and have up to date knowledge on procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children want to come to nursery and most children settle in the setting through mainly appropriate support from staff.

Children are involved in a broad range of planned activities and spontaneous events which support their development and learning. Staff use relevant, age appropriate documents, for example 'Birth to three matters' framework for children under three and the Foundation Stage for children aged three and over to plan for children's play.

Children enjoy listening and joining in with nursery rhymes as staff share books with children. They use their imagination as they take part in role play in the home corner. They experiment with sound as they play independently with the musical instruments. Resources are made readily available for children of all ages, for example, staff putting appropriate toys within reach for non mobile babies. Children are interested in what is happening in the nursery and bring ideas into nursery to share with the other children triggered by what they have been doing in nursery. For example, the observational paintings of daffodils promoted one child to bring a magazine picture from home on pink blossom which prompted another activity for children to observe and paint the blossom. Staff plan for outdoor play and children gain valuable experiences, for example, using paper and crayons to get patterns from the wall and looking at the weather.

Children make positive relationships with each other as they play together. Staff build positive relationships with children as they help children wave good-bye to parents.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a satisfactory understanding of the Foundation Stage overall. Children benefit from a mainly well planned learning environment and programme of activities that covers all areas of learning. Focus activities have clear learning intentions and general evaluations are completed following activities but these plans do not show any differentiation for children at different stages of development. Staff observe and record children's progress towards the early learning goals; however staff do not identify individual children's next steps for learning or use the observations to inform the planning.

Children are confident to choose their own activities. They share information about their lives at home at circle time. They are encouraged to be independent and manage their own needs and are learning to put on their own coats.

Children speak confidently and most children listen well at story time. Children are able to recognise their name as they find their place at the table from the name card provided. Children are developing pencil control, for example, as they draw pictures of the sun as part of the topic on weather.

Children learn to count as they sing songs, such as, five currant buns. They are encouraged to calculate as staff pose questions such as 'how many more?' when referring to the number of buns needed to make five. They are learning to count backward as they count down to launch the rocket. Children learn about shape as they complete puzzles. Children use the construction area regularly as they build using three dimensional shapes.

Children have first hand experiences at looking closely at living things, for example, they are watching tadpoles develop at the moment. They look closely at the weather as part of their

current topic. They are learning about the use of technology, for example, the telephone and computer in the home corner.

Children join in with singing and take part in ring games. They use their imagination as they play together in the home corner and create their own games. They explore media and materials as they play in the water, sand and paint pictures.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by staff who work with parents to meet individual children's needs and ensure they are fully included in the life of the setting. Staff work together and include parents in the smooth transition for children as they progress through nursery. Children feel a sense of belonging as they are greeted by staff as they arrive at nursery. They learn about the local community through visits to the local library and supermarket. Children benefit from a suitable range of resources and activities to promote diversity, for example, eating with chopsticks as they taste Chinese food when celebrating Chinese New Year.

Children mainly respond to appropriate expectation from their behaviour and staff praise children for wanted behaviour. However, the current organisation of the morning routine in the pre-school room involves long periods of time where the children are sitting, leading to some children becoming restless and presenting unwanted behaviour. Children play harmoniously together as they join in with ring games, for example, 'The Farmers in the Den' or co-operating in role play in the home corner. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. They receive information on the setting and are kept informed of current events via news letters. Parents are encouraged to share what they know about their child with staff by completing the relevant booklet. They are kept well informed about their child's daily routine and receive daily feed back on their child's day. Children benefit from staff taking time to listen to parents about how the child has been at home and making any necessary adjustments to the child's daily routine.

Parents do not receive information on the Foundation Stage. Discussions with parents state that they are pleased that staff share information as they progress from room to room. Children benefit by staff making some links with parents to be involved in their child's learning, for example, taking the toy cat home and sharing her adventures with the children. Parents also bring things to nursery that children are interested in, such as, tadpoles.

During the inspection, parents offered positive comments saying that staff were approachable and any items raised had been addressed.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are well protected and cared for by staff with knowledge and understanding of child development. Staff are committed to ongoing development through training and children under three now benefit from staff using their knowledge on 'Birth to three matters' to plan activities for children.

The adult-child ratio positively supports children and detailed plans are in place to cover staff absence. Overall, time, space and staff deployment contributes to children's satisfactory health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and ability to take an active part in the setting. Most policies and procedures work in practise. However, there is no fire record and not all records are stored confidentially within the rooms. Record keeping systems are used well to meet children's care needs.

The quality of leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. There is a clear statement in the information booklet stating that the nursery follows the Foundation Stage for funded children. A detailed induction programme and staff appraisal systems are in place to promote the ongoing development of staff. However, no steps have been taken to meet staff's individual identified training needs both for staff knowledge relating to the National Standards and for the Foundation Stage. Staff working with the Foundation Stage are able to identify areas of strengths in the educational provision, for example, planning play for the outdoor area. They are also able to identify areas where they need to improve.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to: develop opportunities for children's play, planning and development records; develop resources including diversity; ensure the safety of unguarded radiators and staff deployment at break times; develop a statement about bullying.

Children now have a suitable range of planned play opportunities using suitable plans and children's individual development is recorded. An increase in resources, including resources that promote diversity, ensures that children now have access to a increased range of suitable toys. Children's safety has been enhanced through the provision of radiator guards and staff breaks are now staggered to ensure there are sufficient staff available to work with children. The behaviour management policy has been improved through the inclusion of a statement on bullying.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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.

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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 all children that require a sleep use individual bedding and there is sufficient space between the mattresses to enable staff to move freely and prevent cross infection
- consistently encourage children's independence at meal times
- ensure that all fire drills are fully recorded with outcomes.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

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

- ensure next steps for children's learning are identified and used to inform the planning
- provide information on the Foundation Stage for parents
- review the organisation of morning routine in the pre-school room to ensure that children are not sitting for prolonged periods of time
- ensure identified staff training needs are met (also applies to care).

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk