



## First Steps Children's Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	142863
<b>Inspection date</b>	27 February 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Jennifer Barton
<b>Setting Address</b>	148 Hendford Hill, Yeovil, Somerset, BA20 2RG
<b>Telephone number</b>	(01935) 474314
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<b>Registered person</b>	Heather Norris and Penny Sealey
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 outstanding. 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 Day Nursery opened approximately 16 years ago. It is privately owned and jointly operated by two managers. The nursery is situated in a residential area on the outskirts of the centre of the town of Yeovil in Somerset. The property has been converted from a domestic dwelling and is now entirely used for child care purposes. The baby room is on the ground floor and can accommodate nine children aged from birth to two years. The two to three-year-olds have use of three linked rooms and these are also on the ground floor and can accommodate 12 children. Kitchen and sleeping facilities on the ground floor are shared between these rooms. The pre-school rooms also interlinked are on the first floor and include toilets. Children also have access to a secure rear garden for outdoor play. The nursery provides meals and snacks for children including a hot cooked lunch.

The nursery is open all year round closing only for bank holidays. It is open from 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday. There are currently 59 children on roll and of these 24 children are in receipt of funding.

Fifteen staff are employed to work with the children and all have the appropriate early years and childcare qualifications. The nursery receives support from the Local Authority and is a member of the Day Nursery Association.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive in a healthy environment where they frequently access fresh air. All babies and children regularly participate in a wide variety of daily physical activities both structured and free play. This ensures they have plenty of exercise to develop their physical skills which contributes to their good health. Children learn about changes to their bodies through well planned activities and are aware of how exercise makes them feel tired and thirsty. Children are able to access their own water bottles throughout the day and babies are regularly offered drinks which enables individual requirements to be met.

Children are very well protected from illness and infection through excellent policies and procedures. Staff ensure parents understand the procedures for children not attending so they not only protect their children but others. Accurate accident and medication records ensure children are well cared for. Written consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment is obtained so staff can act in the best interest of the child. Children's health is enhanced by all staff's up to date first aid skills and procedures to check first aid resources which ensures minor accidents can be dealt with effectively.

Children benefit greatly from extremely high standards of hygiene. Premises and equipment are cleaned regularly through the day. Children are encouraged to wash their hands before handling food, after visits to the toilet and messy play. Children are able to access liquid antibacterial soap and disposable towels to prevent cross contamination. Very thorough procedures for nappy changing and using antibacterial wipes and tissues regularly, ensure babies and young children are protected from the spread of infection.

Children enjoy very healthy and nutritious meals, snacks and drinks. Children are well nourished as they are provided with an excellent well balanced cooked lunch which contains freshly cooked wholesome food including a variety of fruit and vegetables. Children learn about healthy foods through discussion and planned activities and have opportunities to grow vegetables in the garden. Children are well aware that healthy eating and looking after your body is good and know why the extremely good procedure of cleaning their teeth after lunch is completed.

## **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. Very thorough and comprehensive risk assessments ensure risks are identified and effectively minimised, such as ensuring doors are locked and displaying notices to remind all adults to keep doors locked. Children benefit from spacious premises offering a warm, friendly and welcoming environment. Space and rooms are organised extremely well to cater for children's needs, they are used effectively and creatively. Children use different rooms according to their age and ability to ensure they access safe and suitable furniture, toys and equipment. Premises, furniture, toys and equipment are clean and well maintained to promote children's safety.

Children have safe and easy access to an abundance of resources, equipment and toys that are stimulating, fun, interesting and provide excellent challenge for all children. Excellent storage and organisation of resources allow children to make a wide range of choices. Children enjoy an interesting range of safe outdoor equipment some of which is located on a bark surface area in a fully enclosed garden to promote children's safety.

Babies and young children are kept safe by good organisation of the room. Non mobile and mobile babies are cared for in separate areas of the same room and excellent procedures for sleeping babies are in place. Babies are regularly checked and staff use a monitor to promote their safety. Children and babies benefit from good supervision levels as children play together in small key worker groups. Older children have access to different rooms and areas which are interlinked. This gives children good independence and choice while they benefit from good supervision.

Children are very well protected from harm through staff's good knowledge and understanding of child protection. Staff ensure they have regular training and have good information for guidance on child protection issues. Children are well protected against the risk of fire, excellent procedures, such as regular drills and maintaining log records together with well maintained fire appliances promote their safety.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very happy and settled within the nursery. Children are highly engrossed and motivated in the various activities provided. Children are confident to extend staff led activities and initiate their own ideas, such as drawing rockets from their bear templates and when deciding what to sell in the role play shop. Babies and children under three benefit from the staff's excellent knowledge and understanding of the framework for Birth to three matters. Plans are effectively implemented to ensure all children are appropriately challenged. Children benefit greatly from staff's excellent interaction skills which supports and extends children's learning. Babies enjoy resources and activities planned to explore their senses. They are excited and move and rock their bodies as they listen to music or sounds and enjoy feeling different textures. Older children are very confident and excited as they individually tell stories to other children using the felt board and aids. The children have fun as they extend and change the story as they use their own imagination well. Children enjoy familiar and new experiences in

varied role play, such as an office and shoe shop. Children access a wide range of wonderful art and craft resources and are able to mix their own colour of paint and make different textures as they explore. Children are excited as they use a variety of footwear, such as Wellingtons and slippers to make prints and patterns with paint. Children use good imagination with the extensive range of construction play and children using 'the work bench' resources dress up in goggles, ear muffs and gloves as they use drills and hammers in their play.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning for funded children is outstanding. Children are making excellent progress across the six areas of learning. Plans identify aims and objectives and children's progress records are linked to the stepping stones. Children's learning is greatly enhanced by small key worker groups where staff know the children well. Staff are able to provide interesting and challenging activities and effectively interact as they play, talk and question children without stifling their own development, but ensuring they are maximising their own learning.

Children are growing in confidence and independence and are motivated to learn and choose their own activities. Children have excellent speaking skills and confidently discuss events and retell stories. Children have many opportunities to access a wide range of mark making resources and are able to make their own shopping lists. Children are recognising their own name and are encouraged to write their own name on their work. Children are learning mathematical skills through extremely well planned activities and daily routines. Children are able to measure and compare feet and shoe sizes in their role play and counting is reinforced at snack time. Children are learning to solve simple problems as they use coins when they shop in their role play.

Children have wonderful opportunities to explore using programmable toys and the computer which enhances and supports their learning.

Children are exceptionally creative as they explore with a wide range of musical instruments. They are able to sing along and play instruments as they learn about rhythms. Children are very competent when using construction play to design and build which develops their fine motor skills. Children experience both free and structured physical play as they develop gross motor skills when they use exciting outdoor equipment. Children are competent using balancing bricks and are able to handle garden tools when planting in the garden.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. All children are welcome into the setting and receive excellent support and care from staff who work closely with one another and with the parents and carers, to ensure children's progress is suitably enhanced. Children are able to access a good range of resources and participate in numerous planned activities to promote positive images of diversity. Planned activities include topics, such as France and Italy, and Divali which introduces children to the wider world. Staff have good systems in place, such as individual learning plans and working with other professionals to support the welfare and

development of children who have learning difficulties or disabilities. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children behave exceptionally well. Children are learning to share and take turns as they use toys and play games. Children are kind and considerate to other children. They help one another to tidy up and to lay the table for lunch. Children develop a positive attitude to expectations of their behaviour. Children's good behaviour is promoted by staff's praise and encouragement. Staff are excellent role models they are very polite and calm when requesting children to complete tasks.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Comprehensive written information is provided to keep parents well informed about the setting. Numerous well displayed notice boards and notices keep parents informed about activities and events, and of details of the framework for Birth to three matters and the Foundation Stage curriculum. Parents of babies have a daily diary to share children's development and activities and parents of young children share a weekly activity card. Parents of older children share assessment records and scrap books to inform them of their children's progress. All parents are invited to parents evenings and social evenings, such as barbecues and fireworks, to further encourage excellent involvement in their children's care welfare and learning.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is significantly enhanced by exceptional organisation. Children are very happy and settled within the extremely well organised setting. Children's work and posters are displayed to provide an attractive, friendly, warm and welcoming environment. An excellent range of furniture, toys and equipment are provided to cater for the needs of all children and offer easy accessibility and a wide choice of resources. Rooms and space are very effectively organised and provide a spacious and exciting environment for children. Children benefit from staff who are well qualified and have an extremely good understanding of how children develop. Staff are very well deployed and organise children into small groups which is highly effective in enhancing children's learning and enabling them to reach their full potential.

The leadership and management of the setting is outstanding. They are highly committed and enthusiastic. There is a very strong relationship between staff and management and they work very well together as a team. There are highly effective systems in place to monitor and evaluate the setting, such as evaluating the Foundation Stage curriculum, reviewing documentation, regular staff meetings and staff appraisals. Any ideas identified for improvement are immediately addressed to ensure they maintain their high standard and deliver a very effective curriculum. Management are very supportive of staff's training needs to ensure they continually improve and further develop their knowledge to be able to consistently meet the needs of all children.

Children's welfare, care and learning is extremely well supported through comprehensive policies and procedures and outstanding partnership with parents and carers. Excellent development and progress records are shared with parents. The outstanding quality of care and nursery education ensures the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

The previous care inspection recommended that risk assessments are developed in respect of the nursery building and that parents acknowledge medication given to their children. The setting have further developed their risk assessment to include all aspects of the building. There are comprehensive written procedures and records in place and thorough systems for continual assessment to ensure children are kept safe. Additional medication records now require parents acknowledgement which ensures children are well cared for.

The previous nursery education inspection recommended that parents are informed of the Foundation Stage. Numerous procedures now inform parents of the Foundation Stage, such as details in the prospectus, on notice boards and various displays around the setting. Staff also have regular meetings with parents to support and further their understanding of the Foundation Stage.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required 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.

## **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 outstanding. 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**

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

#### **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 *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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)