



## **Footsteps (South West) Ltd**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY296229
<b>Inspection date</b>	10 October 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Sue Vernon
<b>Setting Address</b>	Culverhay School, Rush Hill, Bath, Avon, BA2 2QL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01225 429989
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Footsteps (South West) Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care, Out of School 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 good. 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?

Footsteps Nursery was registered in 2004. It is a privately owned nursery operating from a house in the grounds of Culverhay School, on the southern side of Bath. It is registered to care for a maximum of 43 children aged 0-8 years at any one time and currently has 93 children on roll, most of whom attend part-time for a variety of sessions. Of these, 15 children receive funding for nursery education. An after-school session is offered for children over 5 years of age.

Footsteps Nursery is open from 08.30 to 17.30, five days a week, except over Christmas. The nursery has sole use of the building which includes enclosed areas for outdoor play. The nursery currently supports one child with special needs and one with English as a second language.

There are 10 staff working with the children, 7 of whom have early years qualifications and 3 of whom are working towards qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children's health is effectively promoted in an environment where staff consistently practice good health and hygiene practices within the daily routine, for example staff use gloves and anti-bacterial spray for nappy changing and each sleeping child has clean bedding every day. Children enjoy developing personal independence with regular hand washing after play and before food. Children's well being is promoted with staff supporting children's individual dietary needs very effectively. Regular drinks are available throughout the day on request as well as at break times. Children learn the value of healthy eating through topic activities, eating fresh fruits at snack time, and trying new healthy foods with good staff support. Children are protected from possible infections well by the sickness policy which is shared with parents. This helps parents understand the need to protect children from cross-infection. Staff keep effective medical and accident records which ensures consistency with parents.

Children's physical well-being is supported by regular outdoor play. They extend their gross motor skills by peddling various toy cars and develop co-ordination with throwing skills. Babies experience fresh air in their own garden area with play resources such as baby swings and slide. Funded children enjoy physical play both indoors and out, though planning lacks consistency in ensuring their opportunities are extensive. Dancing and exercise tapes help children find out the effects of exercise on their bodies. They enthusiastically enjoy developing their jumping, balance and stretching skills.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment where risks have been well identified and effectively minimised. This allows children to move around smoothly and safely when changing rooms for different activities. They enjoy developing personal independence by learning the safety routines such as holding on to hand rails when going down stairs. The attractive resources are well displayed in suitable storage units which enables children to explore, play and select toys independently. Good routines are used for monitoring toys and resources which ensures they are safe and suitable. The use of rooms is well planned to ensure children have safe access to a

variety of play opportunities, for example messy play is offered for different ages in the downstairs garden room. Close staff supervision ensures sleeping children are safe and comfortable.

Fire safety issues have been addressed well and the required equipment and procedures are in place to support children's safety. The staff's sound awareness of child protection issues and the procedure to be followed if any concerns arise support's children's welfare.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enter happily and settle to play quickly due to warm support from their carers. Toys and play opportunities are set out ready in each base room which help children feel confident to explore. Consistent staff teams know the children and their routines well which helps them feel secure. Children have good relationships with staff and look to them for reassurance and cuddles. Play planning for all age groups helps staff offer an interesting range of activities. Some are linked to topics such as safety, with children enjoying acting out driving cars with seat belts and using zebra crossings. Time for engrossing creative and imaginative play is limited because of the rota for access to the play room. Children are helped to concentrate well, for example when trying simple craft activities by staff who encourage them with praise.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

Staff interact well with children and use open questioning effectively. This encourages children to think and enjoy learning, for example questions such as 'what's going to happen when we mix flour and water?' prompts children's thinking and their use of language well, with a child describing it as 'squidgy'. Children are confident using mathematical language during play, such as counting up to ten and knowing shapes such as rectangles and circles. Children listen to stories, sing rhymes and learn to recognise their names but have limited opportunities to extend writing skills. They are learning about the world around them through visits to local facilities such as the library and riding on the bus. Activities such as painting rangoli patterns during Divali support exploring other cultures and their festivals. Opportunities to enjoy engrossing creative and imaginative play are limited because of the emphasis on adult led activities and time-tabled use by all of the main craft room.

The staff team have satisfactory knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Plans generally cover the areas of learning but do not reflect any individual needs of children or ways to ensure children of all abilities are challenged. Children's profiles are linked to the stepping stones and are shared with parents though are not used to identify learning gaps in order to strengthen effective planning.

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

The provision is good.

Children and parents receive a warm welcome on arriving in the group. Staff know them as individuals which ensures they feel valued. Individual needs such as dietary requirements and baby's sleep routines are known and respected which helps children feel settled. Individual settling-in routines, good paperwork and clear feedback ensures parents have every opportunity to establish good relationships with the nursery which ensures consistency of care.

Children learn about the value of diversity through the good range of resources offered which includes books, play people and dolls. All children are included in play and both genders enjoy the range of play opportunities offered, with boys and girls dressing up in sparkly clothes and using a play tool kit. There is a positive approach to managing behaviour. Consistent praise is given and distraction is used effectively as part of good age-appropriate techniques.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents receive good information about the Foundation Stage and topic planning is well displayed where they see it. They are involved with staff in children's learning through bringing in things from home, if appropriate. Parents are clearly aware that profiles are used to monitor their child's progress. They know work folders and profiles are freely available and can be discussed with the staff, both formally and informally. Parents are confident about approaching staff and sharing information.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

There is an on-going commitment to training and staff development that ensures staff continue to evaluate and develop their skills in working with children. This promotes children's well-being. Owners and staff work well as a team and through regular staff meetings they share ideas for future planning. Effective systems are in place for recruitment and induction which support a consistent staff approach. Records and policies are in place and shared appropriately with parents though some details are lacking. Children of different ages have base rooms which helps children feel secure, though use of shared rooms limits time offered for different activities.

Leadership and Management is satisfactory.

There is a clear commitment to promoting good quality both of care and education between both the owners and the staff team. Regular staff meetings and access to training supports the on-going development of skills. Staff meet regularly to review planning and daily discussions build good communications systems. However, the system for monitoring and evaluating the programme for education has failed to identify gaps in evaluation of activities and the use of planning and profiles to ensure all children are challenged and moved on through the stepping stones effectively.

The nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

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

Not applicable.

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

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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 satisfactory.

## **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 policies such as those for a lost or uncollected child contain all required details.
- extend opportunities for all children to access extended creative and imaginative play[also applies to nursery education].

### **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 observations, planning, evaluations and profiles are used to ensure all children are challenged and moved forward through the stepping stones.
- develop opportunities for being curious and exploring the natural world and practising writing through mark-making skills.

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