

Footsteps

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY257595
Inspection date	02/03/2009
Inspector	Suzette Butcher
Setting address	Walford & North Shropshire College, Shrewsbury Road, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY11 4QB
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

Footsteps Nursery was registered in 2003 and is owned and managed by Walford and North Shropshire College. It operates within purpose built premises on the college campus in Oswestry, Shropshire. All areas within the premises are accessible for people with disabilities. It is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 51 weeks a year. The setting provides care and education for college students' children, families from the wide area and short periods of respite care for identified families.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and a maximum of 62 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 92 children from birth to 12 years on roll. The nursery provides funded early years education for three and four year olds. The provision is also registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. Children attend for out of school activities after school and during school holidays. The setting supports a small number of children who have learning difficulties.

There are 17 staff employed who all hold an appropriate early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Local Education Authority.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the provision is good. Effective leadership and management establish a clear direction for change and set the right pace for sustained progress. Children are at the heart of everything that happens in the inclusive, enabling environment. They make good progress within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), although aspects of good practice do not extend to out of school care. Children's welfare is safeguarded well and partnerships with parents and other providers are developing.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- improve the two way flow of information with parents and carers to increase the shared understanding of children's individual needs and involve them further in their child's learning and development
- increase links with other providers within EYFS to promote the integration of care and education.

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- ensure that appropriate ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process for children in the early years age group who attend out of school care (Learning and Development).

24/03/2009

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff in the effective team are all well qualified and committed towards continuing their own professional development. The manager is currently working towards degree standard to achieve Early Years Professional Status. Staff have clear roles and responsibilities and meetings are held on a regular basis. Robust recruitment, employment and induction procedures and thorough risk assessments are in place to protect children. Good relationships are maintained with the adjacent college, with close supervision and support for the regular student placements within the nursery. Required policies and procedures are available and reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they meet requirements. Significant improvements have been successfully implemented, with recommendations fully addressed since the last inspection. Objective and rigorous self-evaluation systems involve the whole staff team and parents are consulted. Outcomes clearly identify the provision's strengths and weaknesses and prioritise areas for improvement, such as introduction of photographs and posters to identify a child's key worker to enhance partnerships. Good organisation and effective staff deployment focus on children's individual needs. For example, staff rotas are carefully planned to provide stability and continuity in key worker systems for every child and their family. Inclusion is strongly promoted throughout the setting, with the combination of male and female carers enriching children's experiences. Any barriers are overcome to promote an inclusive environment where children enjoy freedom of movement within the indoor and outdoor environment. The current development of a sensory garden benefits every child and enhances play and learning opportunities within the enabling environment.

Staff work in effective partnerships with extended services and support agencies, such as social workers and speech therapists. Respite care opportunities support children and families' individual needs and promote early intervention. Partnerships with parents and carers are maintained through honest, open relationships. Information is shared in regular newsletters, notices, meetings about EYFS and numerous informal chats. Parents evenings are organised each term to review children's progress and initiate a shared understanding of children's individual needs. However, the two way flow of information does not fully involve parents in supporting their child's learning and development. Reception teachers from receiving schools visit the nursery and information is shared during the transition period. Further systems to increase links with children's other providers within EYFS have been identified but they have not been established to promote the integration of care and education for individual children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Staff respond positively to change and have a clear understanding of the underlying principles of good early years practice. Effective observation and assessment procedures are securely established in the nursery where they are regularly monitored and reviewed to continually improve practice. Key workers

identify and plan for next steps for each child in their group and focus activities are evaluated. Individual profiles highlight children's progress towards the early learning goals and record their individual learning journey. The small number of children within the early years age group who attend out of school care are sensitively supported by key staff. They access appropriate opportunities across the six areas of learning within EYFS to complement provision in their other settings. However, their progress is not monitored in ongoing assessment procedures which is a breach in requirements.

Children develop a strong sense of belonging within the nursery and learn about the natural world and the local environment. The good organisation of continuous provision provides a balanced range of suitable resources for children across the age ranges, within the indoor and outdoor environment. They are organised to promote children's confidence and independence with, for example, low-level easels, sand and water trays for babies and toddlers. Children are offered stimulating challenges to extend their experiences with time to explore, practise and apply their learning. They learn to reflect and evaluate their experiences in daily 'plan, do and review' sessions. Staff know when to stand back and allow children to initiate their own games as they develop active, independent learning. Staff intervene sensitively and provide explanations to make children think, as they work alongside and extend opportunities to help children acquire new skills and try new experiences. Language and communication skills are promoted as children join in lively action songs, sing instructions or share stories. Letter sounds, numbers and word patterns are regularly reinforced in daily activities, such as at snack time. Visual cues, pictures and Makaton sign language enhance children's understanding. Positive attitudes are promoted towards diversity to help children to value aspects of their own and other people's lives. This ensures that children and their families feel included, safe and valued. Linguistic diversity is valued and opportunities for children to use their home language is provided in their play and learning.

A healthy lifestyle is actively promoted throughout the setting. Covered outdoor areas and the free-flow of activities between the indoor and outdoor environments ensure that children benefit from regular exercise and fresh air throughout the year. Good hygiene practices are actively promoted and incorporated into the daily routines to encourage children to care for themselves. Nursery menus consist of well balanced, nutritious meals that are cooked on the premises each day. Meal times are relaxed, social occasions, where staff and children sit together to eat and enjoy each other's company. Safety is given a high priority with areas checked on a daily basis to identify potential hazards. Children are encouraged to consider and recognise potential dangers as they gradually accept responsibility for their own safety. They are encouraged to develop skills for their future well-being as they learn to solve problems and work collaboratively. Children and babies share warm relationships with familiar staff. Children are well behaved as they happily share, take turns and consider each other's feelings. They are involved in agreeing rules and learn to respect boundaries.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	3
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:

Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:

Met

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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.