

My First Friends Ltd Day Nursery & Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY294057
Inspection date	06/05/2009
Inspector	Christine Lynn Williams
Setting address	Ashbrook Drive, Rubery, Rednal, Birmingham, West Midlands, B45 9FP
Telephone number	0121 453 6206
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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 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).

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

My First Friends Day Nursery and Pre-School is privately owned and run as a limited company. It opened in 2004 and operates from a single storey purpose-built nursery building within a business and leisure park in the Rubery area of Birmingham. The setting is sited close to several main commuter routes, with easy access to motorway networks, shops and leisure facilities. Children have access to enclosed outdoor play areas. The setting is open each weekday for 52 weeks of the year, excluding bank holidays. Sessions are from 07.30 until 18.00.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 120 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 169 children aged from three months to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties.

The setting is also able to make provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register.

There are 36 members of staff, the majority of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least National Vocational Qualification Level 2. Two members of staff are currently working towards early years degree qualifications. The setting provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds and receives teacher support from the local authority.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good with many aspects of children's welfare and learning promoted with success. Some aspects of the setting's practice are extremely strong, while other new ways of working have only recently been introduced and have not yet been in place long enough to have had full effect. Staff work effectively together to support and encourage children so that they make good progress in their learning and development. There are clear safeguarding procedures and children are cared for in a healthy, stimulating and inclusive environment. The nursery is well-equipped and resourced and some aspects of safety and security are particularly effective. There is a clear commitment to working with parents and other agencies to ensure that children's individual needs are met and children benefit from the nursery's effective key person system.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- reassess and extend the arrangements for supporting the different learning styles of both boys and girls
- improve the assessments of children's learning and development by clearly identifying children's next steps in their learning and using information about

- children's starting points more effectively
- develop further the use of self-evaluation to clearly identify all priorities for development that will further improve the quality of provision for all children.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Leadership and management are strong with the owner and managers working together effectively to support children and their families. Effective operational routines ensure that the setting runs smoothly and management and staff have a shared vision of what they hope children will achieve and work collaboratively to ensure that children experience good quality care and education. Many new ways of working have recently been introduced. For example, observation and assessments of children's progress have been improved and there is a new system for encouraging parents to contribute their ideas for what children should learn. However, some of the recent changes have not yet matured sufficiently to have had full impact on all the outcomes for children. The setting has begun to identify its strengths and areas for future development. However, the process of self-evaluation is new to the nursery and is still under development. Plans for the future include providing children with additional outdoor learning opportunities, increasing the numbers of computers within the nursery and encouraging parents to learn alongside their children at Saturday workshops. Those in charge have developed effective guidelines for encouraging continuous improvements, although this is not yet fully operational.

Many aspects of children's welfare are promoted with success, ensuring that they are safe and secure. There are clear safeguarding procedures and employment strategies in place to ensure children are well-protected and security arrangements are commendable. For example, a fingerprint recognition entry system ensures that only authorised persons gain access to the building and intercoms and CCTV is used to monitor the outside and car park areas of the nursery. Staff work closely with children to promote tolerance and acceptance and help them to acknowledge the diversity of our society. There is a clear focus on inclusion and developing the necessary skills to meet all children's needs. Staff recognise the different learning styles of boys and girls, with many positive initiatives introduced that particularly build on the interests of boys. However, these are not being fully utilised and as a result, the interests and learning preferences of boys are not always fully supported.

Children really benefit from the warm welcome given to their families. Staff and parents share their knowledge about children and work together and with the local community to support, guide and nurture the children. Parents are kept well-informed at all times so that they understand and fully share in their children's early care and education and there are effective arrangements for supporting working parents. All staff are confident in their knowledge of required record keeping and how to maintain these to a high level for the benefit of the children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children benefit from quality early years practice which ensures that they make good progress in their learning and development. They respond enthusiastically to the wide range of experiences offered within a stimulating environment. Within the baby and toddler rooms, staff listen and respond well to the smiles, gestures and noises the youngest children make and music often plays in the background to soothe or stimulate. Pre-school staff show a clear understanding of how children learn, have a genuine interest in what children do and give them time to practise, refine their skills and so become confident learners. Specialist teachers for such things as French and dance add richness to children's experiences. Planning is flexible to allow staff to follow children's interests and key workers note and assess children's progress and share this with children's parents. However, the assessment system is not yet fully effective.

Staff support children well and provide praise, stickers and rewards to help children act positively and develop good self-esteem. Important steps in early literacy are developed as children enjoy making marks, link sounds to letters and look at picture books and children communicate well through their imaginary play, rhymes and during key worker sessions. Playing with toys that come apart and fit together encourages children of all ages to problem solve, while simple counting games and rhymes help them to become familiar with numbers. Three and four-year-olds are developing good skills in using technology, such as computers, and these are used effectively to help support their understanding of numbers and letter sounds. Children's natural curiosity as learners is promoted well. They explore in the garden, make dens and investigate through their senses. Children respond excitedly and with real enjoyment to a wide range of creative activities. They sing and use musical instruments with gusto, enjoy making up their own games and use paint and other craft materials freely and with expression.

Effective steps are taken to promote children's good health and safety. For example, children wash their hands regularly, learn the benefits of eating well and make the most of the different outside areas to keep fit and learn new skills. The youngest children show delight as they enjoy an indoor ball pit or crawl through tunnels, while older children climb, balance, peddle and coordinate their bodies when playing outside. Staff are skilled in providing safe support to babies and toddlers when they are learning early walking skills and encourage older children to learn new physical skills in a safe and supportive environment. For example, children are encouraged to think and act safely when climbing in and on the tyres and balancing on beams in the garden.

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?	2
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

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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

Met