

First Steps Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	106951
Inspection date	15/06/2009
Inspector	Yvonne Campbell
Setting address	Southville Centre, Beaufey Road, Southville, Bristol, BS3 1QG
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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

First Steps Day Nursery opened in 1991. It is one of two daycare provisions managed by Southville Community Development Association and it operates from two purpose adapted areas in the community association building complex. Children have access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is situated in a residential area close to several schools and it serves the local community. Opening times are Monday to Friday from 08.00 to 18.00, all year round.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 41 children in the early years age group may attend at any one time. There are currently 118 children on roll. Of these, 27 have funded education for three and four year olds. The setting is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery supports children who have English as an additional language and children with learning difficulties and disabilities. The premises are accessible at ground level.

There are currently 14 members of staff who work directly with the children. Of these, eight have level 3 qualifications. The team is led by the Family Services Manager who has a degree in Early Years Education and has also achieved Early Years Professional Status. The nursery receives teacher support from the local authority education advisory service. They have received validation for The Bristol Standard in Daycare quality assurance scheme.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is good. Children are happy in the well run nursery where they have a high level of care and varied and exciting learning opportunities. Individual needs are met through an effective key worker system and most learning files have clear information supplied by parents to enable staff to assess children's starting points and provide activities that help them make progress in all areas of learning. Staff are aware of the nursery's strengths and areas for development, and evaluation is ongoing through involvement in the Bristol Standard.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- further develop the book corner to promote children's interest in illustrations, print and books
- further improve systems for collecting information on children's starting points and ensure that all forms provided in children's learning profile for this purpose are completed with parents.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are cared for in an environment which is thoughtfully organised by staff to make maximum use of the available space so children have suitable areas for play and rest. Staff make creative use of the indoor space in the main nursery room where children under three years are cared for, enabling babies and toddlers to have a separate area to move around and increase their mobility in complete safety. Children also enjoy periods when they mix and play alongside their older peers. The separate preschool room is well planned and set out so resources which support all areas of learning are accessible to children and they can choose the toys and activities they want to be involved in.

Staff are committed and eager to improve the service they provide for children and the community. The setting's self-evaluation is primarily carried out through assessment under the dimensions of the city wide Bristol Standard. The Family Services Manager works closely with the management of the community development association and there are plans in place to make several improvements. For example, provide children with access to more information technology equipment by purchasing computers which operate educational programmes.

Staff are aware of various childcare initiatives as they attend training courses on a regular basis and have close links with other early years settings in the community. These include local schools and children's centres. Good practices such as the forest school initiatives for outdoor learning are adopted to further enhance the learning programmes offered to children. Well thought through systems are in place to insure all children are included. Where areas for additional support are identified, staff develop individual education plans with short term targets and regular reviews. Parents contribution to information about children is highly valued by staff who make time to discuss what parents and write about children's stages of development when they start nursery. Parents also have several sources of information including a notice board and a website. However, in a few cases, parents have not supplied the information requested regarding children's starting points and this has not been followed up by staff. This may impact on the quality of care offered to those children.

Effective child protection procedures ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted within the setting. The policy is thorough and well set out so it is easy for both staff and parents to read and understand the actions which will be taken if there are concerns that abuse may have taken place. Staff are safe to be in close proximity to children as criminal record checks are carried out and renewed by a reminder system on the computer. Students and visitors are supervised at all times. Preschool age children behave very well and respond positively to adult instruction as staff ensure they are purposefully occupied and supported by the structure of the daily routine. They have a cheery welcome during morning circle time and have the opportunity to share whether they are feeling happy or sad. Children enjoy helping others and ask for assistance when they need help.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children show a happy disposition to exploring and learning from very early stages. Under threes explore and test their developing physical skills through free play and planned activities which are appropriate for their stage of development. For example, during a planned activity, babies and newly mobile children show great interest in empty plant pots of various sizes. Staff position themselves on the floor so they can support and encourage the children as they observe how learning is developed. Children practise putting the pots inside others by judging size and also use the pots to construct by placing larger pots at the bottoms and smaller ones on top. Some children systematically place the pots into a line, whilst others choose to fill then empty the containers. Some children show a sense of adventure and they have physical support from staff as they balance and walk across the upturned pots.

Toddler age children show a strong interest in books and concentrate for several minutes as they have stories read to them, which are followed by favourite rhymes, some accompanied by Makaton signing. They also enjoy songs with actions and sing quietly and loudly when appropriate. Older children also enjoy stories. They have opportunities to mark-make and practise writing skills, and they know print has meaning by the name labels on their coat hooks and the labels on the resource storage units. A good selection of books is provided in the comfortable book corner, however, few children select books independently during free play as the display system is not sufficiently enticing and many books are stored in a flat pile preventing children from seeing the illustrations on book covers.

The outdoor area is an excellent, rich learning environment where children are invigorated in the fresh air and take part in many different types of activities. For example, preschool children quietly take time to observe the small insects such as snails and spiders which inhabit the garden. They talk about what they see as they observe the motion of the insects and show a caring attitude by telling others not to hurt the creatures. Children have opportunities to have energetic play to develop their physical skills safely away from the direct gaze of adults. They walk and ride their bikes along the winding path through tall plants. Staff are skilful in creating unplanned learning opportunities for younger children and when water is accidentally spilt on the patio surface, children enjoy splashing in the small puddle and make marks with the water.

Children's welfare is highly promoted and they are developing the understanding of what keeps them fit and healthy. Nutritious cooked meals which meet various dietary needs are supplied to the nursery by a specialist early years caterer. Staff ensure they have the correct information about the types of diets according to the individual children who attend on different days of the week. Menus are displayed in a prominent place so parents can see and comment on what is provided. Effective procedures are in place to prevent the spread of infection and to prevent germs being transferred to children during nursery procedures. Strict hygiene procedures are observed when serving meals and also when meeting hygiene needs including nappy changing. Medication is administered safely to children by a

senior member of staff and care plans are developed for children who have ongoing medical needs. A thorough risk assessment of all areas of the nursery ensures that where hazards are identified, staff have controlled measures in place to ensure children play, learn and explore in the safest possible surroundings.

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?	1
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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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