

First Steps Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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.

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Description of the setting

First Steps Nursery was first registered in 1988. It is a private company; First Steps Grimsby Limited and has two directors. The Pre-school Learning Alliance accredited setting operates from a large ground floor room in a building that was formerly an ice house. The nursery also has the use of a kitchen, toilets and a small, soft-surfaced outdoor play area. The company also has another nursery nearby that cares for babies and children under three years of age. The nursery has achieved level one of the Effective Quality Improvement Pathway. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 41 children on roll including children with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Children attend various sessions throughout the week, and are mainly from the local area. Children who are in receipt of nursery education funding attend the setting. Opening hours are from 8am to 6pm on Monday to Friday all year apart from public holidays and Christmas week. The setting work closely with the local Children's Centre. Six staff are employed including a qualified teacher, two staff with Early Years Professional status, one who holds a degree in Early Years Childhood Studies and two who hold a relevant level three qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The setting meets the individual needs of the children who attend and effectively supports children with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Although there are minor weaknesses in the educational programme children make steady progress in their development and learning. Staff understand the importance of safeguarding procedures and promote most aspects of children's welfare successfully. Good relationships are developed with parents and carers where information is freely shared. The relationship with other providers that children attend are not fully effective in helping children progress. The evaluation of the service provided by the nursery is in the early stages of development and some of the recommendations raised at the last inspection have been completed, so the setting show a suitable capacity for improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- use observations and assessments to identify the next steps in children's learning and use these to plan relevant and motivating learning experiences for each child
- develop effective working relationships with other providers offering the Early Years Foundation Stage, ensuring information about children's next steps for development are discussed and shared to ensure continuity and progression
- update the record of risk assessment to include any assessments of risks for

- outings and trips
- further develop a system of reflective practice in order to confidently identify aspects of the service that are done well and those aspects that might be improved, so as to promote good outcomes for children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

There are a wide range of policies and procedures that support the smooth running of the nursery. Staff have a clear understanding of how to safeguard children's welfare. They understand the signs and symptoms that may cause concern and are aware of the procedures to follow should there be any concerns about a child's welfare. The person in charge has undertaken safeguarding training to the second level. All of the indoor and outdoor spaces, furniture, toys and equipment used by children are carefully risk assessed and checked for safety every day children attend. The record of risk assessment does not include an assessment of risks for outings and trips, such as walks in the locality of the nursery. There are a number of staff who are trained in first aid and all accidents and medication administered are correctly dealt with and recorded.

This very well-qualified staff group are led by an ambitious management team. There is a suitable training programme in place and good teamwork is apparent. The setting have identified and implemented areas for improvement, for example, the partnership with parents, however, not all of the recommendations raised at the last inspection have been addressed. The setting have started to evaluate their provision, involving the views of parents through asking them to complete a number of questionnaires. Staff also ask the opinions of children, what they like to play with and what are their favourite activities. However, the evaluation of the nursery as a whole is still in the early stages of development and does not consider all aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage delivered by the provision.

The spacious premises offer children good freedom of movement and access to a well used outdoor area. Children choose from a wide range of activities. Many resources are readily available to children and are clearly labelled with words and pictures. For example, children enjoy a good choice of activities in the well resourced creative area. Children are very well supported as they play. They learn the importance of looking after resources as they are involved in recycling items within the local environment. Children with special educational needs and those to whom English is an additional language are very well supported within the setting. Staff work closely with parents and outside agencies to develop individual strategies and educational plans that help children progress. For example, parents are offered documentation in their first language and the setting can arrange for specialist help with language development. Good support is offered by key workers who develop close relationships with parents. They offer parents the opportunity to undertake additional activities at home with their children should they wish to.

The nursery develop effective relationships with parents and carers which keeps them well informed about their child's time at the setting. Parents have their own notice board and access to easily read policy documents within the entrance area.

Children's daily activities are clearly displayed within the playroom. Discussions take place at the beginning and end of the session and parents have a transition meeting when their child moves between nurseries. Specific help is available to parents to encourage their child's language development. The setting work with a language consultant on a long-term programme involving parents and helping them with ideas on encouraging language development at home. Attractive resources are given to parents to support this work. Parents are asked to express their views through completing questionnaires. Parents are encouraged to regularly review their child's care plan and are often asked if they are happy with all aspects of care and education. Parents are very complimentary about the quality of the setting and the progress that children are making.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

The setting use the interests of the children to plan a wide range of activities both indoors and outdoors. Children have individual play plans which help staff to take their interests into account. Staff regularly assess and track children's progress through undertaking observations as they play, however, the next steps in their learning are not always identified. This means that the staff cannot always effectively plan for children's progression. Children are very active in the nursery. They use a suitable range of equipment that challenges them physically and really enjoy activity sessions as a group when they bend, kick and stretch. Staff help them to learn about the effects of physical exertion on their bodies as they talk about their hearts beating and the perspiration on their skin. They are encouraged to understand the importance of drinking water afterwards. The attractive dining area is set out so that children can independently choose their own snack and drink and set their place at lunchtime. Meals and snacks are nutritious and wholesome. For example snacks include raisins, breadsticks, fruit and freshly made meals such as spaghetti Bolognese with garlic bread and home-made cake are enjoyed at lunchtime. Very good hygiene standards are maintained throughout the nursery with the setting having gained an excellent five-star grading from the Environmental Health Department.

Children play happily and respond well in the cheerful atmosphere because they receive a great deal of praise and encouragement from the positive staff group. For example, they are praised when they respond to their name at carpet time. Throughout the day there is a lot of discussion between staff and children which helps to effectively promote their language development. Children show an interest in mark- making, writing the letters in their name and drawing. The nursery undertake specific activities to help develop children's language and listening skills.

Children show an interest in investigating and exploring, for example, they looking closely at mini beasts. They are involved in planting and go for local walks to the market to buy fruit and vegetables and look at features in their local environment. Children learn about the passage of time as they sing a song about the days of the week. Displays of children's birthdays and individual drawers with their names on help to give children a sense of belonging. Generally children behave well in the positive atmosphere. Children have many opportunities to explore their senses

through using foam, painting, play dough and in sand and water. Staff make good use of incidental opportunities such as the snowy weather to help children to explore their senses through real life experiences. Children recognise shapes as they built with blocks and learn about the language of size during movement sessions. They learn nursery rhymes that give them an early understanding of problem-solving, for example, ten little fingers.

Children are starting to learn about the importance of managing their own safety. They move safely within the nursery room and are regularly involved in the evacuation of the premises. Staff encourage children to think about whether or not it would be safe to go on the climbing frame just wearing their socks. Children learn how to safely carry their own cutlery as they set their place at lunchtime. Children build skills in using technology equipment as they confidently use a digital camera, a play telephone and have regular access to a computer.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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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