

First Steps Childrens Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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EY259683

Inspection date

16/02/2010

Inspector

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Setting address

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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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

First Steps Nursery has been registered since 2003. It is part of a chain of three privately owned nurseries and operates from premises near to the city centre of Wolverhampton. The nursery is accommodated within five base rooms and one specific play room laid out over the ground floor and the first floor with additional staff facilities on the second floor. Access to the building is via steps up to the front door.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 6.00pm throughout the year with the exception of bank holidays and one week at Christmas. A maximum of 50 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 63 children on roll who attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary Childcare Register.

There are currently 15 staff who work directly with the children, of whom 12 hold appropriate Level two Early Years qualifications or above.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and well settled at the nursery and make good progress in all areas of their learning and development due to the practitioners secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The setting is committed to making ongoing improvements as there is a strong drive towards improving the process of evaluating their quality and self-evaluation. Staff are enthusiastic and skilled in encouraging critical thinking skills to enable children to explore, investigate and enjoy their time in nursery. Partnerships with other providers is still to be developed, to foster links with other settings in order to promote consistency and ease children's transition into full time school.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the quality and improvement processes to monitor and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the provision
- improve documentation to ensure that accident and medication forms are fully completed and address details are correct on the complaints policy
- develop the opportunities for partnership working where children receive care and education in more than one setting.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare and wellbeing are effectively promoted due to the setting having robust procedures in place for safeguarding children. Staff have a good knowledge of child protection issues and keep up to date with procedures. Recruitment procedures are robust as practitioners evidence Criminal Record Bureau checks being undertaken on all staff and regular staff appraisals are carried out to ensure that individual training needs of staff are identified. Written policies and procedures are in place, and most accident and medication forms are completed, however a few have missing information which could affect a child's safety. In addition the complaints policy does not reflect the correct address details for Ofsted which may potentially mean parents are unaware of where to address concerns to in terms of a complaint. Detailed risk assessments are conducted daily by staff which identify all hazards to children. For example, daily visual checks around the setting and outings to the Forest School.

Staff know and understand the children well within their own rooms and can accurately recall an individual child's learning. The development of children in relation to their starting point is good, as staff identify where further improvements can be made to overcome variations in an individual child's progress. Adults identify a child's need for additional support as early as possible and share information and records with parents and colleagues, where appropriate to ensure that each child gets the support he or she needs.

Children's individual needs are met well as their routines are taken into account, particularly in the baby room where staff work around the child's sleep and eating times according to information gained from parents. The process for evaluating the quality of the provision and its impact on children's progress is being developed by the practitioners. Some reflection has taken place on continuous improvement, but this needs to be put into place. Parents have recently completed questionnaires and outcomes from these have been put into practice. For example, the menu now has only one dessert per week and more fruit and yoghurts have been included into the choice.

Staff have good relationships with parents and offer advice and support in a friendly manner. A good exchange of information takes place between parents and staff to ensure that children's individual needs are met, particularly when they first start at the setting. Parents receive a monthly newsletter and younger children have written daily diaries. The notice board informs parents of the menu for today, together with the vegetarian option and keeps parents up to date with other forthcoming activities, such as the hairdressers visit next week. However partnerships with other providers involved in the delivery of the EYFS are not so well established yet, marring the development of continuity of experience between settings.

The premises are clean, warm and welcoming to children. Displays and photos adorn the walls showing activities the children have been involved in. Resources are well maintained and stored appropriately for children to access themselves

depending on the age and development of the child, they are used well to achieve the planned goals in learning and development outcomes.

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

Children make good progress in all areas of development and learning as they are supported well by staff who have a secure knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Observations of the children are carried out and staff use 'WOW' posters in each room to record children's achievements on post-it notes which are later transferred into their learning journeys.

Children feel secure and safe and staff ensure that time is taken with new starters to ensure that they settle easily into the setting. For example, trying to find toys that the child likes to help them settle more easily. While sitting at the table for snack the staff informed the children that they were moving into the blue room for creative/art next, the children said that they did not want to move into the blue room as they wanted to stay in their room to play with the role play area. Staff allowed the children to make their own decision on the next activity and used their choice to guide them for the morning's activities. This ensures flexibility in planning for the group while taking into account the views of the children in an enabling environment.

Older children enjoy their weekly football coaching session which is held at the Grammar school across the road and trips to the Forest School to develop their outdoor experiences. All children have the opportunity to enjoy creative activities from exploring the properties of cornflour to playing with the cooked spaghetti and water play for the babies. Areas of learning overlap as the older children are able to use sand trays to trace out the letter of week with their finger. This week it was 'S' for snake which they were also able to show the inspector in the phonic book. Younger children select from a wide range of mark making resources including printing and chinks, looking at the printed words and letters around the room.

The role play area in the pre-school room is currently a kitchen which links in with pancake day and Chinese New Year. The children were very busy in the kitchen making pancakes and talking about the pan being hot and not touching it. They particularly enjoy washing up all the utensils after, drying with the tea towels and packing away. The children were so engrossed with the pretend making of pancakes staff introduced biscuit making into the activities for the day to continue the experience.

Children's behaviour is managed well with clear and concise procedures practised in all rooms. Staff use distraction methods for the children and are good role models for them. They ask younger children who would like to come to do an activity at the table rather than just picking up a child allowing them choice and developing their self-esteem. Older children are able to access the toilet themselves and get ready for outdoor play, putting on their coats and hats themselves.

Children enjoy meals that are freshly prepared and delivered from the Grammar school close by. All dietary needs are appropriately met and vegetarian and other options always available. Older children line up to collect their food and serve themselves to vegetables, while younger children are served at their tables. Fresh water in individual cups are available for all the children, the older children have name tags on the cups, while the younger ones look for their picture to identify their own cup.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
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	2
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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	2
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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