



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 142863

DfES Number: 524079

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 10/06/2004
Inspector Name Charlotte Jenkin

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name First Steps Day Nursery
Setting Address 148 Hendford Hill
Yeovil
Somerset
BA20 2RG

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Heather Norris and Penny Sealey
Address 148 Hendford Hill
Yeovil
Somerset
BA20 2RG

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

First Steps Day Nursery was established 12 years ago. It is jointly owned and operated by Heather Norris and Penny Sealey. Both proprietors hold child care qualifications. The nursery is situated in a residential area on the outskirts of the town centre. The property has been converted from a domestic dwelling and is now entirely used for child care purposes. The baby room is on the ground floor and can accommodate nine children aged from birth to two years. The two to three-year-olds have use of three linked rooms and these are also on the ground floor and can accommodate 12 children. Kitchen and sleeping facilities on the ground floor are shared between these rooms, however each room has its own nappy changing area. The pre-school rooms are on the first floor and are self contained with integral toilets and kitchen areas. The nursery also has a fenced garden at the rear.

Fifteen staff are employed at the nursery, all are qualified in the early years. The nursery supports children with special educational needs. The nursery provides cooked meals for the children and cold snacks. They receive support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and accept Government funding for the education of three to five year olds. There are currently 8 funded three-year-olds and 11 funded four-year-olds on roll.

How good is the Day Care?

First Steps Day Nursery provides good quality care for children.

The nursery is very welcoming to parents and children and staff greet them as they enter. The fully qualified staff team and high adult to child ratios ensure children are well supported, cared for and their development is monitored closely. Space is well utilized and outdoors is well laid out to offer children a range of experiences. There is a good range of toys and equipment available that promotes children's development in all areas, although there is scope to improve the furniture for sleeping toddlers.

Staff are aware of their responsibilities with respect to children's safety and

supervise and protect them daily. Risk assessments detail potential risks to children during specific activities, but do not include the building. Staff promote appropriate hygiene practices through daily routines and accident and medication records are in place, although some lack detail. Snacks and meals offered to the children are healthy and nutritious and staff cater well for children's dietary needs and preferences. Staff have a good knowledge of child protection issues and procedures.

Staff plan a good balance of structured and free play activities that help children make progress in all areas of development. They interact well with the children and are calm and gentle in their manner. Staff implement the equal opportunities policy in their daily practice and respect children's differences and individuality. Staff use sensitive and age appropriate methods for managing children's behaviour and are calm and consistent in their approach. They are aware of the sources of support to gain advice for supporting children with special educational needs into the nursery.

Staff liaise closely with parents regarding the care, routines and preferences of their children and respect their wishes fully. Parents receive detailed information regarding their child's progress and have regular exchanges of information.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

What is being done well?

- The fully qualified staff team and high adult to child ratios ensure children are well supported and cared for, and their development is monitored closely. Space is well utilized and the outdoor area is very well laid out to offer children a range of experiences.
- Staff plan a good balance of structured and free play activities that help children make progress in all areas of development. Children explore and choose the activities on offer, relate well to staff and peers and are engaged in their play. Staff interact well with the children, are calm and gentle in their manner, and praise them for their attempts and achievements. Children are happy and confident in the nursery.
- Staff are aware of the equal opportunities policy and implement this in their daily practice. They respect children's differences and individuality, and give all children equal chances to access and participate in the routines and activities of the nursery.
- Staff use sensitive and age appropriate methods for managing children's behaviour. They are good role models for children, are calm and consistent in their approach and children's behaviour is very good.
- Staff liaise closely with parents regarding the care of their children and respect their wishes fully. Parents receive detailed information regarding their child's progress and development and are invited to take records home regularly for comment.

What needs to be improved?

- the equipment available for toddlers to rest or sleep on
- the risk assessments of the building, to minimise risks to children
- the arrangements for parents to acknowledge medication administered to their children.

Outcome of the inspection

Good

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?**The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection**

Std	Recommendation
6	Develop risk assessments to include potential hazards to children, with respect to the nursery building.
7	Ensure parents acknowledge medication given to their children.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

First Steps Day Nursery provides high quality early years education for children and many good first hand experiences ensure that children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning.

Teaching is very good, staff have a good understanding of the early learning goals and this is shown in the individual plans produced for the children and in the way that these are linked to the stepping stones. Good knowledge of the curriculum is also shown in the way that work is adapted for older and more able children or for children with special needs. Staff manage behaviour well and give clear explanations to children, they praise children regularly. They organise time, space and resources well to give a very balanced programme. Assessment is well used to plan future work.

Leadership and management is very good. The two managers work well together and their combined talents compliment one another. They give a strong lead and encourage staff to attend training and are both willing to attend training too. They appraise the staff regularly and are able to assess strengths and weaknesses. Staff also hold meetings amongst themselves to discuss progress and to plan future work. The staff are very caring and willing to train to improve their performance. The setting is very well organised.

There is a generally good parental partnership. Parents feel well informed about their child's learning but would like to have more information on the curriculum. They are very impressed by the caring staff and how well the nursery is organised. As one parent said "What impressed me was the friendliness, it was very purposeful and children are calm and polite"

What is being done well?

- The organisation of the nursery rooms where children are able to access equipment easily.
- The leadership and management of the nursery which is strong and effective at all levels.
- The provision of very good resources which enhance the educational programme.
- The ethos of the whole nursery which is very positive.
- The way the garden is used to enhance the educational programme, in particular the programme for knowledge and understanding of the world which is enriched with many first hand experiences.
- The good teaching and very caring attitude of the staff which leads to happy and well motivated, autonomous children.

- The ongoing improvement of planning and assessment which tracks children's progress well.

What needs to be improved?

- The parent's understanding of the early learning goals and the foundation stage.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the staff were asked to:

Improve the quality of teaching and assessment by providing more opportunities for the four-year-olds to initiate their own activities and select from the full range at each session. Ensure that children's time engaged in adult directed activities is shorter and more appropriate to their needs. Enable children to work in a greater variety of group situations. Deploy staff more effectively to challenge children who learn more quickly and to support children who learn more slowly.

Staff have made more free choice time available and there is now a good balance of directed and free choice activities. Children choose activities well and staff work well as a team and take small groups for different activities, both in teaching and free time activities. The very individual planning ensures that all children work at their own pace. Staff are well deployed.

Staff were also asked to develop procedures for regular assessment to ensure children's progress towards the early learning goals.

They have worked hard to develop the assessment programme and children's individual assessment files. Children have individual play plans and assessment is used for future planning. Development in this area is ongoing and working very well.

Therefore improvement since the last inspection is very good.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are interested in all that is offered. They are very autonomous and express themselves well. They show developing confidence and independence as they help themselves to snack and pour out their own drinks. They are very well behaved and relationships are good all round. They have good understanding of self care as they talk about sun cream and not getting sun burn. They learn about their own culture and celebrate other cultures too.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are able to talk with confidence and with clarity. They listen well to stories and they show good use of language as they discuss with staff. They are able to link letter sounds and letters well and sound out words to write. They enjoy role play and act out experiences such as going on a picnic. They write their names and form letters well. They also write for a purpose as they make signs around the nursery.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Everyday activities are used well to develop understanding of numbers and mathematical thinking, for example adding two groups of children together to find out how many children were at school today. In this way children develop good understanding of addition and subtraction. They count regularly, name shapes, understand positional language and solve simple problems. They enjoy pattern making such as with the fruit in the story of 'The Hungry Caterpillar'.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children have good opportunities to investigate and use their senses as they observe their plants and tadpoles growing. In this way they understand 'change'. Programmable toys are well used and enjoyed. Children talk about their own culture as they discuss weddings. They spend time in the garden, using a compass and a great deal of their learning is achieved through good first hand experiences, for example, going out to post cards. Other cultures are also covered.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children have good opportunities to move and do so with confidence and control and awareness of space. The garden and equipment is well used and children play physical games. They show bodily awareness and they use a good variety of equipment such as parachute, tyre and climbing frame. Physical skills with tools such as scissors are also well developed.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children are very skilled at drawing and painting and their work is of a high standard. They have good opportunities to explore colour and sound in a free way and drawing from real life is encouraged as they are given clip boards to draw in the garden. They sing a variety of songs and sing with enjoyment and dance to their 'Sticky Kids' tapes. They respond well to all that is offered, they particularly enjoy role play and listening to music.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- There are no significant weaknesses to report but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- include information on the foundation stage of learning in the information provided for parents.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.