



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY287532

DfES Number: 535813

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 10/01/2005
Inspector Name Beryl Baggs

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name First Steps Moorlands
Setting Address Moorlands Infant School
Moorfields Road
Bath
Bath and North East Somerset
BA2 2DQ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name First Steps Centre for Children and Families 265485 1012690

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name First Steps Centre for Children and Families
Address Woodhouse Road
Twerton
Bath
BA2 1SY

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 Moorlands is a full day care nursery managed by First Steps Centre for Children and Families. It operates from a building in the grounds of Moorlands Infant School, Bath and has its own car park.

The nursery is open from 08:30 to 17:30 Monday to Friday all year except for Bank Holidays and two in-service training days. The nursery provides full-time and part-time places. The nursery does not provide overnight care.

The nursery building provides separate play space for babies under two years, two-year-olds and for three- to under five-year-olds. There is access to an outside play space at the rear of the building.

The nursery is registered for 50 children from birth to under 5 years. There are 80 children on roll of whom 24 three-year-olds and 10 four-year-olds receive nursery education grant. Four children have special educational needs and one child uses English as an additional language.

There are 13 childcare staff all of whom hold or are working towards a childcare qualification. In addition the nursery employs two administration assistants, a cook, a cleaner and a caretaker handyman. The nursery is supported by the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

First Steps Moorlands provides good quality care for children. The manager is qualified and has good management skills. All staff are qualified or working towards a qualification. The nursery is bright and warm with colourful photographic displays of children at play. The nursery provides good quality child-sized furniture and bright attractive toys. All records are stored safely and confidentially. The outdoor play space cannot be used in wintry weather as it is muddy in places.

Staff have a good awareness of hazards for children and keep children safe.

Children only go home with authorised people. Children wash their hands after using the toilet and before handling food. They enjoy a healthy, nutritious hot lunch cooked on the premises and fruit, biscuits and rice cakes for snacks. Children can bring a packed lunch. There is good support for children with special educational needs. Play plans are put in place with the advice of parents and other professionals. Staff know how to recognise a child at risk. There is effective liaison with parents and professionals where parents and children need support.

The nursery cares for children in three age groups. Staff play with the children, encouraging language and praising their achievements. Staff use distraction to manage children's behaviour. There is a calm and quiet approach; staff talk to children about their expectations. Children have choices in play activities and enjoy the positive images of how other people live.

There is an excellent support service in place to help parents develop their enjoyment of play with children. Parents are greeted with smiles and enquiries after home events. They hear information about the children's progress from key workers at consultation meetings and on a daily basis.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

What is being done well?

- Staff are encouraged to attend training to develop qualifications and improve their childcare practice.
- Staff provide warm care for babies and toddlers, sitting on the floor with the children and interacting with them at all times.
- The building is bright and warm with attractive displays of photographs of children at play.
- Children enjoy a healthy and nutritious hot lunch cooked on the premises or bring a packed lunch.
- Effective play plans for children with special educational needs are used to help children develop skills and manage their behaviour.

An aspect of outstanding practice:

Parents are very well supported by family workers through individual and group work to resolve problems and to enjoy play with their children. This support can be in the nursery or at home.

What needs to be improved?

- the outside play area, to improve its use throughout the year for children's large physical play.

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

There are no complaints to report.

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
4	Continue to develop the outside play area to improve its use throughout the year for children's large physical play.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

First Steps Moorlands is of good quality. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

Teaching is generally good. Staff understand how children learn through play. Plans identify the learning aims of activities and now include how to extend this for more able children. Staff support unsettled children well. They value their ideas and choices. Children with special educational needs are well supported, with play plans devised with parents and professionals. Behaviour is generally managed well using distraction and children are given individual help. Staff record children's achievements to share with parents and to develop further activities. Planning does not ensure a full range of activities and resources are always available, for example, mark-making, free creative art and physical play are not always included. There are distractions and interruptions to the session, such as at story time and during the changeover of activities, when children are not engaged or involved in play.

Leadership and management is generally good. Clear management support and the development of good practice help staff to improve the provision. Several previously unidentified aspects of practice were improved during the inspection following discussion. Ideas from training events are implemented. Staff rightly value the relationship with parents and opportunities for parents to learn to enjoy play with their children. They identify the outside play area and the need to balance the needs of all the children within the session as areas for improvement.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents have good information about the nursery and children's learning. Photographic displays are labelled with what children are learning. Some parents receive additional support with children's play at home. Parents share information about their children initially and then each day with key workers and other staff.

What is being done well?

- Children are generally confident, eager to learn and curious about the world around them.
- Children enjoy stories and look at books as individuals and with adults in the book corner.
- Children explore the local area and learn about the changing seasons and wildlife in the garden.
- Staff have good management support that praises good practice and continues to develop good nursery education for the children.
- Parents have good access to children's development records which they can discuss with the key workers three times each year.

What needs to be improved?

- plans for large physical play for children in each session, indoors if outdoor play is not available
- the planning of the sessions to ensure all aspects of the curriculum are covered regularly especially opportunities for children to use writing in their play, to begin to link sounds to letters, and begin to learn about simple addition and subtraction. Ensure children have frequent opportunities to be freely creative with a wide range of art and craft materials
- the organisation of the session to ensure a variety of resources are available to support children's learning from a topic and to avoid disruptions which limit children's attention and concentration

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Many children are confident to come into nursery, eager to play and curious about the activities. Less confident children have trust in the adults and soon settle to play. They take turns in games and learn the consequences of their behaviour such as other children not being able to see in circle time. They listen to stories and understand about the feelings of others. The behaviour of some children disrupts the concentration of others at times. Children have limited opportunities for self-care.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children talk well to each other and the adults. They enjoy stories and rhymes in circle time. They look at books as individuals and with adults. They use language well to express their ideas and describe what they are doing. Although some children can write their names well, children do not have everyday access to mark-making materials in their play. They do not have routine opportunities to link sounds to letters.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children count objects well; some children count to 14 confidently. They count routinely to start singing, and play games matching dots on the dice to moves on a board. They enjoy number songs. Children recognise everyday objects in shapes, match shapes, and colour in jigsaws. Children weigh and measure, and identify patterns when threading beads. Children do not have everyday opportunities to learn about first addition and subtraction with groups of objects; one more and one less.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children explore their reflections in mirrors, observe melting ice cubes and study bugs in the garden with magnifying glasses. They build with bricks, boxes and train track. They use telephones in role play. They learn about the passage of time during the day, the life cycle of frogs and changes in the seasons. They learn about the area around the nursery, walking to the shops and the park. They enjoy activities about Chinese New Year, Christmas, Easter, Divali and their own birthdays.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children move with confidence. They balance, pedal and jump with assurance. They negotiate the play space well, avoiding furniture, activities and other children. In group time they carefully step between children. They wash their hands, learn about healthy living and how their bodies work. They use tools with assurance from scissors and brushes to toy boxes and chairs. Children do not have everyday physical play when they cannot go outside.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children enjoy singing, play instruments to accompany their singing and learn about rhythm and beats. They use their imagination in role play and with small world toys, acting out familiar situations such as birthday parties. They express their delight in achievements through smiles and words of pleasure. Although children explore mixing colours and bubble paint, much is adult directed. Children do not have everyday opportunities to explore art and craft materials in a freely creative way.	

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

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally 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: THE KEY ISSUES

- develop plans for large physical play for children in each session, indoors if outdoor play is not available
- improve the planning and evaluation of the sessions to ensure all aspects of the curriculum are covered regularly and ensure children have frequent opportunities to be freely creative with a wide range of art and craft materials
- consider the organisation of the session to ensure a variety of resources are available to support children's learning from a topic and to avoid disruptions which limit their attention and concentration.

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.