

Tiny Steps Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date 14/02/2011
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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

Tiny Steps Day Nursery opened under the current ownership in 2008. It is owned and managed by an individual provider. The nursery operates from three playrooms in premises located in the Longsight area of Manchester. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm and closes on Bank Holidays and for five staff training days over the course of the year.

The nursery is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 55 children may attend the nursery at any one time, no more than 16 of whom may be under the age of two years. There are currently 78 children aged from 16 months old to under five years on roll. The nursery support children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

There are 12 members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate qualifications in early years. The manager holds Qualified Teacher Status and Early Years Professional Status. The nursery provides funded early education for two, three and four-year-olds and has links with local schools.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The nursery promotes children's welfare and learning successfully and has some outstanding aspects. Positive working relationships with parents and highly successful partnerships with others involved in children's well-being promote security in children's lives. Children's safety is given the highest regard. Inclusion is well promoted and children are valued for their individuality and treated with respect. Systems for self-evaluation are developing effectively and the nursery is fully committed to the continual improvement of their practice. Areas for further development centre on increasing children's awareness of print and encouraging all parents to contribute to the ongoing observations of their children's learning.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend children's learning in the outdoor area by creating an environment rich in print where children can learn more about signs, symbols and words
- build on existing good partnership working by encouraging all parents to contribute to the ongoing observations of their children's learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Effective leadership and management enable the nursery to run smoothly. Staff work well together as a team to meet children's needs. Record keeping is well organised and an extensive range of policies and procedures underpin the safe care and management of children. Children's welfare is considered to be of paramount importance. Extensive procedures for the recruitment, selection and successful induction of new staff ensure that children are cared for by suitable people. Children are fully protected from harm as there is a comprehensive awareness of safeguarding issues among staff. The nursery builds excellent relationships with key agencies and they work collaboratively to ensure that the welfare and protection of children is given their utmost priority. Regular and robust risk assessments are undertaken to keep children safe. As a result, children move around the playrooms freely and with great confidence. A good range of toys and equipment stimulate children's curiosity and meet their developing needs.

The nursery is proactive in implementing ongoing improvements to support the continual development of their service. Close links are established with a Sure Start teacher who offers guidance and supports the nursery in developing practice. New ideas are promptly acted upon to promote positive outcomes for children. Staff are encouraged to access training to support their ongoing professional development and all staff hold a certificate in first aid. Self-evaluation and monitoring systems for the nursery are appropriately rigorous to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Actions taken, such as the development of the outdoor area, are well-chosen and carefully planned. Recommendations raised at the last inspection have been successfully met. For example, the menus now provide a wider variety of foods to promote children's healthy growth and development.

There is a good partnership with parents which contributes to meeting children's needs successfully. Detailed information is sought prior to admission, helping staff to recognise the uniqueness of each child. Parents' wishes for the care of their children are adhered to, such as, meeting specific dietary requirements. Discussions and a daily record sheet on a child's well-being help to ensure effective communication is maintained. The nursery has recently introduced a lending library service to support parents in further extending their children's learning at home. However, not all parents are actively encouraged to contribute to their children's ongoing observation records to share what they know about their children's learning. Parents are happy with the service the nursery provides. Their views are actively sought through the use of parental questionnaires. Staff value parents' contributions and, as a result of their comments, have introduced a quiet area with comfortable furnishings in the pre-school room. This enables children to relax and unwind their bodies.

The nursery's commitment to working with other providers who are involved in children's care and learning is exemplary. They take a lead role in establishing a highly effective working relationship with local schools. Well-established channels of communication are used very successfully to fully promote continuity of care and education. For example, time is allocated for staff to work with teachers in the

school environment to support children from the nursery who have additional needs. The nursery display school uniforms from feeder schools and frequently share photographs of reception class teachers, the classrooms and equipment with children. This ensures every child receives a very smooth transition into school.

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

Children are happy and show a strong sense of security in the nursery. They feel totally at ease and build strong relationships with staff. This successfully promotes their emotional well-being. Staff play closely with children and support their learning through encouragement and effective questioning. The use of frequent praise and staff's cheerful manner encourages children to be good humoured and self-assured. Children engage in a broad range of adult-led and child-initiated activities which appeal to their interests. This strongly motivates them to learn and, as a result, they make good progress in their development. Clear and effective systems are in place for observing and assessing children's progress. Information from observational assessment is used successfully to plan for the next steps in children's learning.

Children actively engage in play and develop good levels of concentration. The lively and supportive atmosphere enables them to freely express themselves. A wide range of experiences are on offer to promote children's sensory development. For example, young children show fascination as staff repeatedly sprinkle sand onto their hands and children become intrigued as they explore shaving foam. Children behave well and develop self-esteem as staff award stickers and certificates for their achievements. Self-help skills are developing well as children are encouraged to pour their own drinks and independently hang their coat on their named peg.

Children are beginning to recognise their name on their name card and gain pleasure from books. This helps them to gain an understanding that print carries meaning. Indoors, a good range of print is on display. However, less emphasis is given to displaying print in the outdoor play area to further enhance children's learning. Singing is very popular throughout the nursery and children thoroughly enjoy taking part in action rhymes. Staff introduce children to sign language and successfully promote children's language and understanding, through good quality interactions. Effective practices are in place to support children who speak English as an additional language. For example, staff use photographs and symbols of everyday situations and activities within the nursery to support children's understanding. Children's communication skills across all age groups are developing well.

Mathematical awareness is well promoted. Children learn about volume and capacity as they fill containers with sand and water. Staff make good use of number rhymes and props to help children learn to count and solve simple number problems. Children have access to some electronic and programmable resources to support their learning. Younger children become curious about how things work as they press buttons on resources and listen intently to different sounds. As the pre-

school children play independently on the computer, they develop good skills for the future and become competent in using a mouse. Children take part in activities linked to various festivals to develop an understanding of the wider world; for example, during Eid, they make celebration cards. They confidently express their creativity by painting freely at the easel and creating their collage. Eagerness is shown as children explore a range of musical instruments and they take great delight in playing in the role play area, pretending to iron and prepare food for their friends.

Good emphasis is placed on maintaining a healthy lifestyle. The outdoor play area is well used and provides children with plenty of fresh air and exercise. Children develop their physical skills as they learn to competently ride bikes and chase their friends. A good range of practices prevent the risk of cross-infection. Staff wear disposable gloves and aprons when nappy changing and visitors are requested to wear a protective shoe covering before entering the room where there are crawling babies. Well-established routines help children learn about healthy practices and they become independent in their personal hygiene. For example, they wash their hands thoroughly and children over the age of two brush their teeth to promote good dental hygiene. Through well-planned activities, children gain an excellent awareness of safety issues, such as, stranger danger and road safety. They use a range of equipment, such as, rolling pins and cutters, in an extremely safe and competent manner. As children walk down the stairs, they act very sensibly and remind one another to hold onto the hand rail tightly.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
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	1
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

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