

Footsteps Childcare Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY355990

Inspection date

02/03/2011

Inspector

Julie Wright

Setting address

The Old Sunday School, Well Street, Tywardreath, Par,
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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

Footsteps Childcare Centre is a privately owned day care provision. It opened in 2007 and operates from a converted Sunday School building. It is situated in the village of Tywardreath, near to Par, in Cornwall. All children share access to a secure enclosed play area. Children attend from the local area and by arrangement can be taken to and from Tywardreath school.

The provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register, to care for a maximum of 42 children aged under eight years, at any one time. Care is available for children aged from three months to 11 years. At present there are 88 children on roll. The setting is in receipt of early education funding for children aged three and four years. The nursery is open each weekday, from 7.30am until 6.00pm for 51 weeks of the year. There are 11 staff employed to work with the children, 10 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and enjoy themselves at Footsteps Childcare Centre. They benefit from a good variety of indoor and outdoor play opportunities. Staff have a secure understanding of children's learning, development and individual needs. Policies and procedures are in place to promote children's health, safety and overall progress, most of which are implemented in full. Staff have positive working relationships with parents, carers and relevant others, which ensures consistent and complementary care. Significant improvements have been made since the last inspection and the setting demonstrates a good capacity for continuous development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- promote consistent good hygiene practice throughout the nursery
- improve the provision of resources and activities to promote children's early awareness of diversity.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff ensure that children are safely cared for in secure, suitable premises. Risk assessments are conducted and reviewed on a regular basis. Daily checks are made to identify and minimise potential hazards to children. Emergency evacuation

procedures are routinely practised, with relevant details recorded in the fire log. Robust vetting and recruitment procedures ensure that children are cared for by suitable persons. Secure entrance and exit systems are in place, with CCTV to monitor persons arriving and leaving the building. Staff have a clear awareness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. They attend training to ensure up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues. Parents are advised of all procedures in respect of staff responsibilities and children's welfare. Mandatory records and documentation required for childcare provision are maintained in suitable order.

Children's play areas are well equipped with toys and equipment to support all stages of development. Rooms are warm and welcoming, with children's creativity displayed, which promotes self-esteem and a sense of belonging. The outdoor play area has been developed to provide children with further learning opportunities. Staff provide frequent access to the outside area, offering children a choice of where they want to play. Toys and play materials are readily accessible, although positive images of different backgrounds and disability are not consistently evident. Staff are conscientious about food safety, including storage arrangements and microwave cooking guidelines. Children develop independent skills and understand daily hygiene routines. Most hygiene procedures are effective, although not always consistent with regard to hand washing for the youngest children. Parents provide packed lunches for their children and named drinks containers. Staff provide snacks with additional drinks and meet children's individual dietary requirements. Children respond well to staff and understand the age-appropriate boundaries, which help to keep them safe. Staff promote positive behaviour through praise, encouragement and recognition of children's achievements.

Staff have made good progress in their implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. They are developing clear systems to observe, assess and plan for children's individual development. Children's ideas and interests are also taken into account during planning and preparation of activities. Space is used well to promote areas of learning and to meet children's individual needs. Ratios are maintained and there is an effective key person system in place. This means that children feel secure and well supported by staff. Parents provide positive feedback at inspection and they are pleased with their children's progress. Staff work closely with parents and others to promote inclusion and support children's development. They also have good links with the local school which ensures smooth transitions for children. Formal and informal meetings are held for parents to meet with staff and see the children's records of development. Information for parents includes use of daily diaries in the baby room, whilst pre-school children's activities are recorded on the board in their room. Photographs are displayed on electronic frames so that parents can see children in their activities. Parents also receive newsletters about forthcoming events and are welcome to take part. Staff evaluate the effectiveness of their provision and identify areas for further development. They have addressed previous recommendations resulting in improvements to assessment systems, safety, record keeping and partnerships with parents. Staff continue to attend appropriate childcare training and achieve relevant qualifications.

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

Children are cared for in two groups, babies aged from three months to two years, and pre-school children. Toddlers settle readily into the pre-school group following visits to familiarise themselves with the room and staff. In the baby room staff follow parental guidance about babies' routines and preferences. Consequently, babies are content with their needs met. They recognise familiar faces in the consistent staff team, smiling and holding out their arms to welcome a cuddle. Babies take notice of their surroundings and are inquisitive as they become more mobile. They learn to pull themselves up and look into the reflective wall surface. Babies crawl and reach for accessible toys or interesting items. For example, they take items from the treasure basket to investigate textures and different forms. Sensory play includes a variety of mediums, such as, paint, water and 'gloop'. Babies enjoy the sensations as they squiggle their fingers in a tray and then make marks or hand prints. Staff promote early speech and language development, encouraging the youngest children to make sounds and copy words. They sing nursery rhymes and action songs to babies and toddlers, during which young children begin to copy and learn to join in. Babies and toddlers benefit from fresh air through regular outdoor play and walks in the local community.

In the pre-school room children enjoy plenty of 'free-play', which provides them with independent choices. They arrive happily and show pleasure at seeing their friends. Children separate confidently from adults and readily join an activity, for example, they go to paint or to the play-dough table. They use tools and equipment with competence, brushing paint carefully onto their paper, or making prints and shapes with the dough cutters. Children are cooperative and play very well together, for instance, they willingly share resources and construct complex track lines on the floor. They play imaginatively with their vehicles, chatting to each other about what they are doing. Staff supervise well, providing time for children to explore and discover by themselves, whilst also offering support to extend challenges to learning. Mathematical language is encouraged throughout activities, enabling children to consider number and to make comparisons. They take part in baking activities, which provides opportunities for children to weigh ingredients and consider difference in liquid or solid forms. Staff provide food tasting activities for children and aim to extend children's vocabulary as they describe the experience. For example, children are encouraged to consider 'sweet or sour' tastes and to talk about texture, shape, smell and colour. These activities sometimes link to an event or topic, such as, Chinese New Year or St Piran's Day. Children begin to develop an early understanding of some cultural traditions. However, provision of activities or resources to promote children's awareness of similarities and difference is not extensive.

Children enjoy outings within the local community, visiting the primary school and independent shops, such as, the butchers, grocers and hairdressers. Staff provide opportunities for children to use money and make purchases, making learning a fun experience. Outings are risk assessed and include a visit to the garage so that children can see the hydraulic ramp in action. Children develop a good sense of road safety, they wear hi-visibility tabards and know where to cross the road with

care. They become aware of people who help them and their different roles. For example, they learn about Doctors, Dentists and emergency services. Staff welcome parents into the setting to share learning experiences with the children. This provides highly interesting opportunities for children, such as, to examine locally caught lobster and crab. Children investigate a flat fish using their senses to during the activity to describe touch, smell and taste. This activity is then followed with a special lunch of fish and chips for the children. Parents and children also enjoy shared learning at home through the setting's book lending scheme. A variety of physical play activities promote children's skills and coordination. These include time limited periods in the 'Jungle Gym' play area and music and movement sessions.

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	3
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	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
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