

First Steps Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Beverly A Kemp-Russell

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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

First Steps Nursery is part of a chain of nurseries and is privately owned. It was registered in 1990, although, it has been at the current premises since 2001. It operates from purpose built premises in Ruskington, Lincolnshire. The setting serves the local community and surrounding areas. There is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The setting opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm hours for children aged from birth to eight years old. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. The numbers and ages of the children attending are consistent with the staffing arrangements and the space available to meet the children's needs. The setting is registered to care for no more than 70 children at any one time. There are currently 97 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs 19 members of childcare staff. Of these, 17 hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The management and staff team successfully promote all aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework requirements within the suitable and inclusive environment. Children are making good progress in their learning and development. The management and staff team meet children's individual needs by the good quality provision they provide. Outstanding partnership with parents and good working partnerships with other providers and professionals promotes an integrated, positive approach to children's care and learning. Good improvements have been made since the last inspection and the setting's appropriate system of self-evaluation is continuing to move the setting forward.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further systems to ensure observation and assessments are consistent between all staff and children's next steps are clearly identified for all children
- develop further robust systems to ensure a regular two-way flow of information with other providers.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

All children are cared for in an innovative, warm and welcoming environment, where they are well-supported inline with their individual needs. The inspiring use of space, resources and learning systems enable children to make good progress towards the early learning goals. Children are fully safeguarded and their welfare is significantly enhanced and promoted through robust policies and procedures, which all staff have an excellent understanding.

Leadership and management is strong. All necessary records and documents are in place and are outstanding. They are completed with relevant information and used to safeguard children and meet their needs to the highest standard. The superb policies and procedures are clearly understood by all the staff and implemented exceedingly well in all areas. For example, the policy for safeguarding children gives utmost priority to children and families and is put into practice by highly skilled staff in this area. This results in children feeling safe and secure throughout the setting. All staff gain excellent information from parents and carers, which enable children to make rapid progress from their specific starting points. It also motivates staff to value each child inline with their individual needs. Partnership working with parents and carers is excellent. Staff nurture purposeful relationships with parents and have thorough support systems in place, such as learning journey books where parents contribute. Information is continually exchanged and shared through the setting's clear communication channels but in a confidential and professional manner. Effective systems are in place to keep parents up-to-date with their children's progress and development and parents are also actively encouraged to contribute to their children's records. Children also benefit because the setting liaises with some external agencies or services. However, robust systems to ensure a regular two-way flow of information with other providers are not fully developed. All staff work as a strong team to ensure support and a smooth transition for all children.

The staff and management are committed to developing the service they provide and they work with Local Authority advisors to make improvements where necessary. Improvements have been made since the last inspection, which have enhanced care and learning experiences for children. The setting uses an effective system of self-evaluation which is constantly being updated to reflect current practice in the setting to ensure children benefit from improved practice in all areas.

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

The early years staff have a clear understanding of the learning and development requirements. They observe children's individual learning and record their development in their learning journeys and diaries. Some staff are very skilled in their recording. However, systems to ensure observation and assessments are consistent between all staff and children's next steps are clearly identified are not

fully developed. Most staff utilise the information they have obtained from concise observations to challenge and extend children's learning as they play. Children are cared for in a safe, secure, well-maintained environment. Highly comprehensive health and hygiene policies and procedures are in place to minimise the risk of cross-infection. Children benefit from a healthy diet, as they are served nutritious and well-balanced cooked meals. Parents are given the choice of their child having a hot meal or of providing their own children with a packed lunch. Fresh drinking water is freely accessible to children and systems are in place to ensure each child's specific dietary requirements are met. Children access outside play daily to fully promote their health and well-being. Children have varied and stimulating opportunities to access a very good range of play materials outdoors which fully promotes their learning. For example, children have great fun playing in the potting shed and planting herbs in the garden to watch them grow. Children's awareness of safety issues is also extremely well promoted through discussions, activities and regular events. The road safety officer has attended the nursery to promote this. Children are also encouraged to take calculated risks with staff re-enforcing the possible dangers to help children to become aware of these and assess the situation for themselves. For example, when playing on the large equipment outside, staff support children but whilst encouraging their play.

Children are making good progress in their learning and development. All staff clearly provide activities and resources taken from children's interests. For example, one child is very focused on cars, therefore, staff encourage creativity in painting by using car tracks to make marks. Planning, observation and assessment systems provide a range of adult-led and child-initiated play experiences for children. All children are making good progress in their literacy skills. Children are developing their speaking and listening skills well and are supported by their key workers. Children develop their emergent writing with a variety of resources and discuss what is meaningful. Children have access to a table set up for making marks with a range of media. They interact enthusiastically, pointing to pictures as the key worker reads stories throughout the day. All children have very good opportunities to develop physically. They energetically climb equipment, travel through tunnels and ride bikes. Babies are encouraged to make their first steps and they are supported well when playing in their own outdoor play space. Children develop problem solving, numeracy and reasoning skills well. They become aware that numbers are sequential as they listen to number rhymes and count a variety of resources through their play. Children align puzzles and measure ingredients when baking. Babies build with soft blocks and they are becoming increasingly confident to reach out for familiar toys. Themes and topics are chosen to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them including the life cycle of the frog and growing tomatoes and herbs from seeds in the garden area. All children are encouraged to access all toys and resources regardless of their gender. They have a broad range of activities and resources chosen to celebrate children's diverse cultural backgrounds which promotes equality and diversity effectively. Children have good opportunities to develop their creative skills. They know their colours and paint a variety of pictures and use a variety of natural materials to make collage pictures. Babies explore colour and textures through finger painting and gloop activities. They have access to a sensory area where they can relax and enjoy the experience. Children thoroughly enjoy using the computer and develop skills in all areas of learning whilst having

fun.

Children's behaviour is very good, with staff using appropriate strategies to manage behaviour. Staff act as good role models and are consistent in following the behaviour management policy and procedure. They give praise and encouragement building children's self-esteem and confidence. All of this encourages children to be motivated to learn and develop their skills.

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	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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