

First Steps - Windsor

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique reference number | 108441 |
| Inspection date | 06/09/2011 |
| Inspector | Tracy Bartholomew |

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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 Pre-school was first established 45 years ago and re-registered at its current premises in 1999. It is a committee run pre-school and operates from New Windsor Community Centre in Hanover Way, Windsor. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 28 children under eight years of age may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 24 children on roll in the early years age group. The pre-school currently receives funding for early education for children aged two, three and four years. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The pre-school is open weekdays during term time only, from 9.15am until 12.15pm. The pre-school employs seven staff on a part-time basis, including the manager. Of these, four staff have appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are making good overall progress in their learning and development and their welfare is effectively promoted. They are happy, relaxed and confident. Most partnerships are well established and make a strong contribution to children's development and progress. The management team work well together and continually reflect on their practice. The pre-school demonstrates a good capacity to maintain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- evaluate the organisation of the daily routine to allow children better access to outdoor environments
- work together with other practitioners to support all children moving between the setting and school, to maximise continuity of care and learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is safeguarded effectively because all staff have a thorough understanding of child protection issues and what to do if they have any concerns about a child in their care. A strong emphasis is placed on ensuring children's safety both on the premises and on outings. Comprehensive risk assessments are conducted and staff are vigilant in their supervision of the children. Effective evacuation procedures are in place and practised regularly to allow children to

understand the procedures. A high staff ratio is maintained at all sessions, which has a positive impact on the support children receive and the progress they make. All the required documentation is in place and well-organised. Recruitment procedures are robust and ensure staff are suitably experienced for their role.

The setting has good systems in place to promote equality and diversity. Staff ensure planning incorporates various festivals and cultures to promote children's understanding of the world around them. The staff work well together and are proactive at ensuring all children's needs are met and maintained on a daily basis. Resources are of good quality, accessible and plentiful; these are rotated regularly to promote learning and develop interests. Children clearly know what the pre-school have and ask for additional resources if these are not available, such as additional pushchairs.

Effective self-evaluation identifies clear strengths in the pre-school's practice and areas for ongoing development. For example, the management team and staff have a clear vision to pursue, including training for further qualifications. They evaluate the effectiveness of the activities on offer effectively overall. However, free flow access to the outside area is not fully considered as the pre-school does not currently have a secure area. Nevertheless, the children do experience outside or gym play daily. The views of parents and carers are regularly included in the self-evaluation process. For example, parents are involved in committee meetings and completing questionnaires to help to promote good outcomes for the children.

The pre-school has highly positive relationships with parents and carers and these are well-established. Parents have all the relevant documentation available to them and there is an established open door policy. They are involved in their children's learning and development. For example, some parents introduce children to foods they eat at home, which develops children's understanding of different cultures around the world. Staff have a good awareness of how to build partnerships with others and have developed successful links with relevant professionals, which promotes continuity in children's care and learning. However, some links with schools are not as successful as others, which could hinder the transition processes for some children moving from the pre-school to school.

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

Children are very secure and settled. They arrive confidently and are eager to explore the stimulating resources available and greet their friends. Themes are used very well to engage and extend children's interests. Children create pictures from wool and fabric and develop their creativity further by exploring colours and paints while they create their own pictures of flowers. They excitedly dress-up and engage in play acting within the role play area. They enhance their social skills, for example, as they pretend to be princesses, doctors or Mums and Dads. Early mark making is promoted, for example, as children make pretend lists on imaginary paper of things to buy from the shops. They recount their own life experiences as they use the babies and pushchairs to obtain the shopping from the shop.

Staff interact very well with children. They easily encourage their learning in all areas as they support them in their play. They introduce counting, colour and shapes whilst children are creating their own models from construction. They encourage children to talk about their designs and the pictures they create. Children's ideas are valued and included in displays. Their problem-solving skills and ability to investigate are enhanced and promoted in all area, for example, when playing in sand and water. In addition, children learn how to use new equipment such as chopsticks as part of food tasting for Chinese New Year celebrations. Various methods are used to monitor and assess children's achievements and staff confidently know where to focus and plan their support to challenge the children. Children's achievements are clearly captured in their unique profile assessments, which chart the good progress they make.

Children demonstrate a good awareness of how to promote a healthy lifestyle and follow appropriate personal hygiene routines. They confidently see to their own personal needs, such as, obtaining tissues as and when required. Children's physical development is well supported. They enjoy playing and exploring in the public field and visiting the play parks. They use gym facilities to enjoy balancing and sliding on the soft shapes and mats. Children are taught to be safety conscious without being fearful. They imitate safety rules within their play, for example, by making sure that the 'babies' have their straps on before they go for a walk. Therefore, children demonstrate a good understanding of keeping safe.

Children demonstrate that they feel secure throughout the day, seeking reassurance from staff when needed. They respect the behaviour rules and are all very happy and settled, displaying confidence and high levels of self-esteem. They develop their understanding of diversity, ethnicity and cultural differences through use of toys, resources and team games with other children with backgrounds different to their own. The children enjoy freely exploring a range of tools and creative materials using scissors, glue, tools from the workbench. Overall, children develop a good range of skills that help to prepare them for their future learning and development.

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

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| 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

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| 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 | 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

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| 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

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| 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 | 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

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