

# First Little Steps

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

EY426071

**Inspection date**

19/10/2011

**Inspector**

Susan McCourt

**Setting address**

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**Type of setting**

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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*.

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## **Description of the setting**

First Little Steps nursery registered in 2011. It is registered on the Early Years Register and is privately owned. The nursery has sole use of a pavilion during operational hours, which is situated within King George's Fields, Morden. Play activities take place in the main room, which has integral toilets, a kitchen and direct access to the fields. A section of the fields can be partitioned with portable fencing to provide an enclosed play area. The nursery opens on weekdays, during school term time, from 9.15am to 12.30pm. A maximum of 24 children in the early years age range may attend at any one time. There are 26 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age range. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years. The staff provide support to children for whom English is an additional language. There are three members of staff, two of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The staff are establishing a strong foundation to underpin their working practices. The systems to support children's learning and development are well designed overall, though occasionally lack detail. Staff build good relationships with parents and other childcare providers to foster consistent care for children and meet their individual needs. Policies and procedures are sound, although not all staff are sufficiently aware of some significant details. The manager regularly reflects on her practice to identify areas for improvement so the capacity for continuous development is sound.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

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

- review planning to provide more emphasis on developing children's vocabulary and communication skills
- check all staff have an up-to-date understanding of safeguarding children issues and be able to implement the safeguarding children policy and procedure appropriately.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

The safeguarding arrangements are sound overall. All staff are checked for their suitability and staff are vigilant at keeping the building secure. The child protection policy meets the requirements and staff are aware of their role and responsibility in

protecting children's welfare. However, the manager has not ensured that all staff fully understand the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against them. The risk assessment is thorough and staff follow safety procedures rigorously. For example, when playing outdoors, they carry out regular headcounts and guide children's play into one area. All documentation that underpins children's welfare is well maintained and kept confidential.

The manager is highly motivated to provide high standards of care for children. Staff are now in the process of embedding their new systems into their daily practices. For example, they regularly seek the views of parents and carers and use them to inform important decisions about the nursery. Staff appropriately monitor children's progress and well-being. They meet regularly to evaluate their practice and set new goals to maintain steady continuous improvement.

The space within the nursery is used efficiently to support a wide range of play. For example, messy play is set up in a part of the room with little traffic so that the sand and glue stays in one place. Play equipment is of good quality and designed to support children's learning and development. Children can easily see and reach the toys, which help them to be independent and active learners. Staff promote equality and diversity adequately, working closely with parents to meet children's individual needs. Children with active learning styles are given ample opportunities for active play, which means they can take part in the whole curriculum. Children in vulnerable groups, such as those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress.

The manager establishes very positive relationships with all the parents. The information they share supports consistent care of the children. For example, they devise strategies for behaviour management suitable for the nursery and at home, such as the 'traffic light' system. Children have responded very well to this and know that a green card means they are doing the right things, and a red card means they must stop. Families borrow resources every week so that learning can be supported at home. Parents can see the children's learning journal folders at any time and see that the work done at home contributes to the record. Staff work closely with other professionals, such as speech therapists and the local authority, to provide consistency in a child's development. These relationships are well established and make a strong contribution to children's well-being.

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

Children are well cared for and staff build affectionate relationships with them. Children's ideas and interests are highly valued by staff who adapt plans to include their suggestions. Staff are sensitive to children's energy levels, so if children are becoming very active in their play, staff will create an outdoor game to extend their ideas. The routine allows time for children to adequately explore and investigate the play materials. Children use the outdoor area under close supervision for group games and exploring nature. The learning environment is interesting and inviting, with the children's own work displayed effectively to create

an interesting and stimulating place to play.

Staff have a sound understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The wide range of toys, equipment and activities available ensures that children are exposed to the whole curriculum. Staff plan fun adult-led activities such as making life-size, collage self-portraits, or kite making. Staff use suitable observations of children's achievements to plan their next steps, so as a result children's progress is sound and improving.

Children enjoy their time in the nursery and clearly feel safe and secure. They respond well when staff remind them about safety. Staff are careful to give full explanations so that children can begin to take responsibility for themselves. Children enjoy fruit and other healthy snacks at break time and enjoy the social atmosphere of eating together. They can begin to take care of their personal hygiene and know the hand washing routines, which are well established. Children relish the opportunities for outdoor play and enjoy group games, ball games and using the park equipment. Children are very well behaved. They have mature skills in sharing and turn-taking and have a clear understanding of right and wrong. Children are beginning to remind each other about rules, and as a result play cooperatively with their peers.

Children are independent in their play and enjoy a full range of activities. They use various natural materials and gather autumn leaves and conkers for craft activities. They squeal with excitement and chat to themselves and each other as they play. The learning environment has lots of words and labels on display, so children can understand that print has meaning. However, the planning does not consistently take account of the language children need for communication. This means that younger children are not systematically exposed to a wide vocabulary. Children frequently use the different technological toys such as toy drills in the correct context as they 'mend' things around the room. The development of skills for the future is sound.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
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	3
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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