

# First Steps Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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EY423564

**Inspection date**

16/11/2011

**Inspector**

Anna Davies

**Setting address**

West End Road, Maxey, PETERBOROUGH, PE6 9HA

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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*.

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 owned by First Steps Nursery (Maxey) Limited Company which was registered in 2011. It operates from a building in Maxey, Peterborough, in Cambridgeshire. The nursery serves the local area. There is a large fully enclosed area available for outdoor play. The nursery opens Monday to Friday for 51 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 54 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 67 children in the early years age range on roll. The nursery supports children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs 20 members of child care staff. Of these, 10 hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3. The Manager holds a Level 4 qualification. One member of staff holds a Level 2 qualification. The nursery also employs a cleaner, a cook and relief staff. The nursery provides funded early education for three and four year olds and receives support from the local authority.

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

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at this friendly, vibrant nursery and make good progress in their learning and development. Practice is inclusive and supports all children to actively participate in a good range of activities and learning experiences. Staff have developed strong partnerships with parents and carers. Effective self-evaluation procedures are in place to support the ongoing review of the provision. This supports them in prioritising and implementing improvements, and thereby offering a service which is responsive to both the children's and their families' needs.

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

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

- improve the educational programme for the younger children's creative development so that they have further opportunities to explore their imagination and express their own ideas, this particularly relates to art and craft activities
- develop the link between children's next steps of learning and the planning of activities so that opportunities to promote individual learning are not potentially missed.

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

The staff and manager demonstrate a secure understanding of the procedures to follow in order to safeguard children. Robust recruitment procedures ensure that staff working with the children are suitable to do so. All necessary policies, records and documentation are in place to fully underpin children's safety and well-being. For example, effective risk assessment procedures ensure that the setting is a safe and secure place for children.

Inclusive practice is promoted effectively. Staff know individual children and their families very well and parents make positive comments about this. Clear strategies are in place for the effective support of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This includes effective partnership working with outside agencies and other professionals in order to meet children's additional needs. The staff and management team work very well together. Their level of enthusiasm and passion for their work with the children is evident and beneficial to the children. The nursery has a very friendly, enthusiastic and fun atmosphere and the learning environment is highly stimulating. All rooms are brightly decorated with lots of children's work and photographs displayed giving them a strong sense of belonging. Resources are of good quality and well deployed inside and out. These are stored at children's level to enable them to make independent choices in their play.

Effective partnerships have been established with other local settings. This supports consistency for those children attending more than one setting. Good relationships with the local school helps promote smooth transitions for the older children. Partnerships with parents and carers are strong. Parents share information about children's learning and achievements from home, helping staff to gain a more detailed picture of children's development. Good information is shared between parents and the setting to support consistency and to keep parents well-informed. Parents speak very highly of the setting and staff. For example, one comments 'It is frightening leaving your child but I couldn't be happier with how she and we as parents have been treated'.

Effective systems of self-evaluation are in place. Clear action plans are implemented based on the settings own analysis of priorities for improvement, feedback from parents and children as well as the local authority advisors. Good improvements have been made since the settings re-registration. For example, a ramp has been installed to enable access to the older toddler's mobile building.

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

The majority of staff display a clear understanding of the Early years Foundation Stage and effectively put this into practice to help children make good progress. For example, they pretend to forget the rules of a game so that children have the

opportunity to use their recall skills. They make wonderful use of props from a favourite children's story, to promote children's imagination, ending up with a much enjoyed hunt in the garden. Planning very much relates to children's interests which ensures that activities are enjoyable and meaningful to the children. Regular observations are undertaken of children's learning and next steps identified. However, it is unclear how these feed into the planning to ensure that opportunities to promote individual learning are not potentially missed.

Children show that they feel safe and secure by seeking comfort from staff with whom they have formed warm and fun relationships with. Older children display much confidence as they practise their songs for their up and coming Christmas production for parents. Older children recognise familiar words such as their names. For example, they comment 'that nearly looks like mine' when they find a name that begins with the same letter as theirs. Children's communication skills across all age ranges, are developing well as staff continuously interact with them, listen and respond to their views or vocalisations and introduce them to new vocabulary. Numeracy is successfully filtered through into everyday activities such as counting the number of children present. Children compare the different colour groups of sweets and display their findings in simple graphs. Older babies solve simple problems such as fitting different sized cogs onto the board and pressing buttons to hear noises. Children develop a knowledge and understanding of the world as they learn about their immediate locality through walks and visitors into the setting. They gain an appreciation of the wider world; different cultures, languages and beliefs through multicultural display stimulus and activities. Children confidently explore and investigate materials such as shredded paper and pine cones as well as rice where they watch it 'jump' as they repeatedly hit the tray. These activities lay secure foundations to support children's future economic well-being.

Children's physical development is effectively promoted. Babies' individual routines are followed. For example, they contentedly snuggle into staff for milk feeds and rest undisturbed in the bedroom. Children's creativity is generally promoted well. However, the older toddler's abilities to express their own creativity during art and craft activities is sometimes hindered by staff as they focus too heavily on the end result.

Children's welfare is successfully promoted. Effective hygiene routines are in place to reduce the risk of cross-contamination. For example, a 'no outdoor shoe' policy for all carpeted areas keeps these spaces clean for children playing and crawling on the floor. Children demonstrate an understanding of how their personal hygiene routines protect their good health. For example, they tell staff that they have washed the germs off their hands. Meals and snacks are healthy, balanced and nutritious. Children contribute to the provision of snacks through their baking activities, for example, homemade cheese scones. Children behave very well. Staff offer lots of praise and positive encouragement and reinforcement which boosts children's self-esteem. Children learn about safety through activities such as recognising and agreeing when it is safe to cross the road when out for walks as well as taking part in regular fire evacuation drills.

## 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>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### 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>	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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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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**

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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