

# First Steps Nursery (New Mills) Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY346962
<b>Inspection date</b>	30/08/2011
<b>Inspector</b>	Linda Edwards

<b>Setting address</b>	First Steps Nursery, 1 Hibbert Street, New Mills, HIGH PEAK, Derbyshire, SK22 3JJ
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<b>Type of setting</b>	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 Day Nursery (New Mills) Ltd re-registered under its present owner in 2007. The nursery is situated in the High Peak town of New Mills, Derbyshire. The nursery is registered to provide care for up to 68 children aged under eight years, with no more than 30 being under two years. The nursery is open Monday to Friday 7.45am to 6pm all year round. There are currently 75 children on roll with 26 being in receipt of free nursery education funding. The nursery is registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are 24 members of staff who manage the nursery and work with the children and four support staff. Nineteen of these hold an appropriate childcare qualification. The nursery provides support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery is the designated childcare provider for the local children's centre and receives support from the local authority.

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

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and enjoy their time at this welcoming and child-focused nursery and make good progress towards the early learning goals in relation to their starting points. Managers and staff demonstrate an excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and children. The nursery provides a broad range of resources and activities which are well managed and easily accessible. Procedures to support children's welfare are well implemented and children feel safe and settled. Outstanding partnerships with parents and childcare professionals provide a consistently high standard of support for all children. Staff are highly skilled and use detailed observation and assessment to plan for children's individual learning and development needs.

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

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

- improve two way flow of communication with parents with regard to signing their children in and out.

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

Children are well safeguarded because staff have received specialist training and know what to do if they have concerns about a child's welfare. Staff are appropriately vetted to ensure they are suitable and qualified to work with children. Children are kept extremely safe because the building is secure and visitors sign in as they enter the building. The nursery's policies, procedures and documentation demonstrate a commitment to providing a quality service to children. Parents are provided with the nursery's sickness policy and details of

when ill children are excluded. Regular robust risk assessments are used to ensure a safe environment and identify appropriate procedures. For example, outdoor shoes must be removed before entering the baby room to protect children from dirt and injury, as they crawl and lay on the floor.

The nursery has four childcare rooms where children freely explore a broad range of appropriate resources and activities. For example, staff provide babies with the opportunity to experiment with messy play, feeling paint between their fingers and toes. However, plans to refurbish the nursery did not sufficiently manage how children could continue to access the separate sensory room and music area. Staff have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage; they use observation and assessment to identify children's interests and how to best support their next steps towards the early learning goals. Key workers plan together to provide a mix of adult- and child-initiated activities. They gather boxes of resources to support each child's learning needs and use them to support children's learning throughout the day.

Staff build positive relationships with parents. There is a strong key worker system which ensures children and parents always see a welcoming smile and have a point of contact within the nursery. Parents are eager to praise the service they receive. They say they have, 'every confidence in the care their children receive' and that they 'cannot thank the nursery enough'. There are robust procedures to engage parents and support children to settle quickly. Key workers work with parents to gather comprehensive information about the child and learn about their interests and how they are developing. Parents are given daily verbal feedback on their child's progress, such as what they have eaten and any welfare information. On occasion, systems for communication with parents about signing their children in demonstrate a minor weakness. Younger children's care information is easily accessible for parents via a chart on the room door and parents have free access to their children's records. Newsletters each term provide news and information about what the children will be doing, with details of how parents can be involved in their children's learning. For example, identifying the songs the children will be learning so parents can sing with them at home.

The nursery's equal opportunity policy is implemented well with staff ensuring activities and resources are accessible to all children. Staff know the children very well and make sure they plan to meet individual needs. For example, by adapting activities and using resources from any area of the nursery. The nursery has exemplary relationships with specialist agencies and staff ensure they are able to meet children's needs through training and accessing advice. The leaders of the nursery show an outstanding commitment to providing a highly skilled workforce to support children's progress towards the early learning goals. There is a superb level of support for professional development and a rigorous staff appraisal and supervision regime which identifies strengths and training needs. Staff undertake additional duties as they mentor their colleagues and share their expertise in, for example, the outdoor learning environment. Management and staff show a commitment and ambition to provide a continually improving service with ongoing plans for improving the environment and facilities. However, planning to minimise disruption during change has not been fully effective and has reduced children's

access to resources and activities.

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

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the nursery. They feel safe because they build strong and positive relationships with key workers who provide an exceptional level of support and care. Children stay healthy and their well-being is safeguarded because staff follow highly effective procedures and practices. Children learn about good personal hygiene as they routinely wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Children develop an understanding about keeping themselves and others safe as they learn about taking risks. For example, they wait for their turn on the slide, giving children at the top space sit down safely and ask for a steadying hand from staff. Staff minimise the risk of cross-infection with good hygiene procedures, such as wearing protective aprons and using anti-bacterial spray on surfaces.

Staff plan activities to support children's emerging understanding of a healthy lifestyle. Children access outdoor play every day and take part in physical activity, such as riding bikes and playing hopscotch. Children enjoy being outdoors and regularly visit nearby woods and open countryside. They learn about healthy eating as they are given well-balanced nutritious meals and snacks, and learn about making healthy food choices as older children serve themselves using a cafe-style system. This practical lesson supports children's transition to school where they are required to carry their meals back to the table. Menus are displayed in the entrance so parents know what the children are being served. They feel confident that meals and snacks are appropriate and comment that the nursery encourages their children to eat a wide variety of healthy meals. Water is available within the rooms and staff offer drinks to babies regularly. Children are well rested and their health is supported well because the nursery has good procedures to support children to nap when they are tired. Babies rest in a cosy sleep room and toddlers settle quickly on their own beds with their comforters.

Children enjoy learning and make excellent progress compared to their starting points because their individual learning needs are expertly met. Key workers record children's progress towards the early learning goals with planned observations and snap shot views of events and spontaneous achievements. As a result, children engage with activities because they are suitable and reflect their interests. For example, key workers support listening and language skills by using a child's favourite book to encourage them to repeat familiar words and phrases. Children have good access to age-appropriate information technology resources which help them develop skills they will need in the future. For example, children use cameras to take photographs which they print and proudly take home or display at nursery. Children learn about the natural environment on regular trips into the local countryside and through planting and growing vegetables. They learn how they can affect and support the environment as they reduce waste by regularly visiting the local recycling centre to deposit plastic bottles and cardboard.

Older children behave well towards each other, staff and visitors. They use negotiation to address issues as they play and say please and thank you without prompting. Children understand routines with even young children lining up patiently as they wait to go to the toilet or wash their hands. Staff use activities and resources to support children's positive behaviour, for example, reading and discussing books about feelings. Children learn about the wider world as they use resources and celebrate events from around the world, such as dual language books and Chinese New Year. They learn about where they live and their community as they visit the local area regularly, and also to local shops where they often use what they see as part of their play. For example, a greengrocers shop has been developed within the childcare room, selling what they have seen in the high street. Staff extend children's learning and support children to learn about diversity with activities, such as finding out about unfamiliar fruit and vegetables and incorporating them into the role play shop.

## 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	1
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	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
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

<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	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
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