

# First Steps Moorlands Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY287532  
**Inspection date** 15/03/2012  
**Inspector** Michelle Tuck

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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 Moorlands Children's Centre was registered in 2004. It was designated as a Sure Start Children's Centre in September 2006. The centre is run by First Steps ( Bath), a local registered charity and company, which also runs another larger centre two miles away, together with delivering some family support services across Bath and North East Somerset. It operates from a sole-use building in the grounds of Moorlands Infant School, Bath. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area. Children aged under two have their own separate enclosed area.

The nursery is open from 8am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday, all year round except for bank holidays between Christmas and New Year, and three inset training days. The nursery building provides separate play space for babies under two years, two-year-olds and for three to five-year-olds. The nursery is registered on the Early Years register and both the compulsory part and voluntary part of the Childcare register. They can care for 50 children aged under eight years at any one time. There are currently 130 children on roll. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two, three and four years. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are learning English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 16 childcare members of staff, of these, one is a qualified teacher who holds Early Years Professional Status and a further 14 are qualified to level 3 or above in early years.

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

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children make exceptional progress in their learning and development within a very safe, secure, calm and vibrant environment. They thrive because staff establish exemplary relationships with the children, and are highly skilled and very knowledgeable about their progress. Excellent relationships with parents have been established overall. Highly effective partnerships and efficient assessment arrangements enable children's individual needs to be exceptionally well met. The nursery's extensive monitoring and very high level of commitment to continuous improvement ensures excellent outcomes for children.

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

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- enhancing parents' involvement in their children's learning by introducing 'rhyme time' bags for parents to share with their children at home.

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

Children are highly protected as there are very robust systems in place to ensure the continued suitability of staff. The premises are very secure and visitors are carefully monitored. Management ensures that extensive risk assessments are routinely conducted. These are regularly reviewed and any hazards dealt with promptly to help ensure children's welfare is highly maintained. Therefore, excellent safety measures are implemented. Comprehensive safeguarding policies are understood and consistently used to enable staff to help protect children through collaborative working with key agencies. Staff's safeguarding knowledge is exceptional. Therefore, they are very clear of their roles and responsibilities in effectively protecting children.

The nursery's innovative vision, drive and evaluation of its practice is highly impressive and demonstrated within the day-to-day operations. For example, as a result of introducing home visits more detailed information is gathered from the outset of each child's 'journey'. This has significantly enhanced the very effective settling in processes, support and knowledge of children's individual needs. Through very skilful planning, the premises, both inside and outside has been organised very effectively. This provides children with a rich learning environment, contributing to their excellent experiences and progress. Staff are very effectively supported in their professional development. Consequently, the team are highly skilled, motivated and valued.

There are extremely effective partnerships with parents. They are very well informed about the activities and policies of the setting. The nursery regularly canvasses parents for their views. They feel very involved as they have excellent opportunities to share information about their children's interests and learning experiences at home. Staff are highly committed to involving parents in their children's learning. In addition, staff highly value parents' skills. They invite them to share these with the children, such as cooking dishes from their home country. The nursery has not fully extended their already excellent practice to enable parents to borrow 'rhyme bags' to share with their children at home. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the setting. For example, parents state their child 'loves all the staff' and 'has developed very well in all areas, especially in self-confidence and independence'. Parents state they have been 'very well' supported with overcoming any issues that have arisen with their child. Parents contribute the recognisable improvements they see in their child to the staff team's dedication and hard work. Staff implement excellent systems to work in partnership with the other settings and agencies involved in each child's care and education. Therefore, there is sensitive early intervention extensive planning and excellent communication to ensure children's individual needs are met extremely well.

Children enthusiastically explore as they have excellent access to an extensive

range of high-quality toys and resources. The child-orientated environment is extremely welcoming, for instance this is richly displayed with their ideas and work. Children frequently experiment and demonstrate great imagination as they move freely between the indoors and outside. Children develop very positive attitudes to diversity as an extensive range of activities, resources, displays and celebrations are frequently included and part of the daily discussion. Therefore, they have wonderful experiences such as trying foods from around the world, listening to music, engaging in dances and make craft items.

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

Highly effective planning and excellent organisation means children are extensively challenged. This contributes to their excellent progress and high levels of enthusiasm and confidence. Very detailed assessments are recorded using meaningful observations, photographs and examples of their work in each child's learning journey'. These very effectively track children's progress. Staff are very knowledgeable about children's next steps and this information informs the future planning. Staff take the lead extremely well from children's interests, such as exploring a 'pirate' theme. This extends further to include an excellent range of role play and art activities. Children are heard discussing their role play in the garden saying 'we are the Captain Hook family', using the musical bells for pretend hooks. Children problem solve very well, they play with the water, pouring it from one container to another. They then identify the most effective way to move the water without spilling it is by using a funnel.

Children make exceptionally good progress in developing skills for the future. They are very curious and inquisitive, and play a full role in their learning. Throughout the day, staff use routines and activities to encourage children to count and use very good mathematical language relating to size and colour. Children are extremely confident and very articulate. They enthusiastically engage in the many rich activities on offer, which sustain their interest well. Consequently they focus well and achieve high levels of involvement. Children sometimes persist with activities for very long periods, such as tracing and mark making playing for over half an hour. In addition to making confident, independent choices in their play, they are equally enthusiastic about participating in adult-led activities. For example, they complete all the actions to accompany a story they have been involved in creating. They inquisitively ask 'what is a Dame?' when they sing 'baa baa black sheep', engaging in lively conversation with staff. Young children and babies have many opportunities to explore using their senses, for example, they sit in trays of flour, running it through their fingers, giggling and laughing with enjoyment.

Children's behaviour is exemplary as they are familiar with the routine and learn about expectations within the nursery. Staff are excellent role models and superbly praise children and recognise their achievements. Therefore, children have extremely high levels of self-esteem and are very cooperative. Children are often

seen showing kindness to one another, for example, helping one another to put their hood up on their coat. These acts of kindness are recognised and celebrated through having a leaf on 'the tree of kindness'. Children are very happy and settled. They form warm and caring relationships with key persons and demonstrate their strong sense of well-being. The staff support children excellently well in feeling safe and secure. Practical activities provide them with valuable lessons in learning to stay safe. For example, using real tools safely, carrying scissors correctly, practicing fire drills and learning about road safety on walks.

Children have a great awareness of their physical needs and independently choose activities throughout the day. This enables them to run around and be physically active before settling down to quieter activities. They help themselves to drinks of water when they are thirsty and enjoy healthy meals and snacks throughout the day. Children learn about healthy lifestyles as they engage in excellent hygiene practices such as washing their hands without prompting and taking care of their personal care needs extremely well. Children explore their body movements through a plentiful range of highly energising activities such as parachute games and enjoy extensive physical exercise and fresh air.

## 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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|--|---|
| <b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b> | 1 |
| The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement                                     | 1 |

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

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|--|---|
| <b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>            | 1 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement         | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources   | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity                             | 1 |
| 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

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|--|---|
| The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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|--|---|
| <b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b> | 1 |
| 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        | 1 |
| The extent to which children develop skills for the future       | 1 |

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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