

Little Footsteps Day Nursery

106 Stroud Road, GLOUCESTER, GL1 5JN

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

05/10/2012

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision	2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Children are happy, confident learners who are making good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities.
- Staff provide a safe and welcoming environment where children mix frequently with other age groups, developing good social skills as a result.
- The management team demonstrates a clear ability to improve practice by identifying areas for development and addressing these systematically.
- Staff act as positive role models, interacting warmly with children and maintaining good partnerships with parents.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff are not fully confident in challenging the most able children, particularly when applying teaching strategies in mathematics and literacy.
- The key person system generally works effectively although the nursery does not fully embrace the importance of keeping numbers of key persons for each child to a minimum.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children and staff in all age groups both indoors and outside.
- The inspector completed a joint observation of an outdoor activity with the manager.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager and the registered provider.
The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation,
- evidence of staff suitability and qualifications, and the nursery's self-evaluation form.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Gill Little

Full Report

Information about the setting

Little Footsteps Day Nursery is privately owned and has been run by the same family since it opened in 1993. It re-registered in 2012 under a different family member. It operates over two floors of a converted detached house on a main road in a residential area of Gloucester. It includes a separate baby unit and five activity rooms. There is an enclosed outdoor play area and a separate car park. The nursery serves the local area. The nursery is currently caring for 53 children in the early years age group, aged from three months to

four years. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language. It has links in place with local schools. It operates on weekdays from 8am until 5.45pm all year, except for bank holidays. It is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four. The nursery employs 15 staff, of whom 13 hold relevant qualifications.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- support staff to develop their knowledge and understanding of challenging the most able children by agreeing teaching strategies, with particular reference to literacy and mathematics, and by further encouraging open-ended thinking during children's free play
- enhance the effectiveness of the key person system by considering reducing the number of key persons, where appropriate, allocated to each child during their time in the nursery.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children are happy, confident learners who are making good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Babies and younger toddlers enjoy exploring a range of interesting resources, such as tunnels to crawl through, balls to throw or rockers on which to balance. As a result, they become confident in developing their physical skills knowing that their key person is nearby. Staff extend young children's interest in their environment by introducing interesting resources, such as treasure baskets with natural and household materials. Children become excited and animated as they try to catch bubbles and have a go at blowing them. Staff talk to children routinely about their play and what they are doing, which effectively enhances their vocabulary and communication skills.

Older toddlers benefit from the staff team's positive approach to supporting their developing social skills. While playing outdoors, staff remind children gently and kindly to share resources and to let other children join in with their play. As a result, children become aware of others' feelings and respond to appropriate boundaries. They become increasingly confident in riding push along and pedal toys, using space well and avoiding collisions with good staff support. Staff successfully engage children's interest in the natural world around them. For example, they point out a flock of pigeons flying in and out of sight. Children become excited as they wait for the flock to come around again and they benefit from good quality discussions with staff. Such experiences support children's communication skills well, including children learning English as an additional language

who are able to use single words in context.

Pre-school children play cooperatively and share resources readily. At times, they are able to negotiate and solve problems by themselves. They show kindness towards others, such as helping each other button up coats before going outdoors. Staff repeat words and phrases correctly, and extend discussions through sensitive questioning. As a result, children are confident in expressing themselves well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff reinforce children's understanding of sounds, letters, numbers and shapes through their everyday play. Stimulating resources, such as menus and price lists, encourage children to develop their early reading and numeracy skills during imaginative play. However, staff lack confidence in challenging the most able children to extend their skills, as they are not sure which teaching strategies to use, particularly concerning literacy and mathematics. While able children are developing well, this weakness has some limitations in helping them to progress further.

Key persons make regular observations and assessments of children's progress, including their starting points, which they use effectively overall to plan for their next steps. They follow children's changing interests skilfully and they generally support children well during their free play. They plan interesting adult-led activities to focus on specific skills that respond to children's individual needs. For example, they plan maths games to support children's growing understanding of shape and number. Overall, such strategies are effective in helping children to progress to their next stage of learning or onto school.

Staff maintain good partnerships with parents and the nursery is continuously trying new initiatives to engage parents in their children's learning. For example, staff encourage parents to complete 'Wow' vouchers to illustrate any significant steps children make at home. This process successfully enhances communication and partnership working between the nursery and parents.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Key persons get to know children well as they work closely with parents when children start at the nursery. For example, they gain information through a 'communication passport' about children's routines, likes and dislikes and use this information well to support individual needs. As a result, babies enjoy calm and familiar routines, such as settling down to sleep with their comforters after snack time, with their key person close by. Key persons liaise closely when children transfer from one room to another and this process takes place over time to enable children to settle well. However, the nursery does not fully embrace the importance of keeping numbers of key persons for each child to a minimum. This minor weakness means that children sometimes move on to new key persons more quickly than is necessary.

All children display good relationships with their key person, other staff and their friends. Staff act as positive role models, interacting warmly with children and promoting good behaviour. Throughout the day children mix frequently with different age groups, for example, at meal times and during outdoor play. As a result, children develop good social

skills and learn to respect each other's differences.

Staff provide a safe and welcoming environment both indoors and outdoors, which successfully supports children's all-round development. Children learn to play safely around others and they develop a positive approach to healthy lifestyles. The nursery has recently purchased outdoor clothing and wellingtons to enable children to enjoy wet weather play. Staff make sure that children of all ages play outside regularly throughout the day. This approach effectively encourages children to enjoy physical exercise and fresh air on a daily basis throughout the year. Mealtimes are social occasions and children enjoy a healthy diet. Staff encourage children to develop skills for independence successfully. For example, pre-school children pour their own milk and younger toddlers feed themselves with spoons.

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

The management team demonstrates a clear ability to improve practice by identifying areas for development and addressing these systematically. Senior staff collate the views of children, parents and other staff to evaluate the nursery's practice thoughtfully. For example, they send out questionnaires to parents to assess their understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and respond effectively by providing leaflets and notice boards to provide additional information. Further plans for improvement include additional training for baby room staff and introducing more natural resources throughout the nursery, which is likely to enhance already good outcomes for children.

The management team monitors the delivery of the educational programmes carefully. The manager routinely checks children's development records. This ensures staff complete these correctly, plan an interesting range of activities and identify children who need additional support. She works closely with outside agencies where necessary to provide additional help for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There is a positive approach to supporting staff development and assessing the impact of this on children. For example, after attending a communication and language course, staff enthusiastically introduce story boxes and different ways of storytelling, which has a positive impact on developing children's communication skills.

The management team and staff demonstrate a clear understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements. They help to keep children safe through routine risk assessments, effective safety procedures and close supervision. Most staff have safeguarding training and there is a clear procedure to follow if staff have concerns about children. Staff recruitment and induction procedures are robust so that staff working with children are suitable and understand their roles and responsibilities. Staff work well together as a team to keep routines running smoothly and to support children effectively.

Partnerships with parents, outside agencies and local schools work well to promote consistency in children's care and learning. For example, the nursery invites teachers from

local schools to visit the children and provides detailed information on transfer about children's progress. Such procedures are effective in sharing information so that everyone involved in children's care can work consistently.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY447102
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	795440
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	55
Number of children on roll	53
Name of provider	Mary Farley
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	01452 380599

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their

Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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