

Little Footsteps of Dereham

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY440629

Inspection date

21/08/2012

Inspector

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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

Little Footsteps of Dereham is a privately owned nursery and was registered in 2012. It operates from a renovated house in Dereham, Norfolk. The nursery serves children and families in the local area and from the surrounding villages. Children use a base room according to their age and all children have access to an enclosed garden for outdoor activities.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round, including Bank Holidays, with the exception of Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. It is open from 7.30am until 6pm, although times may be extended to suit individual needs. A maximum of 44 children under eight years may attend the nursery at any one time, 28 of whom may be in the early years age range. Additionally, the setting offers an out of school club for children aged up to 14 years. There are currently 50 children on roll, 47 of whom are in the early years age group. Some children receive funding for early education. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language. It is registered on the Early Years Register and both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register.

The nursery is owned and managed by two proprietors. One manager holds Early Years Professional Status. They employ six members of staff, including a qualified chef. All childcare staff hold full and relevant qualifications to at least level 3. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are making speedy progress in their learning and development and are very well cared for within the Early Years Foundation Stage. Partnerships with parents are good, every child is recognised as an individual and their needs are well met. Partnerships in the wider context are developing to improve continuity for children in their learning and development. Planning for improvement and self-evaluation has been started, but not yet completed. However, identified weaknesses have already been addressed, demonstrating a strong capacity to improve outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the babies' outdoor play area to ensure they are able to explore and play in safety
- implement fully the current plans and complete the self-evaluation to ensure the good practices and quality of care and education are fully embedded throughout the nursery.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are cared for and supported by staff who are well qualified and experienced. Staff are clear about how to safeguard children from abuse and know the procedures to follow to refer their concerns. There are rigorous employment and induction procedures and ongoing monitoring and support from managers to ensure staff are well trained and work effectively with children. Thorough risk assessments and daily checks ensure hazards are minimised and children are kept safe on the premises and when on outings. There are comprehensive policies in place to protect children and to foster their welfare and development positively. Children are cared for in a stimulating environment where they select from a good range of high quality, clean and safe toys. They freely access the garden, which is colourful and well resourced to promote their physical development. The babies use a separate garden area which is resourced with appropriate toys for their age, but the concrete surfaces in the garden, which include cobbles, are covered only with thin astro-turf or carpet squares. As a result, babies who are tottering are liable to falling over on the hard surfaces.

Children with specific needs are supported well and intervention plans have been drawn up following discussion with parents. Key workers know their children well and liaise closely with the special needs coordinator in the setting to ensure appropriate activities and support are offered so that children make progress. Children who speak English as an additional language are also supported well in speaking and understanding English. The nursery staff highly value each and every child and ensure children have opportunities to learn about the world around them and similarities and differences in the way people live their lives. A variety of books from the library are selected to promote discussions about diversity.

Parents report that they receive good information about the setting on joining, and through completing the 'all about me' books are able to give staff a good insight about what children like to do. Daily information is exchanged by the child's key person and a communication sheet outlines activities children have enjoyed. Regular newsletters keep parents informed about the nursery and events. Some parents report that they are engaged in their children's learning through looking at and contributing to the Learning Journal, and are working in partnership with staff to extend and develop children's learning at home. Managers have nearly completed the first self-evaluation. As areas for development have been identified and changes have been made to improve outcomes for children. All staff are encouraged to contribute their aspirations and ideas for the nursery. As a result, there are far-reaching plans in place to improve and develop to provide high quality care and education.

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

Children are very happy and settle quickly with staff who are energetic and enthusiastic. Children are fully engaged in purposeful play and learning and are making very good progress. Staff make regular, informative observations of children and use this information to develop plans for each child. As a result, each and every child has specific plans for their individual development. Staff ask questions of children to test their understanding and to encourage them to think problems through.

Children take part in a wide range of activities which promote their learning and development in all areas. They enjoy a sense of belonging to the nursery. Each child has their key worker and strong bonds have already established between staff and children. Children are introduced to everyone else in the 'good morning song'. Friendships are developing. Babies gain a sense of self as they look at their reflections in mirrors. They are encouraged to feed themselves and staff encourage them to join in activities with other children, developing social skills. The environment is rich with print and children are becoming aware that print carries meaning. They all enjoy story time with adults, joining in with refrains they have learned through the book and using language well to explain and anticipate what happens next. Babies communicate with their adults through babbles and gestures and enjoy a range of board and cloth books. Children are heard counting in their daily routines, as they count their peers at registration or count objects as they play on the climbing frame outside. They learn about patterns, for example, when painting the stripes of a tiger, and through collage they learn about shapes and colours. Babies use a range of textured puzzles to promote problem solving.

Children are aware of their local community and have visited the church and railway station and been on a bus journey. After reading stories children have designed their own maps, giving them a sense of place. They enjoy exploring in the nature garden, and the nursery cockerel provides them with a focus on caring. Babies enjoy building towers with blocks and explore their surroundings freely and independently. A good range of art and craft materials are available for children to use and they have recently used paint, glitter and tissue to make their own Olympic torches. Babies explore sound as they play with the musical instruments. They paint pictures and then use their senses to explore their work, for example by scrunching up the paper and using their hands to squelch in the paint. Children's physical development is fostered well from an early age. Babies pull themselves up onto furniture or crawl and roll on the floor to reach a toy. In the well-equipped garden children dig in the sand, use ride-on toys to scoot around on and play on rockers and with balls and hoops.

Children's understanding of personal safety is developing. Staff remind them how to use equipment safely and reinforce 'rules for safety' before going outside to play. Young children develop good personal hygiene routines as staff encourage them to wash their hands before meals, while older children are able to tell staff why this is important. Children eat well from a good menu with foods prepared from fresh ingredients, some picked from the nursery garden, where children have

planted and nurtured lettuce, peppers and cucumbers. Children clearly enjoy the outdoor environment, as most choose to play outdoors where they can climb, run around and be active. Children's behaviour is very good and staff are highly skilled at promoting positive messages about kindness, respectfulness and good manners. Children are encouraged through positive strategies and are proud to be included on the 'Well Done Tree'. They are encouraged to be independent and active learners and are already well equipped with the skills they need to secure further learning.

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

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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

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

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	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

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met