

First Steps Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY289832
Inspection date	30/10/2008
Inspector	June Fielden
Setting address	26 Church Road, Croydon, Surrey, CR0 1SB
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Type of setting	Childcare - Non-Domestic

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).

Description of the setting

First Steps Day Nursery is run by a limited company. It opened in 2004 and operates from three rooms in a two storey renovated chapel in central Croydon. The nursery has access to a kitchen and a secure outdoor play area. The building is easily accessible by the front door. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 hours for 52 weeks of the year. It serves families from a wide catchment area. It is registered on the Early Years Register to care for up to 32 children from six weeks to five years of age. There are currently 38 children on roll. Children can attend for a variety of sessions or the whole day. The nursery employs ten members of staff. Of these, seven have appropriate early years qualifications and the rest are working towards a qualification.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Children are cared for in a friendly and welcoming environment. The nursery has in place an effective system for planning, observing and assessing children, which means that they make good progress in their learning and development. The setting has identified its main strengths and is aware of some areas for improvement. Parents are involved in evaluating the effectiveness of the nursery through the questionnaires they are asked to complete, and action is taken on any suggestions they make. There are breaches of specific welfare requirements relating to documentation and safeguarding, but they do not have a significant impact on the provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that activities are always sufficiently demanding for all pre-school children.

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- keep an accurate record of children's times of departure (Documentation) 31/10/2008
- obtain prior written permission from parents before administering Calpol to children (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 31/10/2008

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting is committed to promoting a good relationship with parents and others involved in children's care. Parents are kept well informed about their child's progress in welfare and learning through the parents evenings that are held twice

a year, regular newsletters and notice boards. Opportunities for two way communication with staff are also provided through the use of daily diaries which children take home with them. Parents are particularly pleased with the nurseries settling in process for new children, and the feedback they receive from staff. They are involved in children's learning by sharing books that the nursery send home, and by providing information about their families and culture for a group folder they are making on this subject. The setting maintains links with the local community, as fire officers and the police are invited to speak to the children. The nursery is in the process of further improving relationships with the local school which children transfer to. Staff understand the process for identifying, supporting and working with others involved in the care of children with learning difficulties and disabilities. The manager has also attended training in this area.

The manager sees the setting's self evaluation form as a working document. It identifies the nursery's relationship with parents as one of their strengths, particularly their use of parental questionnaires. This enables them to respond to any issues that might not otherwise have been brought to their attention. The setting has rectified the weaknesses identified at their last inspection, when it was recommended that they devise and implement a robust system to monitor and evaluate the care and education that is on offer. Also, that they ensure staff are aware of the developmental needs of children and that their assessments identify their next steps and are used to inform planning. The manager now spends time in each part of the nursery monitoring the provision, and planning sheets are evaluated to assist staff in organising future experiences for children. Observations of children are used to inform future planning and staff are regularly provided with training opportunities to furnish them with the appropriate knowledge. These issues were included in the nursery's action plan. The setting has recently updated its safeguarding policy, and further training in this subject is planned for staff, to ensure that children are appropriately protected. There are sound recruitment procedures in place, and staff work together as a team. Annual evaluations are completed on staff and a team building day was arranged to help them form better relationships with each other. As a result, the manager believes staff are now more motivated. Staff sometimes omit to record children's times of departure when they are busy, although they are aware of which children have left the premises. All the required policies to ensure children's welfare are appropriate, apart from the one relating to the administration of Calpol. The nursery does not obtain prior written permission for this medicine, but parents are contacted before it is given to children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Key workers are involved in planning activities for children that cover all areas of learning. They make regular observations of children and use these to assist them in devising the following weeks activities. Although, on occasions, planned activities are not sufficiently demanding for all pre-school children. There is an effective balance of adult and child led activities as part of children's daily routine. For example, children often decide on the games they wish to play during the time they spend in the outdoor area. Staff sit with children as they complete activities, offering them encouragement and explaining the task to them. They record their

observations of children in their Early Years records, which are shared with parents, and provide evidence of their achievements. Staff understand how to liaise effectively with parents of children with English as an additional language, and they find out about key words they use at home. They also use signs to communicate with these children. Resources are easily accessible to children to allow them to self-select from open cupboards, shelves and labelled containers. They are also encouraged to put their coats and aprons on for themselves, to develop their independence. Children improve their mouse skills as they use computer programmes, and experience sensory activities that enable them to use their sense of touch and smell. They sing a variety of songs chosen by themselves, such as 'The Wheels on the Bus', to assist them in becoming aware of rhyme and rhythm. Staff question children about the activities they use to make them think, and to extend their vocabulary. Children enjoy using the parachute in the outdoor play area, shaking it in the air and running around underneath it for exercise. Staff introduce the use of number into this activity to reinforce children's learning in this area.

Children are offered healthy options at meal times, as staff have a sound understanding of their dietary needs. Water is always provided for children to help themselves to. Appropriate toys and equipment are available to meet all children's requirements, and the space for them to play in is suitably organised. Staff make children aware of keeping themselves safe in the outdoor play area, and they co-operate well during collaborative games. Children are introduced to new experiences, such as digging in a tray of soil or shaving foam to find different objects, to encourage them to be inquisitive. Staff introduce activities to develop children's skills in taking turns, such as when they are aiming a ball through a hoop. They lead by example in teaching children right from wrong, and as a result, they respond well to staff's high expectations for their behaviour. Staff effectively handle any squabbles that occur between children, and monitor any that continue to express inappropriate behaviour. They liaise with parents to promote continuity of care.

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	3

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	3
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	3
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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