

Second Steps Day Nursery

Durham Rd, Laindon, Essex, SS15 6PJ

Inspection date	06/12/2012
Previous inspection date	02/06/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	4
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		4
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		4
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		4

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is inadequate

- Children's safety is not assured. Children are at risk from unvetted persons; no evidence of criminal records bureau checks is in place for over half of the staff working at the setting. The designated person with responsibility for safeguarding has not attended the requisite training. Staff do not take action to minimise risks to children.
- Lack of monitoring of staff's performance means that learning and development is inconsistent and poor in some cases and children's health is put at risk as hygiene and cleaning in some areas is not consistently managed to an acceptable standard and smoking occurs in the vicinity of the playroom.
- Many of the younger children are left with too little to engage them as resources are not uniformly of adequate quantity or standard. The outdoor area lacks imagination and is under-used and uninspiring, so children miss out on active and exploratory play, causing behaviour to deteriorate.
- Behaviour management and supervision of children is not consistent and as a result, some two year olds become disorderly or miserable because they are not fully engaged in meaningful activities and their needs are not met.

It has the following strengths

- Care of babies is good; staff know them well as individuals and provide warm, caring interaction, which helps them to feel settled and secure.

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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector held talks with the manager and various staff members during the course of the inspection.

- The inspector spent time in all care rooms, including the out of school club room, viewed the bathrooms and kitchen and visited the outside area which was not in use on the day of the inspection.

- The inspector viewed a range of documentation including the latest self-evaluation form, some policies, children's learning journeys and returned, completed parent surveys. The inspector asked to see evidence of checks on all staff, of which some were available.

Inspector

Sarah Williams

Full Report

Information about the setting

Second Steps Day Nursery is privately owned and was registered in 2005. It operates from converted, commercial premises in Laindon, Essex. The nursery serves the local area and families from further afield. The nursery is on two levels with children under two years cared for on the first floor, accessed by stairs. There is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play adjacent to the nursery.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round, excluding bank holidays. Sessions are from 7am until 7pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 75 children attending who are within the early years age range. The nursery also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are 26 staff caring for children, 24 of whom have a qualification at Level 2 or higher.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- provide evidence of suitability for all persons employed at the setting and in contact with children. This includes identity checks and details of criminal records disclosures, such as the reference number, date of disclosure and details of who obtained it
- ensure that the designated practitioner with overall responsibility for safeguarding children attends an appropriate training course which enables them to identify, understand and respond appropriately to any signs of abuse or neglect
- put in place measures to supervise staff to provide support, coaching and training which fosters a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement
- ensure that the premises, indoors and outside are fit for purpose and safe for children. Take steps to remedy identified risks and hazards, such as dirty and faulty equipment and areas, so that children are not exposed unnecessarily to hygiene and safety hazards
- enforce the no smoking policy so that children are not exposed to the hazards from smoke in or near the premises and outside area where the children are, or may be about to be, present
- improve educational programmes and provide sufficient, age-appropriate and stimulating, accessible resources so that all children have opportunities to enjoy challenging and meaningful activities which engage and inspire them to make progress

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

- devise and implement a thorough self-evaluation process, which includes the views of parents and children, to identify strengths and areas for development. Devise an action plan to overcome weaknesses that have been highlighted as a result of the process and show how and when these will be addressed.

Inspection judgements

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

Progress of some children is limited by insufficient supervision and poor resources which leave them disengaged at times and unable to find interesting things to do. This relates

mainly to the two year olds on the ground floor who, after lunch, are not engaged in meaningful planned activities and for whom the core provision is inadequate as children are not stimulated by the equipment they can access. For example, several children are interested in the dolls and spend time carrying them around and holding them, but there are no supporting items such as blankets, buggies or beds to extend their play, and staff seem unaware that these children need support to help them; many are engaged in routine tasks such as clearing tables and spend too little time interacting with the children.

Staff have knowledge of the areas of learning and plan next steps for their key children, which are followed up and evidenced when children achieve them. This works well in the babies' room where the layout of the room encourages babies to take their first steps, or cruise the furniture and explore the toys and cosy dens set out for them. The staff in this area are attuned to the babies care needs and routines, and endeavour to stimulate and provide a range of activities and play opportunities to aid the babies' development, whilst fitting in their care routines well.

Care and learning on the ground floor where children are two to four years of age is less successful as too little emphasis is placed on monitoring staff and overseeing the delivery of core provision and resources. Where activities are planned, such as the baking of cakes and decorating biscuits, children are enthused and engaged, and show that they are interested in the processes. They also enjoy helping to set up the 'Santa's Grotto' and respond well to staff eagerly sharing their knowledge of the letters they are sticking up as they spell out 'Merry Christmas' for a display.

The completed parent satisfaction surveys seen suggest that many parents would like to be better informed about their children's progress. However, this has not been addressed by the management, therefore parents involvement in their child's education, and in continuing learning at home, is limited.

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

Children's well-being is hindered by the poor and ineffective risk assessments which endanger children due to hazards such as faulty and inappropriate equipment. Their health is further at risk because cleaning and hygiene is inconsistent and poor in some areas such as the whole of the ground floor and the floor in the out of school club. The exception is the babies' room; adults remove outdoor shoes before entering and consequently the floor is kept clean so babies can move and crawl freely and safely. A large, unprotected radiator on the stairwell is very hot at times and poses a threat of potential injury. The role play screens in use have broken fixings and are liable to fall and injure children. Children play with adult-sized plastic shower caps which present a smothering hazard. The toilet area on the ground floor is not adequately monitored and regularly cleaned, and open bins accessible to children contain used nappies, used paper towels, food waste and general debris, exposing children to health hazards. This is because the informal system of staff being vigilant and acting on awareness of when something needs cleaning does not work. The general appearance of the setting is that it is in need of a deep clean and refurbishment, particularly the floors in most areas. Carpets

are dirty, stained and have ingrained substances on them. Tiled areas of the floor are worn, broken and cracked and present a hygiene hazard as well as a trip hazard. Staff are aware of this and highlight it on their daily risk assessments, which are collected and collated by the management. However, no significant action is taken to address the hazards or minimise the risks to children's health and safety. In one room an exposed radiator valve is protruding and is a hazard to any child falling onto it; staff failed to notice this. A small outside area adjacent to the building contains assorted equipment, discarded items, and is unkempt and dirty. Children play next to this area inside and see through the window, giving an impression of not caring about the space or valuing the equipment. The manager said she is aware of the issue and has just not got round to doing anything about it. The main outdoor area lacks care and is tired and uninspiring. This has been targeted as an area for urgent improvement for some time but no action has been taken and the area is under-used. Additionally, the area is not checked for safety before children are taken out, for example, to clear ice and make the surface safe. This results in children missing out on much needed physical play and fresh air.

Children are assigned a key person who is responsible for liaising with parents about their child's development. Younger children have a daily sheet detailing their food, nappy changes and sleep patterns, which is shared with parents, keeping them informed. Children aged up to two years in the two care rooms upstairs form attachments and bonds with their key persons, who know them well, which helps them feel safe and secure.

Older children are confident and talk about what they like to do, and are eager to demonstrate their skills, such as writing and counting, holding up four fingers as they say 'I am four'.

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

The management and leadership team are aware of issues regarding the overdue refurbishment of substandard parts of the premises, from actions previously set by Ofsted. Whilst an action plan has been drawn up, the matters highlighted are not attended to in a timely fashion, therefore children continue to be exposed to unhygienic and inadequate conditions. The self-evaluation is weak and has too little impact. Whilst it acknowledges some of the shortcomings, it does not address them in a practical way. Stated goals are vague and not targeted to bring about the necessary improvements.

Safeguarding of children is not effective as the setting does not hold evidence that all staff are fully checked and vetted for suitability, therefore exposing children to the risk of being cared for by unsuitable persons. The designated person with responsibility for safeguarding has not attended the requisite course to update her knowledge and understanding. She has a basic knowledge of the processes of how to refer a concern. Other staff have completed online courses to update their knowledge of safeguarding.

The management does not monitor the quality of teaching by supervising and observing staff working with children. As a result, care and learning is inconsistent and some

children are not receiving adequate or appropriate supervision to keep them safe or enable them to learn and make progress. The more competent staff manage their key children well during planned activities, but other staff lack the understanding of how to provide sufficient meaningful play and activities to engage the children, so these children drift and are disengaged. The range of quality, worthwhile resources is scant in the two-year-old's area, with no role play, no mark-making, unsafe use of the sand, few inspiring or attractive activities offered and lack of physical play. This leads at times, to unruly and disorderly behaviour, such as running from one end of the play area to the other. This is hazardous and clearly not meeting children's needs or stimulating their learning potential.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

To meet the requirements of the Childcare Register the provider must:

- ensure the premises and equipment used for the purposes of childcare are safe and suitable for that childcare and ensure that all necessary measures are taken to minimise any identified risks (Suitability and safety of premises and equipment) (both parts of the Childcare Register)
- ensure that any person caring for, or in regular contact with, children is suitable to work with children and holds an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check (Suitability of persons to care for, or be in regular contact with, children) (both parts of the Childcare Register).
- take action as specified above (Suitability and safety of premises and equipment and Suitability of persons to care for, or be in regular contact with, children).

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 action. 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	EY308855
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	890242
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	83
Number of children on roll	90
Name of provider	Sharon Anne Harrison
Date of previous inspection	02/06/2011
Telephone number	01268 410937

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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, which are usually the childminder's 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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