

First Steps Nursery

246 Cranes Park Road, Sheldon, Birmingham, B26 3SU

Inspection date

13/06/2013

Previous inspection date

14/03/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

2

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

- The staff have a good understanding of promoting children's learning through a wide range of enjoyable and interesting activities. As a result, children are stimulated to make consistently good progress in their development.
- Children are happy in the nursery and form strong relationships with key persons, who are good role models. Consequently, children mirror what they see, treating others with respect, and this reflects their very good behaviour.
- Safeguarding arrangements in the nursery are effective, resulting in the safety and protection of children.
- The strong partnerships with parents ensure children receive support to meet their individual learning and care needs consistently. Therefore, their well-being is effectively promoted.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Children are not always encouraged to develop their very good growing independence skills through all care routines. Therefore, children's self-help skills are not always developing sufficiently, relative to their age and abilities.
- The self-evaluation of the nursery does not routinely take account of the views of parents to make changes that lead to improvement for children.

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 discussions with the provider, manager, staff and children.
- The inspector sampled documents, including children's learning journals, risk assessments and a selection of policies.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the provider of a teaching and learning activity.
- The inspector observed activities indoors and during outside play.
- The inspector spoke with parents on the day of inspection.
- The inspector conducted a tour of the premises during the inspection.

Inspector

Adelaide Griffith

Full Report

Information about the setting

Frist Steps Nursery was registered in 2007 and is one of two nurseries owned by the provider. It is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery operates from converted premises in the Sheldon area of Birmingham. It serves the local area and is accessible to all children. The nursery operates from three rooms and there is a fully enclosed area available for outside play.

The nursery employs eight members of childcare staff, including the manager, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round, except for Bank Holidays and one week at Christmas. Sessions are from 8am to 5.30pm and children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 56 children on roll who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. It supports children who speak English as an additional language.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- use routine activities consistently to strengthen children's growing independence to do things for themselves, such as serving themselves with all courses at dinner time
- build on self-evaluation by extending how the views of parents are incorporated, to further assist in identifying areas for further improvement.

Inspection judgements

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

The staff have a good understanding of supporting children's learning through a wide range of activities. Skilled staff make use of natural occurrences, such as rainfall, to engage the attention of two-year-old children. For instance, they lift them up to look at the water on the road and talk about the similarity to swimming pools. As a result, children learn to make links with what they already know and what they see. Staff effectively promote listening skills by helping children to focus on the sound of raindrops against the window panes. Therefore, children's understanding of the world around them is stimulated well as they develop an awareness of different sounds. Pre-school children benefit from a wealth of learning opportunities as they choose from several options for their free play. While children play in small groups in the role play 'shop', others develop

play with a selection of bricks and enjoy play on their own or with peers. Consequently, children's abilities grow as they concentrate to play with what they know. These free-play sessions are well balanced with adult-led activities planned to promote learning across all areas.

The experienced manager engages a small group of pre-school children in activities, such as skittles, which children enjoy immensely. As she gives clear guidance, children respond appropriately by identifying which skittles they wish to knock down. The manager supports children effectively throughout the activity and encourages all children equally. She adapts the activity purposefully for boys, who are well supported to recognise numbers. This means that they have opportunities to grow in their number skills just as much as more able girls who name and write numbers clearly. As a result, children's individual needs are met as they learn at their own pace. This approach to learning is maintained for children who speak English as an additional language. For younger children, staff use words in children's first language and supplement these with cards for a visual reinforcement. They use audio equipment for children in pre-school, and this helps them to learn English at a quicker pace. Consequently, they make good progress from their starting points. More able children form letters well and write fully recognisable examples of their names. This means that activities prepare children well for the next stage in their learning, such as starting school.

Staff discuss with parents what children can do during the initial phase in the nursery. They then carry out observations of children's skills while they play, and accurately assess children's development. Staff complete progress records, which are shared with parents, and they invite comments on how to support the next steps in children's learning. Furthermore, staff encourage children to take home books for reading, and parents share information about what children do at home. Accordingly, the shared understanding between the staff and parents supports children's learning effectively. The progress check at age two is completed for all children within a reasonable period to identify if additional support is needed.

All children explore their surroundings as they play with a wide range of good quality resources. Toddlers in the baby room use small brushes to brush the floor, and focus as they enjoy achieving what they do. A low board with different textures is accessible so that they can experience a wide range of sensations as they run their fingers over rough or smooth surfaces. In the room for children aged two years, a selection of animals encourages younger children to express their own ideas as they play imaginatively with lions. They look at books independently and hold these the right way up, while turning pages, and remain focused as they are involved and concentrate. Consequently, children take control of aspects of their learning and enjoy what they do.

The nursery is very welcoming with vibrant displays that imaginatively reflect children's work and learning activities. For instance, in the pre-school room, a board includes self-portraits of all children to reflect their creative skills and their abilities in making marks as they write their names. Colourful displays reinforce children's learning, for example, a board that shows different ways of using numbers. This means that children see marks, pictures and illustrations that focus their learning in a variety of ways. In turn, they learn to understand numbers and this moves them on in an area, identified by staff, where pre-

school children need additional support. Throughout the nursery children's creative work demonstrates their abilities to paint. Their contribution to the environment is included in examples, such as colourful Father's Day cards. The wide variety of activities and the wealth of stimulating resources support children effectively in making good progress towards the early learning goals.

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

The well-established key person arrangements support children to settle quickly in the nursery. Key persons obtain information from parents about children's routines and preferences, and this helps them to make a smooth transition from home to the new environment. For example, staff follow the routines for babies according to parents' guidance, and this means that their individual needs are met effectively. Staff interact positively with children at all times, and they are good role models who talk politely and listen when children communicate. Consequently, children feel valued and they form strong attachments with the staff. Staff praise children often and encourage sharing and taking turns at using resources. As a result, children learn to treat others with respect and are well behaved. They are confident as they move around in the rooms to access resources and they ask for help when they need assistance, for instance, to cut their food into bite-size portions at dinner time.

Mealtimes are a social occasion when staff sit with children at tables, and this encourages them to eat more heartily. Staff promote independence well for children aged two years and over. Younger children learn to pour their own drinks under close supervision, and they learn to take risks by using cutlery for feeding themselves. This provides good challenge for children to develop their small muscles. However, staff do not always encourage children, including those in pre-school, to serve themselves at all mealtimes. This means that children do not consistently have opportunities to develop their self-help skills relative to their age and abilities. Staff help children to gain an understanding of the benefits of healthy eating by providing balanced meals and snacks. They consistently ensure that children's dietary needs are addressed according to preferences or for cultural reasons. This means that children's individual care needs are met, which contributes to their physical well-being. Daily outside play encourages children to run around in the available space, and they delight in showing staff how they competently climb up the steps to the slide. The experience of physical play helps children to gain an awareness of the effects of exercise on their bodies. Water is easily accessible when they need a drink after outside play and when they are in the care rooms.

Children learn to keep themselves safe as staff provide reasons why they should refrain from putting knives in their mouths when eating. Children are secure on the premises because the front door is locked at all times and procedures are well understood by children. For instance, in the pre-school room children inform staff when they need the toilet and they are supervised appropriately. Transition within the nursery is a stress-free experience for all children. Owing to the small size of the nursery, children frequently see other staff who are not based in their rooms. This allows them to form relationships with all adults in the nursery in preparation for moving to new base rooms. Similarly, children form relationships with peers because they spend more extended periods in other rooms,

according to their developmental needs. As a result, children's well-being is promoted and they are emotionally secure in the nursery.

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

The safeguarding arrangements in the nursery are good. Staff understand the policies and procedures and they undertake relevant training to ensure they are well informed about all aspects of safeguarding. Consequently, staff are clear about the procedures to be followed if they have concerns about children in their care and this means that children are protected. Rigorous recruitment procedures and an established induction programme ensure that adults are suitable to work with children. Parents are informed about the responsibility of the staff to keep children safe at all times, for example, by completing risk assessments. These are reviewed annually by the manager and daily checks are completed by staff, who are vigilant about potential hazards in care rooms. The adult-to-child ratios are maintained throughout the day, and the provider is frequently on the premises to oversee the running of the nursery. She works well with the manager to ensure children's needs are met. As a result, children's well-being is promoted due to strong leadership, and they are kept safe in the nursery.

The highly effective partnerships with parents support children's learning and care well. A parents' board is used to display information relating to the Early Years Foundation Stage, and there is an invitation to look at children's 'learning journeys' when they wish to do so. Copies of policies, including the complaints procedure, are accessible, and staff share information daily about children's experiences and any significant occurrences. For instance, staff ensure parents are informed about accidents and they record these clearly so that parents can read the detail included. This ensures that parents are aware of any follow-up care required, as advised by staff who are first aid trained, and this promotes children's well-being appropriately. Parents are highly satisfied with the care children receive and they comment favourably on the progress their children make in the nursery. For instance, they state that children are developing skills in preparation for school and that they are happy in the nursery. The management team work equally well with the early years consultants to ensure children get the support they need. For example, they hold regular meetings to identify the strengths of the nursery and where improvements can be made. The management team provide regular opportunities for parents to express their views about the nursery through questionnaires. However, they do not routinely invite suggestions for improvement. Consequently, improvement plans do not take account of parents' views to make changes that they believe specifically benefit their children's learning and care.

The management team hold regular staff meetings, and these allow all staff to contribute to the self-evaluation of the nursery, for instance, by reviewing activities. The manager has a good understanding of the learning and development requirements. She supports staff effectively as she monitors the delivery of activities, planning and assessment. As a result, children receive the support they need to make consistently good progress. Regular supervision and yearly appraisals help staff to discuss areas for their professional development, for example, through more training. This means that they have

opportunities to increase their knowledge and skills to support children more effectively over time. The nursery has developed good working partnerships with other early years providers, such as the local school. Staff discuss children's learning and care, and incorporate parts of the curriculum in order to fully promote continuity and progression.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	Met
--	------------

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	Met
---	------------

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	EY351384
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	923078
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	56
Name of provider	First Steps Nursery (Solihull) Limited
Date of previous inspection	14/03/2011
Telephone number	0121 7222218

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance '*Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

