

First Steps Private Day Nursery (Pennington)

Kirkham Road, Leigh, Lancashire, WN7 3UQ

Inspection date	26/06/2013
Previous inspection date	29/03/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	2	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children	3	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

- Staff are highly skilled and have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They use this knowledge effectively to inspire and engage children in every aspect of their learning and development.
- Robust observation, planning and tracking procedures are in place which identify children's next steps in learning as they make good progress towards the early learning goals.
- Children are settled, confident and active learners. They explore their environment and resources with enthusiasm and purpose.
- Purposeful relationships are forged with parents, other providers and a range of professionals. This supports consistency of care for children and supports individual needs being well met.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Writing opportunities in the outdoor area are not yet fully developed which does not enhance children's understanding of that text can be used in a variety of ways.
- Staff do not consistently ask questions which challenge children and promote further thinking, which does not fully support their otherwise good communication and language skills.

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.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities and children at play throughout the inspection.
- The inspector spoke with children, parents, staff and the management team throughout the inspection.
- The inspector looked at documentation to ascertain children's progress in achieving the early learning goals.
- The inspector looked at the nursery's self-evaluation processes.

Inspector

Elisia Lee

Full Report

Information about the setting

First Steps Private Day Nursery was registered in 1997 and is on the Early Years Register. It operates from a purpose-built nursery in the area of Pennington, Leigh and is owned by a private individual. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from the ground floor and there are enclosed areas available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 15 members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds Qualified Teacher Status, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 5, one holds a qualification at level 4 and 10 hold a qualification at level 3.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday from 7.30am until 6pm, for 51 weeks of the year. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 75 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The setting receives support from the local authority early years team.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- consider enhancing opportunities for children to explore and experiment with writing, for example, by providing writing resources in the outdoor play area
- develop staff's practice in asking further questions which extend children's ideas of what is possible, in order to challenge children's thinking even more.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and use this knowledge skilfully to support children in their learning and development. There is a wide range of resources which provide challenging opportunities and support children across all areas of learning. For example, children enjoy sensory play, take part in creative activities, play with a range of equipment in the outdoor area, draw patterns in sand, explore capacity during water play, build with construction kits and access books. Educational programmes offer a breadth of learning opportunities which offer challenge across all age ranges. For example, babies use finger paints while exploring with their senses and pre-

school children make their own three-dimensional models using a range of recycled materials and collage.

Effective teaching is in place and a range of strategies are used to support children's learning. For example, nursery staff have attended 'Every Child a Talker' and 'Elklan' training. These initiatives support children in becoming confident communicators. Therefore communication and language skills are enhanced. Children are keen and active learners and enthusiastically take part as staff create lots of opportunities for children to learn through well-focussed activities. Staff promote language and extend children's vocabulary by modelling language and asking questions. For example, children explore how properties of different materials change through mixing water with corn flour to make 'silk play'. As children run the mixture through their fingers staff ask 'how does it feel?', and 'is it runny or solid?'. This teaching strategy supports children's communication and language skills. Staff interact well with children and pose lots of questions. However, staff do not always pose questions which are challenging and that support children's thinking and problem-solving skills. The environment is highly stimulating and learning displays are developed with a real sense of purpose. For example, as part of a recent topic on 'Under the sea', children have made a pirate display incorporating different shapes. In addition children have made three-dimensional treasure boxes using collage which they have filled with personal treasures from home.

Regular observations are undertaken while children play. Activities are then planned based on children's interests, individual needs and next steps in learning. Imaginative planning is in place and provides a focus on which activities are based. For example, the 'Under the sea' topic incorporates activities, such as discussing different types of animals that live in the sea, exploring different ways to travel across water, reading books and using computers to listen to whale and dolphin noises. Staff consider how they can make learning imaginative and creative.

Well-organised observation and assessment systems are in place which clearly identify children's developmental stage. Effective tracking is in place which ensures that staff have current knowledge of children's needs and can offer appropriate support to children as they move towards the early learning goals. Staff liaise with parents to find out about children's likes and dislikes when they first start at the group, and then undertake baseline assessments which ascertain children's starting points on entry. In addition staff complete the progress check at age two and summaries of learning every term which provides a clear and consistent picture of children's current needs. Parents are involved in their children's learning by contributing to assessments and completing written observations within the home which are included in their child's development file. Children with special educational needs are thoroughly supported by a designated knowledgeable special needs officer, strong relationships with a range of multi-professional agencies and well-informed observations which target children's individual specific needs. Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported through the use of visual symbols, key words, liaison with parents and dual language texts. Tracking documentation shows that children make good progress as they move towards the early learning goals. As a result, they are developing a good range of skills to support their readiness for school when the time comes.

Parents are kept well informed of children's learning through daily verbal exchanges, home link diaries, parents' evenings, newsletters and a designated parents' board. Parents support learning at home through undertaking observations and by loaning activity bags where children can experience a variety of activities which further support learning. This supports parents in gaining an understanding of the learning and development of their child and a knowledge of the educational programme.

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

Staff are extremely supportive and caring and build warm relationships with children. As a consequence, secure attachments have been developed through an effective key person system. Children invite adults to join them in their play. For example, children request stories while huddled in a den in the outdoor area. Children enthusiastically join in with repetitive language and enjoy interacting with staff. Staff are good role models and offer consistent praise and positive reinforcement throughout each session to all children. Children are very well behaved and listen carefully to others or when staff are giving instructions, such as 'tidy up time' or 'line up for lunch'. Children share resources and enjoy playing a range of games which encourage turn taking and co-operative play.

Children are aware of routines and show a sense of security in the nursery. For example, children show confidence in their surroundings as they tidy resources away for lunch or access resources independently as they initiate their own play. Children learn about risks through discussions about safety, such as sweeping sand up and being careful not to slip while playing in the water tray. In addition, staff encourage children to consider safety throughout the seasons. For example, children discuss not jumping in swimming pools when they are on holiday or touching fireworks when it is Bonfire night. Children learn effectively about their own and other cultures and beliefs through celebrating birthdays and festivals together. A good range of resources promote equality and diversity including dolls from different ethnic groups, dual language books and dressing-up clothes.

Children access the outdoors on a daily basis and are offered menus which provide healthy options; this means that staff promote healthy lifestyles on a daily basis. In addition, older children take part in music and movement sessions while babies take part in 'Baby Moves', a programme which encourages independence and movement in babies as they develop their physical skills. Staff ensure that babies receive elements of the initiative throughout the day. For example, staff roll a ball to babies as they develop their sitting skills and encourage younger children to use their fingers to finger paint, which supports good hand and eye co-ordination. There is a designated cook at the nursery who provides freshly cooked inviting menus every day. For example, children eat fish pie and vegetables, Italian chicken and rice and pork hot pot. Children's independence skills are encouraged. For example, children serve their own drinks, set up tables with cutlery at meal times, access the bathroom independently and wash their hands at appropriate times throughout the day.

Children express their emotions and feelings through play. For example, children independently identify characters during role play and negotiate their role. A child comments, 'you be the monster and scare people' while her peers run around looking for

places to hide. Children are confident speakers and make their needs known by asking for different resources to extend their play. Overall, teaching is rooted in a good knowledge of how children learn, which significantly enhances all aspects of children's learning and development. As a result, children are active and motivated learners.

Children are well supported at times of transition and staff encompass a range of strategies to support children with change. For example, staff attend local authority transition meetings to meet other providers, complete transition documentation, and school teachers are invited into nursery to meet children. In addition, children's achievements are celebrated as they prepare to leave for full-time education by taking part in a nursery graduation day. This ensures that schools and other settings are aware of children's individual needs and developmental stage.

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

Staff have a comprehensive understanding and awareness of safeguarding procedures which means that children are well protected and safeguarded in the setting. Staff have attended safeguarding training and are well informed about child protection and the authorities they need to contact should they have a safeguarding concern. Children are kept safe while in the nursery as staff observe and supervise children well. For example, policies are discussed at every staff meeting, regular fire evacuations are undertaken, all visitors are monitored and there is closed-circuit television cameras on the premises. In addition, the management team undertake an annual audit of safeguarding procedures to ensure that their knowledge and procedures reflect current safe practice. Visitors are invited into the nursery to support focussed activities. For example, the fire service visits to discuss fire safety with children, the police force has visited to discuss road safety and parents have been invited in to nursery to share their skills as a part of a topic on 'occupations'. Written risk assessments are in place and daily safety checks are undertaken. Children are also further protected because staff have thorough documentation including accident, medication and attendance records which they implement well to support good practice.

The management team and staff are fully committed to offering a high level of service and care to children. All staff understand their responsibilities in ensuring that the safeguarding and welfare requirements and the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are adhered to. A proactive management team ensure that children's needs are effectively identified and supported through robust monitoring and assessment of practices and documentation. There are comprehensive procedures in place for selection and recruitment. Staff are well supported through induction programmes, peer mentoring, supervisions, appraisals and a continued programme of professional development.

Self-evaluative practice is strong and identifies strengths and areas for development. The staff consistently update their self-evaluation form which is used as a working document, develop an annual action plan of improvement and take into account the views of children, parents and staff. Current targets for improvement include developing the toddler outdoor

area to provide a shelter to allow greater access in all weathers and improving storage facilities within all rooms. Partnerships with parents are good. Parents contribute to the nursery and express their ideas through questionnaires. Staff are very proactive and try to implement ideas as much as possible. For example, menus have been adapted and photographs of staff have been placed in each room so that parents are aware of staff names and roles within each room. There are purposeful partnerships with a range of multi-professionals which reinforces the support given to children when required. For example, staff liaise with the local authority early years team, sensory play team, occupational therapist and a speech and language therapist. Parents are very complimentary about the nursery, they comment 'I always feel informed of my child's progress and can always ask staff about anything' and 'there is always so much going on, my child is always excited when he knows it's a nursery day'.

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	323014
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	919506
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	73
Number of children on roll	75
Name of provider	Sandra Green
Date of previous inspection	29/03/2011
Telephone number	01942 679509

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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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