

First Step Nursery Day Care

52 Deptford, Broadway, Deptford, London, SE8 4PH

Inspection date	19/06/2013
Previous inspection date	14/02/2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	4
	Previous inspection:	3
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

- The provider has limited knowledge and understanding of child protection requirements. She does not ensure that correct procedures are followed, which is a breach of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and places children's safety at risk.
- Some staff have poor knowledge and understanding of how to meet the emotional and physical needs of babies. This means that some babies show they do not feel safe and secure.
- Some staff have insufficient understanding of how to implement the nursery's behaviour management policy. This results in inappropriate behaviour from children.
- Staff do not manage mealtimes appropriately for older children, which results in raised noise levels and children not being clear as to what is expected of them.

It has the following strengths

- The indoor and outdoor environments are well-resourced and attractive for children.
- The setting has suitable systems in place to involve parents in their children's learning.

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 held a meeting with the manager, deputy manager and provider.
- The inspector had discussions with staff members.
- The inspector observed activities in the baby, toddler and pre-school rooms.
- The inspector viewed a sample of children's development records.
- The inspector viewed a sample of the nursery's policies and procedures.

Inspector

Sarah Moore

Full Report

Information about the setting

First Step Nursery Day Care registered in 2011 and is privately owned. It operates from a three storey premises in Deptford, close to Deptford Bridge Station, in the London Borough of Lewisham. Children are cared for across the ground, first and second floors. There is an enclosed area for outdoor play and a separate outdoor area for babies. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. The nursery opens from 7.30am to 6.15pm, Monday to Friday all year round. There are currently 78 children on roll in the early years age range. The nursery cares for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four years. There are 25 staff employed to work with the children. Of these, 15 staff are qualified at level 3 and two are qualified at level 2.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

The provision is inadequate and Ofsted intends to take the following enforcement action:

We will issue a Welfare Requirement Notice requiring the provider to:

- ensure only suitable people who have been checked by Ofsted, carry out the roles and responsibilities of the provider and manager within the provision in order to safeguard children effectively
- develop the effectiveness of the key person system, by ensuring that staff have sufficient knowledge of how to meet babies' emotional and physical needs, so each child feels safe and secure and can rest, sleep and play as they need
- ensure all staff understand how to implement the behaviour management policy and procedures, in order to model suitable behaviour to children, particularly with regard to using appropriate voice levels at mealtimes for the older children, so children learn to talk rather than shout at such times.

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

- improve the staff teams' knowledge and understanding of how to implement the programme for children's personal, social and emotional development by planning group activities suited to babies' stages of development, and by providing older children with a calm environment during and after mealtimes, making sure they know what is expected of them.

Inspection judgements

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

Not all planned activities meet the individual needs of all children because staff do not have sufficient understanding of how to implement the educational programme for children's personal, social and emotional development. This is a requirement of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. For example, those children in the baby room are made to join a large group of children for singing and story time because staff think this will encourage their communication and language development. The group time is ineffective. It is too long for some children's stage of development. The group size is too large and some babies are tired. This results in babies crying, losing interest and staff raising their voices to sing above increasing noise levels to be heard. This activity fails to meet some children's emotional needs. It does not provide them with suitably challenging activities, which are relative to their stage of development.

Some staff lack knowledge of how children learn, which means they do not support children appropriately in their learning and development. For example, some babies are prevented from exploring areas of their choice, such as the outdoor area. Staff pick them up as they are crawling to go outside and move them to a different area. This action does not support their interests and their ability to be independent and make choices as they begin to explore their environment.

The management of mealtimes is not consistent throughout all rooms in the nursery. For example, in the pre-school room staff use raised voices to speak to children as they eat. They say too loudly, 'Who likes ice-cream?' calling across tables. This results in children raising their voices in turn and they shout responses. Noise levels rise and not all children are able to join in with discussions encouraged by some staff. Staff do not provide a calm environment or skilfully question children to extend their learning. However, in other rooms, children take part in calm discussions; they listen to staff as they provide a commentary of their actions to extend learning. Staff say, for example, 'You are using your orange spoon. I am going to put my pink spoon back into my bowl. Is your ice-cream cold?'

Nevertheless, the staff provide a range of different activities, which cover all the required areas of learning for the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Babies and young children enjoy playing in the paddling pool with lots of balls and older children watch tadpoles in the garden. Systems for observation and assessment of children's learning and development are in place. Parents are involved in their child's learning and information is shared between the nursery and parents. Staff regularly carry out observations of children's learning in order to assess their current stages of development. They work together with the manager and deputy to monitor children's progress to help prepare them for the next stage in their learning. However, due to the actions of some staff, not all children are learning how to behave appropriately, such as at mealtimes, which means they are not being suitably prepared for the next stage in their learning.

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

The nursery does not provide an environment where all children can feel safe and secure. This is because some staff caring for the youngest children lack knowledge of how children learn and develop and are ineffective in dealing with children's behaviour. For example, staff reveal, 'It is usual for staff to raise their voices to gain the attention of the children' and 'Staff lift children to move them if they do not follow instructions from staff'. The inability of some staff to manage children's behaviour effectively has led to allegations being made against them.

Although a key person system is in place, it does not work effectively. Actions of some staff fail to support children's emotional and physical well-being. During sleep times, some staff are pre-occupied with the routine tasks rather than meeting children's needs. Some children lie alone on their sleep mats crying, while staff focus on children who need their hands washed. This shows that some staff are not flexible in their approach and do not prioritise the needs of the children appropriately. In the baby room, similar staff practice occurs. Staff say, 'You're tired', as babies crawl up to them for comfort when upset. However, these children are still kept awake as staff prepare for lunch and sit tired babies in highchairs, ignoring their natural need for sleep.

Routines to help children develop their independence are not consistently applied throughout the nursery. Older children are supposed to serve themselves at mealtimes, but the manager and deputy have to intervene regularly. They have to remind staff to encourage children to do things themselves, as staff do not follow expected procedures. This means children are not developing these new skills as planned.

All rooms throughout the nursery are welcoming and stimulating for children. The nursery is well-resourced and staff set out activities invitingly for children. The outdoor area has a large climbing frame for children's use in developing their physical skills. A 'nature area' supports and extends their learning about the wider world. All resources are low-level to encourage children to choose which toys and resources they would like to play with. This provides the older children in particular with suitable levels of choice.

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

This inspection was brought forward due to concerns regarding the safety of children, following allegations made against staff. The inspection found the nursery's leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The provider lacks sufficient knowledge and understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, in order to keep children safe. For example, the nursery has appropriate written policies and procedures to safeguard children. However, the provider does not correctly implement the safeguarding policy in regard to child protection when dealing with allegations made against staff, in order to protect children.

This is a breach of the safeguarding and welfare requirements and places children's safety at risk. During the inspection, it was found that the provider allows her business partner to take on the role of the provider. This is before being suitably checked by the Disclosure and Barring Service and authorised by Ofsted to do so. This is also a breach of requirements. The nursery manager was unaware that the business partner was not authorised by Ofsted. As a result of the inspection findings, the provider is required to take further action. This is because she has not complied with the requirements relating to safeguarding children, as set out in the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The manager and deputy have introduced new systems to make some improvements to staff knowledge and practice as a result of actions set at the previous inspection earlier this year. An appropriate induction procedure is now in place to make sure staff are well-informed of the nursery's safeguarding procedures. Questions asked of staff indicate that levels of understanding have improved and are now suitable. However, the provider's failure to update her own knowledge in order to meet another previous action, results in the nursery receiving an enforcement action.

There are now suitable systems in place for monitoring staff performance to improve learning for children. However, these systems are proving ineffective as some staff do not follow the behaviour management procedures and do not meet the individual needs of all children through the key person system.

An acceptable system has been developed to monitor the progress of children's development, although the weaknesses in the programme for children's personal, social and emotional development have not been picked up through the evaluation system. The manager and deputy support staff to record children's learning. They work together with them to track individual children's progress. This enables the manager to identify children who require additional support in their learning and to contact relevant professionals to help them make progress. The nursery works in partnership with parents. Nursery staff have introduced activities to involve them in their child's learning and daily discussions with staff and children's journals keep parents suitably informed of what children do. The manager is keen to make improvements to the operation of the nursery and as has introduced new systems. However, some systems require further development to make a positive impact on children's learning and development.

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	EY422898
Local authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	923896
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	85
Number of children on roll	78
Name of provider	Mary Gwari
Date of previous inspection	14/02/2013
Telephone number	0208 0454421

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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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