

First Footsteps Limited (Leyland)

53 Fox Lane, Leyland, Lancashire, PR25 1HA

Inspection date	06/06/2013
Previous inspection date	24/02/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	3
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 nursery environment is extremely bright, accessible and welcoming to children and their parents or carers. This means that children and families develop a strong sense of belonging and children can make choices about their own learning.
- High regard is given to ensuring that meals and snacks fully promote children's physical well-being and help them make good choices about what they eat from an early age.
- Practitioners effectively promote children's learning through their good-quality interaction and effective questioning.
- Parents receive good quality information about the nursery and are effectively informed about their child's learning and are actively encouraged to support this at home, in order to promote a consistent approach.
- There is a strong commitment and a very clear drive for improvement, in order to continually improve practice, which supports children's achievements over time.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Practitioners in the baby room do not fully utilise available space, to ensure that the needs of the differing age groups are consistently met.
- There is scope to enhance parents involvement in their children's learning, with specific regards to their contributions to practitioner's initial assessment of what children already know and can do on entry.

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 care routines in the three nursery rooms and the outside learning environment.
- The inspector held a meeting with the provider of the nursery and the area manager.
- The inspector looked at children's records of learning, planning documentation, evidence of suitability of practitioners working within the setting and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector also took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day and information included in the self-evaluation form.

Inspector

Rachel Ayo

Full Report

Information about the setting

First Footsteps Limited (Leyland) was registered in 2003 on the Early Years Register. It is situated in the Leyland area of Preston and is one of a number of nurseries in the North West of England operated by First Footsteps Ltd. It serves children of the local and wider areas and is accessible to all children. It operates from three main nursery rooms in converted school premises, with additional shared access to a fourth room based in an out-house building and fully enclosed outdoor areas.

The nursery employs 16 members of childcare staff, including the manager, all, except one, hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 to 6. One practitioner has Qualified Teacher Status. The nursery opens all year round, Monday to Friday, from 7.30am to 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 67 children attending. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. It supports children who use 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:

- enhance the use of space with children under two years, including the outdoor environment, in order to positively impact on their well-being and help all aspects of their development
- review the arrangements for involving parents in sharing what they know about their children, in order to enhance their contributions to the initial assessments of children's development on entry.

Inspection judgements

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

Practitioners have a good understanding of how children learn and plan enjoyable and varied activities, which capture their interest and engage them. They know their key children well and recent in-house training has made them more vigilant in identifying key patterns of repeatable behaviour in very young children known as schemas, such as a fascination in rotation. Consequently, they add resources, such as small rollers for painting and a treasure basket with associated objects, to support such interests.

Practitioners undertake an accurate assessment of children's prior skills, knowledge and

understanding on entry, based on their own observations. However, there is scope to gather more precise information from parents to contribute to these. Children's next steps for learning are informed from purposeful ongoing observational assessments and are reflected in detailed planning. Records of learning show that children are working comfortably within the typical range of development expected for their age. Practitioners effectively encourage parents to be involved in their children's ongoing learning, to promote continuity and provide optimum support. Regular parent consultations update them on their children's progress and next steps through the sharing of summary sheets. They are also encouraged to add their comments to observation forms, share any new achievements from home and contribute to planning and topics, such as bringing in a pet. In addition, they are invited to events, such as celebrating their child's 'graduation' as they move on to school.

Children show a positive approach to learning overall and are supported well by practitioners, who show good levels of interest in what children say and do. They balance their interaction carefully as they provide opportunities for children to explore, make discoveries and solve problems on their own; skills which enable them to develop and learn effectively and be ready for next stages in learning, such as school. Practitioners promote children's communication and language by talking to them during care routines and as they play. For example, practitioners encourage babies' sounds and babbling by copying their sounds in a turn-taking 'conversation' and they model building sentences by repeating what toddlers say and adding other words. As children aged two years paint, showing good hand and eye coordination, practitioners encourage them to ascribe meanings to their marks and talk about the colours made when different paints are mixed. Where children use English as an additional language, practitioners ask parents for basic words, in order for their cultural background to be celebrated, alongside developing a good grasp of English.

Pre-school children's language for thinking and imagination is actively encouraged through open-ended questioning. For example, as they spontaneously transport water to the dry soil in the small world dinosaur area, practitioners ask what is happening. As they engage in making marks in the writing area, children readily draw letters, for example, as they copy the practitioner's name, displayed on their t-shirt. Practitioners enhance the learning environment effectively by setting up toys and activities invitingly and through complementing areas with photographs, labelling, draped cloth, mobile telephones and posters. For example, there are photographs of children at a farm and pictures of animals, including those from around the world, such as Africa, as part of the 'Old McDonald' display in the baby room.

There is a good amount of space for children to move around freely and develop confidence in their physical skills and this is utilised effectively by practitioners, who work with children over two years. For example, the room for two- to three-year-old children adjoins the outdoor area, which they have free flow access to. In addition, there is a wonderfully-resourced room in a small out-house building in the garden, for all age groups to use, particularly the youngest children. However, there is scope for practitioners in the baby room to make more effective use of space by utilising the available free-flow access to the garden from their room and the additional play room. In particular, where older toddlers are more exuberant and become less interested in the activities and resources

available in their base room.

Children enjoy exploring different media and materials. Toddlers investigate the interesting dens and observe the spiral pasta shapes with interest. Children over two years are encouraged to take off their shoes and socks to play in the large sand tray in the garden, much to their delight as they pretend they are at the beach. This is extended to the water play activity, where children catch toy fish with a net and are encouraged to count how many they have. As children use water and brushes, they observe the marks they make on the walls and learn about evaporation as these disappear in the warm sunshine. Children's understanding of the world is fostered effectively through visits within the local community, for example, to the shops and through visitors, who bring different types of creatures to the nursery for children to find out about. Children also learn how to care for living things, such as their pet goldfish and a slug that they have found.

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

Children are happy and confident because practitioners build up good relationships with their key children during the settling-in period. This fosters children's emotional well-being during their move to a new setting. This is complemented with photograph displays of key person groups, including information gathered about each child. This helps practitioners to find out about their unique personalities and parents are encouraged to bring in photographs for the family wall. Babies attending for only a short while play happily while a practitioner sits alongside them and clearly enjoy the social interaction at lunch time.

Practitioners find out about children's home routines and mirror these, so that babies and toddlers, in particular, feel safe and secure. Although, they adapt these in response to babies' individual needs, for example, if they do not appear ready for a nap at a particular time, or want their lunch earlier. Children's continued sense of security is fostered as they move to a new room or leave for school. Children's existing key person shares information with their new key person and development summaries are given to children's new teacher. Practitioners demonstrate to children they value what they do, ensuring they develop good levels of confidence and self-esteem. For example, practitioners in the two- to three-year-old's room enthusiastically say 'Shall we put your lovely picture on the wall?'

Children are sociable with adults and their peers. Toddlers observe and copy each other and learn to share and take turns through simple explanations and positive reinforcements. Children aged two- to three-years-of-age play alongside each other and are beginning to engage in common activities, such as making simple constructions with bricks or playing in the water. Children over three years demonstrate more complex cooperative play, linking up to negotiate and share ideas and create particular themes. They behave well in the main and any minor incidents of unwanted behaviour are adequately dealt with by practitioners. Children learn to keep themselves and others safe, for example, through discussions about safety rules when playing football and why they need sun protection cream and hats on. Visitors help children to learn about other aspects of staying safe, such as stranger danger, road safety and fire safety and practitioners use role play toys to reinforce messages.

All age groups are actively encouraged to develop good levels of independence. The environment is very effective in enabling even the youngest children to select what they want to play with. Toddlers readily feed themselves, with only limited support required from adults. Children in the pre-school room find their own name and readily choose where they would like to sit and eat. They serve their own food using tongs and take turns to help prepare for meals, such as giving out cups or cutting up strawberries, where lovely discussions take place about where these come from and how they are juicy, sweet and healthy. As children volunteer to carry the tray of fruit around to give out, staff use such spontaneous opportunities to extend children's learning. For example, they explain that as this is heavy it might tip over, encouraging children to pass the tray around the table instead.

Effective hygiene routines are implemented with children over two years, in order to fully promote their all-round good physical health and help learn about healthy practices. For example, they readily wash their hands before eating or helping to prepare the afternoon snack. Signs in the pre-school room remind children about healthy practices, such as having a drink and they are reminded to hydrate themselves as they play outside. Drinks are readily available for all age groups and practitioners offer these when children may be thirsty, such as after waking from a nap. Children over two years have good access to outdoor play, in order for them to benefit from lots of fresh air and exercise. Practitioners highlight changes to children's bodies after exercise and talk about why exercise is good for them. Meals and snacks are extremely well planned on a three week rota system and are made using fresh meat, fish, fruit and vegetables. Menus are displayed and meals and snacks are attractively presented in photographs.

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

Although, a new manager has recently been appointed at the nursery, the company's area manager and provider are currently providing effective leadership and management of the nursery, while supporting the newly appointed manager as part of her thorough induction. A practitioner with Qualified Teacher Status is also new in post, in order to help raise quality and monitor the quality of teaching and learning in all nursery rooms.

The provider understands her responsibilities in meeting both the safeguarding and welfare requirements and the learning and development requirements and is continually working towards a high-quality provision. Although, the area manager and provider have only been present at the nursery for a short time, their evaluation of the provision, including an in-house audit of the quality of teaching, effectively highlights areas for development. They have implemented many new initiatives to improve children's achievements over time. This includes a more robust process for observation, assessment and planning and for monitoring the overall educational programmes to ensure that all children are consistently supported in making optimum progress. The nursery also take part in local authority improvement audits, further demonstrating their strong commitment to developing their practice. Key plans are in place for the future. This includes the current renovation of one of the outdoor areas, to enhance children's outdoor learning through exciting areas, such as, a large sandpit, water butt, builder's yard and investigative area.

Children are effectively involved in the process by creating a learning story through photographs, observing the changes taking place with interest.

The provider does acknowledge, however, that these are still being embedded to ensure that practice is fully consistent amongst all practitioners and good processes have been put in place to address inconsistencies. For example, peer and management observations have been introduced and in-house training is delivered along with practitioners attending courses run by their local authority. In addition, regular supervisions and appraisals monitor and support practitioners in their professional development. This is reflected in clear and detailed training plans. Each practitioner is required to effectively evaluate training to assess its impact on children. This means that their extended knowledge of early years is effectively used to improve and guide their practice.

Documentation is regularly reviewed and updated and maintained to a good standard, in order to promote the efficient and safe management of the nursery. There is stringent recruitment and vetting of practitioners, ensuring children are protected and cared for by adults, who are well-qualified. The safety and security of the nursery is well-ensured through good risk assessments, in order to promote children's welfare. This includes the use of closed circuit television in certain areas of the nursery. Robust safeguarding procedures are in place. All practitioners are required to keep their child protection training up to date and as a result, they are fully aware of the procedures to follow should they have a concern of this nature.

Parents receive good quality information. For example, on their child's enrolment they receive a welcome pack and policies and procedures are sent by email. Displays, photographs and notices, along with regular newsletters, inform them of many aspects of the nursery. Parents of children under three years are informed about their care routines through daily diaries. Parents are actively encouraged to share their views about the nursery through questionnaires, for example and any suggestions are positively welcomed and addressed. Parents and carers express complimentary comments about the nursery and care of their children. Although, there are currently no children attending with special educational needs and/or disabilities, there are good arrangements in place to ensure strong partnership working with parents and other professionals, to ensure a consistent approach. Similarly, although, no children currently attend other settings, a good understanding is held of linking closely to promote continuity in children's care and learning.

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	EY257949
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	921482
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	85
Number of children on roll	67
Name of provider	First Footsteps Ltd
Date of previous inspection	24/02/2011
Telephone number	01772 454640

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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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