

Footprints at Bollington

Dean Valley Community School, Albert Road, Bollington, MACCLESFIELD, Cheshire, SK10 5HS

Inspection date	04/10/2013
Previous inspection date	17/08/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	1
	Previous inspection:	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Staff have a superb understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They precisely observe and assess children, identifying their preferred style of learning and their current interests and use this skilfully to provide a fantastic range of activities that fully engage and stimulate them.
- A rich and varied learning environment ensures that children are always engaged in fruitful activity that challenges and stretches them. The access to school grounds and a designated outside area provides fantastic opportunities for exploration and play, while activities both indoors and out, are superbly delivered to ensure that children can fully exploit every learning experience.
- Children's safety and well-being are of paramount importance. Staff are highly attentive to children's needs and are constantly vigilant to ensure that any hazards are successfully minimised. Safeguarding procedures are fully understood and all staff are trained in this crucial area of practice.
- Partnerships with parents are exemplary. The setting fully values the role of parents in their children's learning and development and ensures that they are regularly consulted and kept informed about their children's activities and ongoing progress.

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 compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector spoke to children, staff and parents and held discussions with the management team.
- The inspector observed free play, focused activities, outside play and mealtimes.
- The inspector examined children's learning journey records and the planning and assessment procedures.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with children, the provider's written policies and procedures and self-evaluation documents.

Inspector

Jennie Lenton

Full Report

Information about the setting

Footprints at Bollington registered in 2009 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It operates from a purpose built building on the grounds of Dean Valley Community School in Bollington, Cheshire. The nursery is owned by a private provider. The nursery serves the local and surrounding area. Children have access to a designated outdoor play area as well as use of the school grounds.

The nursery employs 15 members of childcare staff. Of these, 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, with three members being degree qualified and two holding Early Years Professional Status. The owner is a qualified teacher. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, 51 weeks of the year, from 7.30am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 82 children on roll, all of whom are within the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- further scrutinise the excellent tracking documents to identify trends in learning for different groups of children.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are extremely enthusiastic and excited as they enter this nursery. They cannot wait to engage with the activities on offer and display high levels of confidence as they select their favourite toys and resources. This is because children's needs and interests are precisely met as staff recognise and value children as leaders in their own learning and development. All the topics reflect their interests and staff are extremely skilled at making every activity relevant and engaging. Children are encouraged to lead play and develop their own ideas, while staff skilfully come alongside to promote children's understanding across all areas of learning. For example, during a jelly making activity in the pre-school, children are asked to predict whether warm or cold water will make the jelly crystals dissolve quicker. They are encouraged to try out both liquids to find the answer. They exclaim with delight as the water turns the crystals a different colour and have great fun feeling the changing substance. They place their hands in the bowl and are surprised to realise they cannot see their hands through the mixture. Staff encourage them to consider why this has happened and children then suggest that adding more water will make their

hands re-appear. Time is then provided for them to test out their predictions. Staff ensure that children have a fantastic experience by allowing them to fully explore their senses, letting the jelly trickle between their fingers and splash back into the bowl. Their imagination is sparked as they consider what jelly rain would be like. Mathematic skills are also superbly promoted as children measure out the liquid into jugs before adding it to their bowls. They count down from the top of the jug until they reach the 200 millilitre mark and carefully pour water to this level. This also promotes their dexterity as they handle the jugs carefully, taking care not to slosh water over the side. Communication skills also flourish as children learn new vocabulary, such as 'dissolve', 'translucent' and other words. This excellent activity fully stimulates and engages every child that takes part and a rich learning experience is clearly enjoyed.

Younger children also enjoy outstanding opportunities to learn and play. Babies are fascinated by the items on a sensory tray and reach forward to feel the bumpy surface of a cabbage leaf and to squish a piece of malt loaf between their fingers. They squeal with delight as they experience these sensations, fully supported by the attentive staff, who show equal levels of enthusiasm. Staff exclaim with interest as they hold up different items for the babies to investigate. They effectively encourage children to fully engage, responding to their coos and babble positively and helping them to be confident with new experiences. Babies also receive lots of quieter activities, which gives them time to bond with staff. They snuggle up as they look at books and enjoy being held for milk feeds. Even new starters quickly bond with their key person as a result of this attention. In the toddler room, imagination blossoms as staff provide an excellent range of resources to support children in their make-believe play. Cardboard boxes are used to create an aeroplane and children pack their own suitcases with swimming costumes, flip-flops and other items to go on their travels. Staff talk to them about the items they take, encouraging them to explain their thinking and show what they know. Children confidently explain that they need shorts because it will be hot and sun-cream so they do not get sunburnt. They use a large piece of blue material to represent the sea and put costumes on over their clothes as they pretend to swim across it. Great fun is had as they are fully immersed in their imagination, chatting to each other about the fun they have had in the sea.

All children show that they feel extremely safe and secure as they freely move around the fantastic indoor and outdoor spaces. Free access to the outside areas is encouraged throughout most of the day. Babies enjoy a 'free-flow' session where they can crawl safely from indoor to outdoor areas, expressing their preference. They enjoy exploring the 'mud kitchen', adding water to soil and feeling how this changes its consistency. They have lots of fun playing in the large crates and giggle with excitement as they take part in action songs, such as 'row row row your boat' as staff sit with them and sing along. Pre-school children know that they can go outside whenever the green circle is displayed on the door and alternate between indoor and outdoor spaces at will. They show high levels of independence as they visit the bathrooms on their own and help themselves to snacks and water. This excellent arrangement encourages their self-care skills as well as enabling them to feel a real sense of being 'at home' within the setting. The setting also uses the local community as a rich learning resource. Children regularly go on outings, taking their own shopping lists to the supermarket or going to visit the post office, butchers and bakers to see what happens in these settings. They take money and make small

purchases, developing excellent interpersonal skills as they chat to shop keepers and pay for their goods. They enjoy nature walks along the disused train track and are fascinated as they see the canal boats in use. Activities back at the nursery often follow on from these experiences, with children making their own boats and seeing if they will float or using the leaves and acorns found on a nature walk to create a collage.

Staff are exemplary teachers and carers. They are superb at delivering activities in such a way that children cannot fail to be stimulated and engaged. Even routine events, such as recognising the initial sounds in letters are fun and interactive. Children listen attentively during a game of 'I spy' and make accurate suggestions about words that begin with the initial sound. They are encouraged to come out with any word they can think of, even made up ones, which encourages a great deal of fun and laughter, before looking at the items in the 'I spy' box to identify the actual object that has been selected. They confidently count up to 15 as they go around the circle identifying how many children are in today and work out which number follows on in sequence. Number songs are used to further develop their understanding of mathematical concepts and they quickly learn basic subtraction through interactive songs, such as 'five little speckled frogs'. This is made exciting as they dress-up as frogs with masks they have made and act out the song on the logs in the outside area. They count down as each frog jumps off, thoroughly enjoying this game while learning how to subtract. Their early literacy skills are also impressive. They write their own names on their artwork and have excellent dexterity as they make marks in a variety of fun and interesting ways from a very young age. Babies explore how to make marks as they pull items through 'gloop' while toddlers enjoy a larger scale activity, using rakes and brushes in paint. Older children also enjoy exploring how to flick, blow and scatter paint as well as developing finer skills with paint brushes and pens.

All children's achievements are recorded in progress files and the key person for each child regularly monitors their development to ensure that they are continually making excellent progress. Staff successfully identify ways to help children move forward and uses this to inform the planning of future activities. Parents are fully consulted at regular intervals and provide their own observations to share children's achievements from home. They also complete forms for staff to inform them about how their children learn, identifying what motivates and captures their children's attention. This provides a wealth of information to staff about how to tailor activities to meet children's individual styles of learning. Parents are also provided with resources and ideas to carry on learning at home. For example, staff provide bags containing the ingredients for salt-dough, so that children can make their own sculptures at home with parents, following on from what they have done in nursery. This fabulous approach ensures that parents are fully included in their children's learning. Consequently, all children are making fantastic progress towards the early learning goals. This helps to ensure they are extremely well prepared for their future learning in school. Children also learn to share, listen to others and wait their turn with popular equipment as they play together. They learn to work together as they take part in running an ice-cream parlour during the summer, providing real ice-creams for their friends to enjoy during outside play. This helps them develop key skills for future learning, such as concentration and turn-taking, as well as helping them to be confident in other group settings, such as the classroom. Undoubtedly, the superb range of activities coupled with the outstanding teaching from staff enables all children to become highly confident and competent learners.

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

Children quickly settle as staff provide high levels of support and encouragement, ensuring every child feels secure and valued. Parents are invited to stay with their children for as long as they feel necessary. Staff know that this is individual for each child and therefore, there is no restriction on how long this may take. Consequently, by the time they are left with staff children are confident and capable of coping. Parents provide details about their child's likes and dislikes to aid staff in getting to know their child. This information is used to plan for new arrivals and favourite games and activities are provided to help them join in and forget their concerns about being left. Most parents report that their children are 'quickly at home' and 'just want to go and play' as staff are exceptionally warm and sensitive, providing extra praise and cuddles to help children feel safe and secure.

As children move from the toddler room to the pre-school, staff make sure they are well supported and emotionally ready to move up to the more classroom like structure. A 'tots' room is linked onto the pre-school and provides an opportunity for shyer children to take part in some smaller group activities, as well as being part of the larger and busier pre-school. This excellent facility provides children with the time and space to make a smooth transition and build confidence as they move into a more structured environment. When the time comes for children to move on to formal education, excellent partnerships with the local schools ensure that this is also a smooth transition. Reception teachers visit children in the setting and get to know them before they start. Staff also take the time to do activities based around their new school, such as reading stories about school and discussing their new uniforms. Photograph books from the schools have also been obtained, showing children who their teacher will be and even what gate they will go through. This superb approach helps children to view their move as an exciting adventure as they know what to expect.

Children are kept extremely safe. All exterior doors are kept secure to prevent unwanted visitors from entering the premises and parents are issued with an electronic key fob, which activates the secure gates and main entrance. Staff are also exceptionally vigilant, ensuring that the identity of any unknown visitors is thoroughly checked and that they are not left unattended in the building. Children have a very mature understanding of how to contribute to their own safety. They know how to cross a road safely as they use pedestrian crossings on their outings with staff and understand that they must wear the nursery's hi-visibility jackets so they can 'stay safe and be seen'. Children also display excellent behaviour as they understand why rules are in place. They know it is important to use the bannisters as they come downstairs 'so they don't fall' and that they can only go outside when the green circle is displayed to show that the outside area is ready for use. Staff praise and encourage children constantly. As a result, they display high levels of self-esteem and a confidence in their own abilities. Children take an active role in the running of the nursery, willingly tidying away toys before circle time and helping to set the tables at lunch. They show an awareness of other's needs as they help themselves to food, ensuring they only take a fair amount so that 'everyone gets some'. This mature approach is a result of the freedom afforded them by staff, who encourage them to think about what they are doing and how it affects others. Where unwanted behaviour occurs,

staff work with parents and other professionals to ensure a united approach is used to help children adapt their actions. Staff are extremely knowledgeable about behaviour management and are skilled at recognising the triggers that lead to difficult behaviour. They put together a plan to avoid these antecedents and as a result of this focussed approach, children rapidly move on and play together harmoniously.

Children's good health is superbly promoted. All food is freshly prepared and the rolling menu provides children with a wide variety of nutritional dishes. Plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables are incorporated into the menu, with some produce, such as peas and strawberries, being grown by children. Children tuck in enthusiastically to chicken and pasta, with a homemade tomato sauce and a side dish of green beans. They enjoy fresh fruit at any time of the day and access to drinking water is also always available. Active play is effectively encouraged, with a rich and varied outside environment. All children, including the babies and toddlers have prolonged access to the outside play area and the surrounding fields and playgrounds which belong to the school. Children have lots of fun using the challenging climbing equipment, running up and down the grassy slope and exploring the school pond with staff supervision. They take part in group games, such as 'crocodiles and islands', jumping into hoops to escape the crocodile who is chasing after them. They learn about how their body changes as they exercise and how the blood pumps faster as they get hot. Staff encourage them to draw round their shadows and then draw in the veins as they show great interest in how the body works. Children also learn about keeping themselves healthy through interactive experiences, such as receiving a visit from the dental hygienist. Young children enjoy using the large toothbrush on a puppet to show how to clean their teeth, while older children learn more about how to stay healthy as they learn about how germs spread. Using flour and glitter, they coat their hands and see how the mixture quickly transfers around the nursery as they touch different items. This brilliant demonstration means that children fully understand the importance of washing their hands before meals as they know how important it is to get rid of germs to stop them spreading.

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

The nursery is led by an inspirational and dedicated management team, who are ambitious and forward thinking. They are ably supported by committed and professional staff, who from the most senior to the most junior, share their vision for the provision of outstanding childcare. All staff have children's well-being at the heart of everything they do. They are all extremely warm and caring, enthusiastic and motivated. Consequently, the nursery has a fantastic atmosphere and energy, which has a positive effect on children who attend. All staff are focussed on driving the setting forward and are keen to try out new ideas and techniques. Training opportunities are fully embraced and staff willingly sacrifice their weekends to attend in-house training events to develop their skills. The entire team attends training on a Saturday to learn how to use the learning journals more effectively and as a result, all members of staff are knowledgeable about how to plan next steps that are meaningful and individual to each child. Exemplary monitoring procedures ensure that managers follow up every training event to ensure that learning is put into practice. Staff receive considerable support as their practice is assessed and constructive

feedback is given. Every child benefits as all staff are quickly using new skills to full effect.

The nursery also offers training and information events to parents, sharing new ideas and current research to help them support their children at home. Parents of older children find a presentation on phonics 'extremely useful' while the 'Are you ready for me, now I am 2?' presentation helps those with toddlers to recognise the way their children learn at this age. The nursery also provides regular emails to parents with 'top tips for talking' to help them support speech and language acquisition. The nursery also works in partnership with other childcare providers to improve its own and other settings performance. Meetings with local reception class teachers are held every three months to ensure that there is consistency in the way nursery staff and school teachers assess children's achievements. A 'moderation' process is undertaken to ensure that each setting is assessing children in the same way and reaching the same conclusions about children's progress towards the early learning goals. This excellent practice helps to ensure that children are receiving the right level of input from staff, as well as providing another means of monitoring staff understanding.

All required policies and procedures are in place. These are of outstanding quality and underpin excellent practice as all staff are fully aware of their content and how to put them into practice. 'Spot checks' are undertaken by managers to ensure that staff remain up to date with current legislation and best practice. For instance, managers will undertake a random check and ask staff what they would do if a child required medication or had unexplained bruises. Staff consistently demonstrate a high level of understanding and all required paperwork indicates that procedures are precisely followed. For example, accidents are fully recorded and signed off by parents to ensure consistency of care following any incident. Monitoring and self-evaluation is used extremely effectively to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the setting and to set future goals to promote continuous development. All staff contribute to this process, regularly evaluating their own practice and reflecting on any issues in the setting. For example, following a spate of biting incidents, triggers to this behaviour are identified and action taken to reduce the number of incidents that occur. Staff use both their own observations and research into this common problem to identify ways to support young children. Consequently, outcomes for children quickly improve as staff help them to deal with their frustrations more appropriately.

Staff are extremely well managed and supported by managers. Their interaction with children is regularly observed and constructive feedback is given to develop their already outstanding practice. This excellent approach enables staff to reflect on how effective they are in delivering activities and helps to ensure that they are all continually developing their own skills for the benefit of children. The educational programme is also very well monitored. Managers and room leaders use effective tracking documents to ensure that children are covering all the areas of learning and to see whether children are meeting or exceeding the expected levels of development. Where gaps are identified, staff are quick to respond by providing focussed activities to help children develop their skills. Further analysis of the tracking data is being considered to identify other ways to even better support children's swift development. For example, this includes looking for any differences between groups of children to see if there is scope to consider improved ways of working with groups of girls or boys.

Safeguarding procedures are fully understood and the setting has comprehensive written policies in place to underpin exemplary practice. These include guidelines for the recruitment of suitable staff and checks for existing staff to ensure their ongoing suitability. All staff, including students, undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service check and complete a full induction to ensure they understand their roles and responsibilities. The safety and well-being of children is effectively prioritised at all times, with all staff clear about the signs and symptoms that may indicate abuse. Staff are also extremely vigilant, making sure that children are safe as they play. Hazards are promptly minimised to prevent accidental injury and children are aware of the importance of acting in a safe manner. Full risk assessments are in place for all indoor and outdoor areas and staff also undertake thorough daily checks to ensure that toys and equipment remain fit for use. All outings are risk-assessed prior to departure and records are updated on return if any new hazards have been identified. For instance, staff record that the pathway down to the disused train track was blocked due to building work. This effectively alerts other staff to this hazard and an alternative route or safety measure is swiftly implemented to ensure children's safety.

Children show that they feel safe in the setting. They know what resources are available and confidently move around to access the toys and resources they want. This encourages their independence and gives them a good sense of freedom. The resources take account of the needs of children who attend and promote an understanding of diversity, with toys and stories displaying a wide range of different backgrounds and abilities. There are no children currently attending with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, the setting welcomes all children and is keen to work in partnership with parents and other professionals to ensure that any specific needs are promptly identified and addressed. This helps all children to reach their full potential.

Staff build excellent relationships with parents and chat to them on a daily basis about their child's achievements and well-being. Noticeboards in the hallway provide parents with a plethora of additional information about childcare issues as well as information about what children are covering in the nursery over the week and specifically, what they are doing that day. Key policies and procedures are shared with parents, ensuring that they are aware of the standards to which the setting operates and providing details of how to make a complaint if they need to. Parents report that they are incredibly impressed with the care their children receive, recognising that 'all staff go above and beyond their job description' and that the nursery 'offers that bit extra'. They particularly praise the management, feeling safe in the knowledge that 'managers know exactly what is going on, down to the smallest detail'. Without doubt, the superb structure and dedicated professionalism of all staff means that this is a fantastic nursery where children cannot fail to blossom.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory 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	EY389368
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	821750
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	50
Number of children on roll	103
Name of provider	Footprints Day Nurseries Ltd
Date of previous inspection	17/08/2009
Telephone number	01625 574777

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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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