

Little Steps Neighbourhood Nursery

Lister Drive, LIVERPOOL, L13 7HH

Inspection date	19/08/2013
Previous inspection date	30/11/2010

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

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is satisfactory

- Children have warm and friendly relationships with each other and the staff. This helps them to feel secure.
- Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported and the arrangements to help children make the transition to school are effective.
- The staff and managers have a good understanding of safeguarding procedures as they attend regular training. There are good monitoring systems in place to ensure children are kept safe and secure.

It is not yet good because

- The assessment of children's progress is not always effective. Parents are not asked to share what their children can already do when they enrol and the progress check at age two has not been implemented and shared with parents.
- Children's learning in understanding of world is less well developed in some aspects because there are few positive images displayed or multicultural events celebrated.
- Staff do not always use the information gathered from their observations to extend learning for individual children during the summer.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities and care practices in the playrooms and within the outside play area. She conducted a joint observation with the deputy manager, looking at the practice of staff.
- The inspector spoke with the children and staff from each room. She also held a meeting with the management team.
- The inspector also took into account the views of parents and carers spoken to during the inspection and read their comments in children's learning records.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation, including planning, observations and assessment records. She also looked at a range of policies, including information used to assess the suitability of staff, staff rotas, attendance registers and the nursery's self-evaluation.

Inspector

Valerie Aspinall

Full Report

Information about the setting

Little Steps Neighbourhood Nursery is part of Lister Steps Limited, a committee-based organisation with charitable status run by a Board of Directors. It was registered in 2004 on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from a one-storey pre-fabricated building in the Tuebrook area of Liverpool. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There is an enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery employs 22 members of childcare staff. Of these, 17 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, one holds an early years qualification at level 6 and one holds Qualified Teacher Status. The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 6pm and Saturday from 9am to 1pm for 51 weeks of the year. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 94 children on roll; of these 45 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 with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- include parents in the assessment of their children's development by improving the exchange of information about what they can already do when they enrol, in order to establish effective starting points which aid planning for children's learning
- review children's progress between the age of two and three years in order to identify their strengths and where their progress is less than expected. Provide parents with a short written summary of their development in the prime areas of learning
- ensure that a secure foundation for learning is in place for every child, which is consistent and ensures equality of opportunity by; recognising and supporting children's home language; teaching children about events and festivals from a range of different cultures and beliefs; displaying positive images that reflect the wider community children live in.

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

- implement the existing observation and assessment of children's progress consistently by planning for the next steps in their learning all year round so that activities continue to build on what children can already do
- continue to develop the skills of all staff in supporting children's thinking and language development more effectively by ensuring they fully engage with children during their play.

Inspection judgements

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

Children enjoy attending this welcoming nursery where they benefit from plenty of child-initiated activities that capture their interests. The resources and activities provided support most of the areas of learning. Staff support children's learning through child-initiated play and praise them for their achievements, which help to promote their self-esteem. Some staff are appropriately involved in children's play activities to promote conversation, however, at times staff supervise rather than engage with children to support their thinking and extend their learning. Consequently, opportunities to support children's developing language are sometimes missed. Children enjoy exploring the sensory resources that are freely available, such as, water, sand, paint and bark, and so

experience the differences between them. Staff extend sensory experiences by encouraging children to push and squeeze cut up oranges to watch the juice collect and teach them new words, such as 'squish'.

Staff use spontaneous opportunities to teach children about the wider world. For example, a tortoise is found in the grounds and staff show it to the children, explaining how to be careful and look after it. Children see the tortoise have a drink of water and enjoy making observational drawings and paintings after watching it. However, other aspects of understanding the world are executed less effectively. For example, the lack of positive images displayed and celebrations of cultural festivals and events mean that children are not learning about the wider community they live in. In addition, children who speak English as an additional language do not have many opportunities to see and use their home language in the nursery. This affects their ability to confidently use their own language outside the home and build strong bilingual foundations when learning English. During daily routines children develop skills that will be required at school, such as lining up to go and play outside and listening to instructions to ensure they are kept safe. However, while staff routinely observe children's development and plan effective next steps to help them make progress, this has lapsed over the summer months. As a result, the evaluation of children's learning is less effective as the activities on offer, while fun for children, are not always targeted to help individual children make progress.

Staff have friendly relationships with parents. Parents comment favourably about the daily feedback they receive and say the staff are 'brilliant and they trust them completely'. However, parents are not encouraged to share what they know about their children's development on entry, and so, staff do not always have a clear understanding of each child's starting points. Consequently, planning to help children make progress is not as swift as it could be. Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are soundly supported. Staff implement play plans, developed for individual children; as a result, they make good progress in their learning.

The nursery has not met the requirement to carry out the progress check at age two and provide parents with a written summary of their child's progress which identifies their strengths and any areas where progress is less than expected. However, annual parents' evenings offer parents the opportunity to spend time with their child's key person and discuss how they are developing and some parents complete 'home observation' sheets, which help staff to get a better picture of their learning at home.

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

Generally, children are happy and content; they form warm relationships with staff and enjoy each other's company. A key person system helps children to feel secure and parents know who to contact. Staff sing to and chat with young children while they are changing nappies, making the experience personal and unique to each child. Most children currently attending the nursery are under the age of three and so play happily alongside each other, rather than cooperating in activities. However, older children from the holiday play scheme and play group enjoy playing with the younger children and this helps them to get used mixing with a wider group and so helps them get ready for starting school,

when the time comes. The staff are effective role models, they are calm and gentle with children and praise the efforts they make. They remind children how to play safely and encourage them to be kind to each other. As a result, children's behaviour is generally good.

The nursery offers flexible settling-in sessions to new children and an 'All about me sheet' asks for their likes and dislikes, but this is not completed consistently for each child. Consequently, the transition from home to nursery is not as smooth as it could be for every child, as staff do not always have detailed information about each child's learning needs. The nursery is cheerful and well equipped, most of the resources are stored at low level, and so, children independently select the toys they want to play with. The outdoor area is pleasant and offers opportunities for children to explore and experiment. Staff encourage children to move in a range of ways, by being on hand to support them, if required. For example, children are helped to negotiate the new aeroplane seesaw, ride bikes and balance on tyres. Consequently, children are becoming active learners, prepared to attempt challenging tasks and this helps them become ready for school, at the appropriate time.

The nursery offers a predominantly vegetarian menu that includes regular snacks and fresh fruit. Children are taught about healthy food choices through tasting and cooking activities and grow seasonal fruit, such as strawberries. They are supported in developing their personal care, for example, by blowing their own nose and washing their hands before meals and snacks. This, alongside plenty of outdoor play, ensures that children begin to understand how to develop habits that contribute to a healthy lifestyle.

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

The nursery environment is safe. Staff complete a checklist every day to ensure there are no hazards present and assess risks prior to taking children out in the local area. Staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures. They know the signs and symptoms of potential abuse and know who to contact should they have concerns. Staff also understand the policy and procedure for reporting possible concerns about staff practice. Recruitment procedures are sound and ensure all staff are suitable to work with children.

The management team has a good understanding of the welfare, safeguarding and learning and development requirements to support children's progress. They ensure that sufficient staff are on duty at all times to meet the ratio requirements. Children's development is tracked so staff can identify potential gaps in their learning. The management team has collated the data and is beginning to formulate plans to guide staff in supporting children's progress. Parents are provided with information about the nursery through informal daily discussion, the nursery prospectus, website and various noticeboards. Their views are sought through discussions, parents' evenings and, more formally, through questionnaires. Parents are happy with the service provided and say their children have good relationships with the staff, enjoy the activities on offer and are making good progress.

The management team is very reflective, keen to develop the nursery and has included staff in developing their focused improvement plan. The nursery is currently being adapted to allow for more two-year-old children to take up places as demand is high in the area. However, over the summer months managers have allowed the usual standard of practice, with regard to monitoring children's progress and planning for the next steps in their learning, to lapse. As a result, some staff have relaxed their engagement in children's learning and so opportunities to support their individual development have been missed.

Staff are encouraged to participate in external and internal training. Almost all staff have first-aid certificates, food safety and health and safety training. In addition, staff are encouraged to pursue higher qualifications such as foundation degrees and adult teaching qualifications. They participate in regular supervision and appraisals to evaluate how they can better support children's development. The staff form effective partnerships with health professionals, which ensures they can meet the unique needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Relationships with other local settings are good. For example, information has been shared with two local primary schools to support children's transitions to reception class. The managers also attend local network meetings and cluster groups to share good practice.

The Childcare Register

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

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

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY289844
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	915533
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	93
Number of children on roll	94
Name of provider	Lister Steps Limited
Date of previous inspection	30/11/2010
Telephone number	0151 254 1394

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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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