

Positive Steps Children's Day Nursery

Two Waters Methodist Church, Mill Street, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD, Hertfordshire, HP3 9RZ

Inspection date	12/11/2013
Previous inspection date	18/04/2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	2
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

- Children are happy, motivated and eager to learn. Staff demonstrate good quality interactions so that children develop good levels of independence and confidence.
- Children have good relationships with the staff, who provide a safe and secure environment for them. Robust procedures are in place to ensure all those working with children are safe to do so. This means their safety is protected.
- The nursery develops successful partnerships with parents. Information is shared between staff and parents on a daily basis about their learning and welfare. This contributes to the two-way flow of information to benefit the children.
- The experienced manager has a clear vision for the future and works closely with the staff, parents and other providers to implement any changes to move the nursery forward. Clear monitoring systems mean that children's welfare needs are met.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is room to develop the toddlers' base rooms so that cosy areas are provided where children can relax, explore and extend their learning with friends and staff.
- There is scope to develop the organisation and range of resources available in younger children's rooms so that they are attractive and sharply focused in all areas, to further promote 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.

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 staff's interactions with children, both indoors and outdoors.
The inspector spoke to the manager, staff and children at appropriate times.
- She engaged in children's play and discussed with parents their views of the service provided.
- The inspector sampled children's assessment documents and discussed how these are used to help children make progress in their learning and development.
The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with children. She discussed and viewed each room's improvement plan and how these are used with the self-evaluation process.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Maura Pigram

Full report

Information about the setting

Positive Steps Children's Day Nursery was registered in 2008 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in purpose-built premises in Apsley, near Hemel Hempstead in Hertfordshire. It is one of seven nurseries which are privately owned and is managed by Positive Steps Children's Day Nurseries Limited. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 15 members of childcare staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, the manager holds level 4, one staff member holds Early Years Professional Status and two hold Qualified Teacher Status.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round, apart from Bank Holidays, from 7.30am until 6.15pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 99 children on roll who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. It supports children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop the toddler base rooms of the nursery so that there are more reassuring and comforting spaces for all children to explore and extend their learning
- extend resources in the toddler room so that they are more sharply focused to promote their learning even further.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are making good progress in their learning and development. Staff have a secure understanding of what children need to learn and how to support their learning through play. They provide a range of interesting activities and interact well using a range of effective teaching strategies. For example, a staff member uses toddlers' interest in dolls to help them actively engage in a group singing session. Children's attention is captured and they follow the actions of the doll, which is used to show children what to do. They jump up and down in delight and clap their hands as they join in with popular songs and nursery rhymes. This supports younger children's emerging communication skills. Babies can freely choose to explore items set out for them, such as interactive toys, balls and a

variety of rattles. They can freely access the treasure baskets and have great fun exploring the contents. Since the last inspection, staff in the baby room have re-organised the layout of the room. For example, a cosy area with a range of resources to create different sounds has been created. This means that children have an interesting area to explore, and provides further opportunities for staff to support children's emerging speech.

The pre-school room is well organised so that children can engage in activities that interest them. Children love books and older children enjoy using the cosy areas where they can sit quietly or 'read' to their friends, mirroring staff. Good provision is made to encourage children's writing skills. Children make marks using different media, such as paint, water and sand. Resources in the pre-school are of good quality and staff are highly skilled. As a result, children show high levels of independence and demonstrate characteristics of effective learning. However, some of the resources in other rooms are beginning to appear well used. They are not set out as attractively as they could be in order to always stimulate children's developing interests. This is most noticeable in the older toddlers' base room.

Children demonstrate that they are developing good skills to aid their readiness for school. Since the last inspection, staff have further developed the outdoor areas to ensure that there are more learning opportunities offered. As a result, children can take part in a varied range of experiences, both indoors and outdoors. They play with what interests them and set their own challenges. For example, outdoors, older children delight in creating their own music using the pots, pans and spoons attractively displayed. They think about their play, cooperatively discussing what they need to do. They agree on the roles they need to take and problem solve as they go along. This means that they clearly demonstrate the characteristics of effective learners and are developing skills for the next stage in their learning. All children, including babies, enjoy daily playtimes in the fresh air and physical activities. Older children enjoy purposeful outings. They visit the nearby park and pet shop and go on seasonal walks. These raise children's awareness of the community and wider world. Recently, they took part in an autumn walk where they enjoyed collecting a range of leaves. The good quality interactions by adults ensure these are used to promote children's learning further. For example, on return to nursery they discuss the differences in the leaves. Ideas are shared about creating artwork with the items found on their walk. Open questions are used to help children gather their ideas and thoughts. This helps to promote children's language skills and make connections in their learning. The end project is attractively displayed. This contributes to children developing very good levels of self-esteem.

Staff show high regard to promoting inclusion for all children and make effective efforts to support children who are learning English as an additional language. They encourage children and parents to share information and familiar words, and use these during the routine of the day. In addition, staff make pictorial books so that these can be easily used during activities to help children's understanding. This helps all children feel involved and valued, while effectively promoting their communication skills. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well. For example, effective strategies, such as ensuring displays are at low level and lots of actions are incorporated into storytimes, help children with communication difficulties to make good progress. The nursery places a strong emphasis on working in partnership with parents, who complete

detailed information sheets, sharing what they know about their child. As a result, staff gain a detailed understanding of each child's starting points and individual needs. This information contributes to the flexible planning.

Observations and assessments are completed regularly. This includes the progress check as age two. Summaries of children's progress are also provided every term so that any additional support or guidance can be quickly sought. Parents can see their children's learning journals at any time, and parents' open evenings are organised regularly. In addition, they complete 'wow moments' to share achievements completed at home. They receive a wide range of information related to their children's learning, such as information about letter sounds older children are learning. This supports children's early reading skills. Information about supporting babies' and toddlers' emerging language in everyday activities is also provided. Therefore, parents are encouraged to be fully involved in their children's learning and are well informed of their child's individual progress. Parents comment that they are 'delighted' with the progress their children make in their learning and development.

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

Children enjoy warm relationships with the staff and show that they feel settled and secure as a result. Babies smile broadly when adults interact with them, showing close attachments. Children are confident and happily explore the play environment to engage actively in learning. The key person system is successfully embedded within the nursery. Staff take time to get to know the children and their parents well. For example, detailed information about children's backgrounds is gained from parents on registration. This means that children's individual needs are well known and staff can take positive steps to meet these. Children are very well prepared for the move to a new room within the nursery. They make a number of visits with their key person, who provides reassurance as they get to know their new surroundings. Information is effectively passed on between staff about children's learning, development and welfare. This ensures that children continue to experience good levels of continuity in their care. Room changes are discussed thoroughly with parents, enabling them to ensure that their children continue to feel safe and secure.

Children are encouraged to behave well and clear boundaries contribute effectively to this. Staff work well together so that children learn to be considerate to each other. For example, they encourage children to use 'kind hands' and any slight disagreements are effectively managed. Any issues regarding children's behaviour needs are discussed with parents, and external advice is obtained as and when necessary. This means that a continuity of care to support children's social and emotional development is effectively used. Younger children are helped to learn right from wrong through calm interaction, good deployment and consistent messages. Praise is provided for children's achievements, no matter how small. This supports children's social and emotional development. Older children happily assist younger children in completing tasks and readily say 'please' and 'thank you'. Overall, this contributes effectively to preparing children for the next stage in their learning, such as mixing with others when they start school. Children's understanding of safety is promoted at all times. For example, clear boundaries are in place, such as

reminders to children about not running indoors so that they and their friends are safe. Outdoors they successfully negotiate space when they ride their bikes. They learn to take safe, supervised risks in their play when they use the climbing frame and slide. In addition, they learn about keeping themselves safe during the preparation for outings and when crossing roads to reach the park.

Children demonstrate good levels of independence and understanding of healthy lifestyles. Older children follow efficient personal hygiene routines and independently wash their hands before eating. This helps them prepare for future learning. There are good links with schools where children may attend so that this change runs smoothly. All children enjoy healthy snacks and some can pour their own drinks. Pre-school children and older toddlers can serve their own meals. This promotes their independence. They tuck into their curry and rice and say, 'lovely, can I have some more please'. Staff sit with the children, promoting good social skills and offering support as and when needed. They are aware of children's dietary needs. The use of visual aids, such as photographs with details of children's needs, provides an effective reminder to staff about any food that children should not have.

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

High regard is given to safeguarding and, as a result, children are kept safe. All staff attend safeguarding training and first aid training. They have a secure knowledge of procedures to follow if they have any concerns about children's welfare. Arrangements for notifying outside agencies concerning child protection issues are secure and clearly followed. Meetings are attended as and when necessary with outside agencies. This contributes to the continuity of care and welfare to protect children. Risk assessments of all areas of the premises are detailed and any potential hazards are removed so children are protected from harm. Children of mixed ages occasionally play and eat together. This occurs mainly at busy times, such as arrival times in the mornings. The manager follows careful procedures to ensure children's needs and ratios are met at all times. For example, familiar staff are always with the children so that they feel secure. The manager communicates well with parents to keep them well informed about the day-to-day organisation of the nursery, including busy periods. Recruitment systems are robust. All staff who work with children have appropriate checks to ensure they are suitable to do so. A detailed induction programme is followed for all new staff to ensure that they are familiar with the operations of the nursery.

The manager has a good understanding of the requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. She has a good knowledge of the skills of her staff and carries out regular supervision meetings and appraisals to identify any gaps in knowledge and training. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and areas of responsibility are evenly spread to ensure the smooth running of the nursery. For example, she works closely with the deputy to oversee the planning and assessment to ensure these are effective. The manager has a clear vision for the future. She works very closely with all staff and parents to implement any changes so that children can benefit. For example, she has started to introduce peer observations so that areas to develop can

be openly discussed and implemented. Staff in the pre-school are well qualified and this impacts on the very good staff interactions that take place for children in this age group. Staff attend regular short courses related to children's emerging needs, and share knowledge gained at team meetings. This contributes to the good teaching and learning that takes place. Staff on current training programmes are well supported to acquire further qualifications. They are enthusiastic with children, showing aspects of effective teaching. Monitoring of the nursery is an ongoing process. For example, each room has a development plan which is consistently reviewed and discussed at staff meetings. Views of staff, parents and children are included in the monitoring process and these are very welcome. Since the last inspection, the recommendations raised have been successfully implemented. For example, improvements to the outdoor area have had a positive impact on children's learning and development.

Staff work closely with parents and carers to ensure individual needs are met. Ideas to ensure parents are informed about how they support their children's learning further are regularly reviewed and implemented. There are good links with other professionals and local schools. Parents feel valued and able to contribute to the nursery through informal discussions and the completion of suggestion slips. There is a wide range of information available for parents regarding children's welfare and learning, as well as information about nursery events. Parents receive regular newsletters which contain details about how they can support their children's learning further. Policies are clearly displayed and discussed with parents so that they are aware of the operations of the nursery. Any concerns made by parents are taken seriously and fully investigated, and any changes necessary are quickly implemented to benefit the children. As a result, they can be reassured and views accommodated. There are currently no children on roll who attend other provisions. However, the manager and the staff value partnership working and the impact this can have on children's welfare and learning.

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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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	EY364529
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	938167
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	88
Number of children on roll	99
Name of provider	Positive Steps Children's Day Nurseries Limited
Date of previous inspection	18/04/2013
Telephone number	01442266119

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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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