

First Steps Nursery

347 Lyndon Road, SOLIHULL, West Midlands, B92 7QT

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

06/03/2014

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

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 enjoy attending this very welcoming and friendly nursery. Practitioners are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about how children play, learn and develop. Precise assessment and planning for individual children results in children making good progress in their learning and development.
- Practitioners recognise the uniqueness of each child. The good key person system enhances relationships with children and their families very effectively. Consequently, children develop a strong sense of security and trusting relationships with practitioners.
- The management and practitioner team show a strong commitment to improving outcomes for all children. There are successful systems in place to evaluate all aspects of the provision to inform continuous improvement.
- The nursery fulfils its responsibilities in meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements. Potential risks to children are minimised through effective safeguarding and risk assessment procedures.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Opportunities for pre-school children to develop independence skills during lunchtime, by serving themselves food, are not yet fully extended.
- There is scope to improve the information gained from parents about children's starting points in their learning, to further support children's learning and development.

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 observed activities in all playrooms and the outdoor play area.
- The inspector talked to practitioners and children, and held meetings with the provider and manager.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation, including children's assessment records, planning documentation and policies and procedures.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners who work with the children, and discussed the provider's self-evaluation form.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Jacqueline Nation

Full report

Information about the setting

First Steps Nursery was originally registered in 1998 and re-opened in new premises in 2013 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It is one of two nurseries owned by a private provider. The nursery is situated over two floors in a converted house in Solihull, West Midlands. It serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The nursery employs 19 members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate qualifications at levels 3 to 6, including two staff who hold Foundation Degrees and one who holds a BA Honours Degree. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6.30pm, Monday to Friday for 51 weeks of the year. There are currently 72 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age range. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. 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:

- build on opportunities for pre-school children to further enhance their growing independence skills, by making the most of opportunities to involve them in serving themselves to food at lunchtime
- extend the range of information gained from parents about children's starting points on entry to the nursery to further support children's learning and development.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are happy and are well motivated to learn in this very welcoming and child-centred nursery. Practitioners are enthusiastic and committed to their role, and clearly enjoy working with the children and their families. Practitioners make continuous and accurate assessments of children's learning and development. They use the information gained from their observations to effectively extend children's learning based on their individual needs and interests. Planning is detailed, regularly monitored and evaluated to ensure learning intentions for each child are focussed and challenging. Children's progress is successfully monitored, so that any gaps in learning are quickly identified and addressed. This means that children make good progress in their learning, and this very effectively supports their transition when they move on to school. Parents are actively encouraged to be involved in their children's learning at home; this includes setting goals for their children and sharing their children's achievements at home. Children's progress is clearly recorded in their individual learning journal record and these are shared with

parents on a regular basis. There is scope, however, to improve the information gained from parents about children's starting points in their learning when they start the nursery, to further support children's learning and development.

All practitioners are very knowledgeable about how children play and learn, and teaching is very effective in challenging all children to move forward in their learning. Interactions with the children are good and practitioners follow the children's lead, listening carefully to their ideas and initiating children's play preferences, such as 'Superhero' play. Practitioners who work with the older children have a good understanding of how to support children's learning in readiness for school. During activities practitioners ask children questions to prompt their thinking and learning skills as they play. For example, practitioners ask older children 'whose name begins with?', 'can you remember?' and 'can you write your name?' Children are very keen to share their knowledge. For example, when talking about the days of the week some children know that when 't' and 'h' are put together they make the sound 'Th' for Thursday. Practitioners working with babies and younger children focus on the prime areas of learning. They interact very well with the children, encouraging their emerging communication and language by emphasising words, using gestures, responding to their babbling sounds and introducing new words as they play. All children develop a love of books, they enjoy listening to stories and singing rhymes and children can take books home to share with their parents.

The playrooms and outdoor play space are very well resourced and provide enabling environments in which children can flourish. The environment is rich in print, and children's skills and abilities in all areas of learning can be seen in the delightful range of work displayed in all playrooms. This shows children's very good skills in mark making and writing, and how they use their imagination very effectively in expressive art and design. For example, children make 'Dinosaur fossils'; they design their own monsters, and make their own monster masks. Babies and younger children also get involved in creative play from an early age. There is a strong focus on providing children with a wide range of sensory experiences, such as jelly, gloop and sand play. Children's physical development is supported effectively and they like the opportunity to play outside. They enjoy playing in the digging area, riding on bikes and practising their balancing skills. Babies and younger children are able to explore their playrooms safely with plenty of space to move around freely. Practitioners make good links in children's learning, for example, practitioners talk to children about what they did yesterday, and talk about their visit to a local farm. Following this visit practitioners introduce animal puppets and children enjoy singing songs and making animal sounds. Similarly, an outing to a flower shop was enjoyed by the older children; they continue using their imagination in their role play shop where they carefully fill pots with compost and flowers which they can sell to their peers.

Children's mathematical skills are fostered throughout the nursery. A good range of resources encourage children's critical thinking skills, for example, they learn about shape and space as they complete puzzles, and practitioners talk about size, colours and numbers as they play. Children develop a good understanding of the wider world and learn about differences within society through a range of meaningful activities. They use resources reflecting positive images of society, and they take part in well planned activities relating to a range of festivals and celebrations. Special days include 'Grandparents' Day', and children learn about the Chinese New Year and Saint David's Day. Children develop

good skills for the future. They are happy, settled and keen to learn in an environment which supports their learning and development needs very effectively. As a result, they are well prepared for the next stages in their learning and are skilfully supported by practitioners in their transition in to school.

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

Children's well-being is fostered effectively, and children develop a strong sense of belonging and security in this warm and nurturing nursery. They develop close and caring relationships with their key person, who is familiar with their individual needs and effectively provides them with emotional and practical support. All practitioners are very caring and sensitive to children's needs and work closely with parents to ensure children's needs are met. Good consideration is given to settling-in procedures to ensure children easily separate from their parents, as they gradually increase the time they spend at the setting. Practitioners make sure that children follow a familiar routine, and receive individual attention and reassurance. Children are very effectively supported as they move rooms in the nursery, with well thought out arrangements to ensure a smooth transition to their new room. This ensures children's needs continue to be met well, which helps children to remain settled and happy at all times.

Children's safety is given good attention and they play in a safe and secure environment. Practitioners are vigilant and they supervise the children well. A good emphasis is placed on children's personal, emotional and social development at the admission stage. This focus quickly helps children develop the underpinning skills needed for their future success. Children's behaviour is very good. They receive plenty of praise and encouragement which helps build their confidence and self-esteem. Practitioners help children to explore and express their feelings, and children learn about the 'Golden rules' which helps them to build positive relationships with others as they begin to understand about taking turns and sharing. Children learn how to keep themselves safe through their play and interactions. They are beginning to develop an awareness of responsibility within the setting, and take turns to be a 'special helper' where they carry out some simple tasks, such as helping at snack time, topping up the water for the hamster and selecting a book at story time.

Partnerships with parents and carers are good. The setting places great value in ensuring that parents and carers develop a sense of belonging to the setting and have a say in the care and well-being of their children. Parents and carers are provided with opportunities to talk to practitioners at collection times when they receive feedback about their child's day. New initiatives are being introduced at the nursery to enhance parent partnerships. For example, a 'Parent rota' which gives parents the opportunity to spend time in the nursery and observe children as they play, and a 'Parent practitioner group' to further involve parents in the nursery provision. Parents' evenings are organised to ensure they are kept fully informed about the progress their children are making. Inclusive practice is successful and there is good provision in place to secure timely intervention for children who may have any additional needs to ensure they achieve well. This is supported by well-established multi-agency links, which provide access to specialist knowledge and skills. Children who speak English as an additional language are supported effectively in the

nursery. Practitioners use a range of strategies and work closely with parents and carers. For example, they use picture cards, and find out some key words in the child's home language to help them settle.

Good attention is given to encouraging children adopt healthy lifestyles and a healthy ethos is promoted at all times. Children's individual dietary needs are met effectively and details of any specific needs or allergies are recorded following discussions with parents. Children enjoy nutritious snacks and well-balanced hot meals at lunchtime which are provided by an outside caterer. Mealtimes are a sociable occasion where children relax, and take time to enjoy their meal and have the opportunity to chat to their peers. However, there is scope to further enhance children's independence skills at lunchtime by encouraging them to serve themselves to food. Children have opportunities to spend time outdoors, this helps them to be physically active and promotes their well-being as they benefit from being in the fresh air. Good hygiene practices are maintained throughout the nursery to help minimise the risk of cross-infection.

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

Good leadership and management ensure the safeguarding and welfare requirements are met. The management and practitioner team continually reflect on their practice to improve outcomes for all children. They ensure that the environment and the educational programmes are constantly monitored and enhanced. This can be seen through their accurate identification of priorities through self-evaluation. The effective tracking and monitoring systems ensure assessments of children's progress are accurate and precise. This means that any gaps in children's learning are quickly identified and planned for. Team work in the nursery is strong; practitioners are caring, enthusiastic and committed to their roles.

The management team and practitioners are well trained in their understanding of the policies and practice to safeguard children. There are clear and effective procedures in place if there are any concerns about a child in their care, or allegations made about a practitioner. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures is in place to ensure children's welfare and safety. All of the required documents are in place to meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements. Documentation is maintained accurately, and stored securely to ensure confidentiality. Practitioners demonstrate a very good level of commitment to promoting children's safety and well-being. The nursery has robust recruitment and vetting procedures in place to ensure practitioners' suitability to work with children. There are effective procedures in place for induction, supervision and appraisals to ensure a clear focus on high quality care and education. Risk assessments cover all aspects of the premises and any outings undertaken with the children. Access to the premises is closely monitored. Practitioners are vigilant about arrival and collection procedures, and good security precautions contribute towards children's safety. All children benefit from good levels of care because the committed practitioner team ensure all children feel safe, achieve well and are included in all activities.

Leadership and management of the setting set high aspirations for quality and this

underpins all aspects of care. This includes procedures to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the nursery to ensure children make the best progress possible. Good team work and focussed leadership is successful in inspiring practitioners to constantly evaluate the learning environment, and look at how they can enrich learning and development experiences for children. Very good arrangements are in place regarding the programme for professional development. Practitioners are encouraged to undertake training to update their knowledge and skills, and this results in a well-qualified practitioner team who keep up-to-date with research and current practice in the early years field. Practitioners are deployed effectively to engage purposefully with the children, and the environment is organised very effectively to meet children's learning and development needs.

Parents and carers are well informed about how the provision operates; this includes access to the policy and procedure documents. Parents' views are sought through the use of a questionnaire and these indicate that parents are very happy with the provision. Parents spoken to at the time of the inspection express very positive comments about the nursery and the interest the nursery take in the children is 'second to none'. It is evident that parents appreciate what this nursery achieves for their children. The nursery has good partnership with external agencies to ensure each child's needs are met. They are developing partnerships with local schools to ensure a smooth transfer as children move into the next phase of learning. Children enjoy attending this welcoming nursery where they develop positive relationships with practitioners and their peers. They gain the underpinning skills, abilities and confidence needed for their future success as they move onto school.

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	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	EY464119
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	934776
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	52
Number of children on roll	72
Name of provider	First Steps Nursery (Solihull) Limited
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	0121 742 7078

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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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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