

# Little Footsteps of Dereham

15a Norwich Road, DEREHAM, Norfolk, NR20 3AE

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|--------------------------|------------|
| <b>Inspection date</b>   | 18/02/2014 |
| Previous inspection date | 04/07/2013 |

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

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision is good

- Teaching is effective, captures children's interest and makes good use of the child-centred environment and stimulating resources. Consequently, children make good progress in their learning and development.
- Staff provide a safe, secure, welcoming environment and have a good understanding of safeguarding procedures. They plan exciting activities for all children and, as a result, babies and children are happy and contented at the nursery and feel confident to explore and play freely.
- Staff value parents as partners and work hard to find new and innovative ways in which to involve them in their children's learning at home. Consequently, children are well-supported by a coordinated approach to meeting their unique care and learning needs.
- The owners aspire to continually improve the nursery. They work closely with the staff team, parents and other professionals to implement changes to move the nursery forward and secure good outcomes for children.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to provide further opportunities for children to experience stories, poems and rhymes in the outdoor environment and ensure that the attractive book area is always available indoors while children are sleeping.
- Occasionally, staff overlook opportunities to extend children's thinking skills by not giving sufficient time for children to explore and voice their own ideas.

## 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 in the playrooms and the outside learning environment.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with one of the owner/managers.
- The inspector held a meeting with both the owner/managers of the provision.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with children, the provider's self-evaluation form and improvement plan.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day and from information included in the setting's own parent surveys.

## Inspector

Lindsey Cullum

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Little Footsteps of Dereham registered in 2011 and is privately owned. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from a converted house in Dereham, Norfolk. There is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. There are currently 69 children attending who are in the early years age range and 15 school-age children attending the out of school provision. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs 18 members of childcare staff. Of these, 16 hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least level 3, including one with Early Years Professional Status and two hold appropriate qualifications to level 2.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- shape teaching and learning experiences further, by increasing the emphasis of adult interaction with older children on promoting children's creative and critical thinking skills, through the already good use of open-questioning while allowing children time to think and voice their own ideas
  
- consider further ways of introducing stories, rhymes and poems to the outdoor environment and ensuring that a quiet book area is available, particularly while toddlers are sleeping.

### Inspection judgements

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

Children and babies benefit from the good teaching and learning opportunities available at the nursery. Staff genuinely enjoy their roles and are skilled at interacting with children and promoting their learning through play and first-hand experiences. For example, staff in the baby room spend most of their time playing, talking and stimulating babies' learning. Sitting comfortably on the floor, staff and babies explore toys together. Staff demonstrate how interactive toys work and praise when babies attempt to have a go.

Consequently, young children are willing to try new experiences and are confident to explore their environment. Babies' language skills are also supported well as staff are providing them with new vocabulary as they play. Staff frequently repeat single words and encourage children to copy. As a result, young children's language skills are fostered well. Older children also benefit from plenty of attention from the staff. Every effort to communicate is responded to well and staff listen carefully when children speak. Staff make good use of open-ended questions with older children to find out what they already know, so that they can build on this during activities. However, on a few occasions, opportunities are missed to use this effective type of questioning, to promote children's thinking skills by enabling children time to think through and then share their own ideas. Children's literacy skills are fostered as the environment is rich in meaningful text, including labelling of familiar objects and storage containers, so that children know what toys are available. Indoors, children of all ages choose books that they enjoy reading with the staff or looking at alone. However, there are fewer opportunities provided for children to experience stories, poems and rhymes outdoors, to further promote children's love of books. Furthermore, for a short period after lunch while toddlers sleep, the book corner is not easily accessible. This means it is more difficult for children to self-select books during this time. Children are keen to practice early writing skills by making marks in shaving foam, flour, paint or with pencils and crayons. They enjoy being creative, with older children ably handling scissors and glue sticks to make their own cards or pictures. These they proudly show off and receive lots of praise from the staff and other children, so they flourish and build confidence in their abilities.

The outdoor environment is well used to promote babies and children's learning. Children choose when they would like to go outside and freely move between in the indoor and outdoor play areas throughout the day. This is of particular benefit to those children who learn best outdoors. The addition of the mud kitchen to the outdoor area has ignited children's imagination. They spend time filling and emptying pots and pans, adding and stirring imaginary ingredients or finding stones and water to add to mud to make 'cakes', before pretending to cook these in the old microwave. Children are encouraged to explore and experiment as staff provide resources for wet days such as oil, powder paint and bubble mixture, which children add to puddles and carefully observe the changes that adding these materials make.

Children make good progress in the nursery because staff show a sound understanding of and implement various teaching methods that engage children's interest. Children are welcomed into a friendly and warm environment where they show that they feel safe and secure. Information gathered by the key person through discussion with parents as children settle, provides a good base for establishing children's starting points in their learning. Furthermore, these discussions ensure that the key person gets to know the children well. As a result, children settle quickly because staff understand their needs and can meet them consistently. Staff frequently observe each of their key children to assess their progress and identify children's future learning needs. This information enables staff to plan for individual children's progress from their earliest days in the nursery. Each child has a well presented 'learning Journey' book that contains comments about their achievements, illustrated by photographs, which show children take part in a wide range of activities, that build on their early learning skills. Consequently, children are well-prepared for the next stage in their learning when they leave to begin formal schooling.

Partnerships with parents are a key strength of this nursery and, as a result, parents comment that they feel well informed, supported and involved in their children's learning. They regularly view, discuss with the key person and contribute to children's assessment records and individual plans for learning. This coordinated approach means that staff plan interesting and worthwhile activities that promote children's positive development and which parents actively support at home. The completion of regular summative assessments, effectively highlight any gaps in children's learning and enable the key person to plan early intervention through support from other professionals, in consultation with parents. This effective way of working together means that, when necessary, children's learning and development is actively supported through targeted strategies, ensuring that all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress from their individual starting point.

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

Throughout the nursery relationships between adults and children are good. This promotes a relaxed and happy environment, which enables children to feel cherished and secure. Arrangements to help children settle initially and build secure emotional attachments with their carers are very effective. For example, 'All about me' books, which contain photographs of family members, children's home and pets, are completed by parents as their children start attending the nursery. Very young children enjoy looking through their book with staff and pointing to the pictures of the special people in their lives. Therefore, children are helped to develop good links between home and nursery life. Successful implementation of the key person system ensures children, from young babies through to the older children, feel safe and the individual needs of each child are met. The key person supports children to move from one room to the next as they progress through the nursery. Planned visits enable the outgoing key person to liaise with the new key person to exchange important information and, as a result, moves are easier for the children. Staff know their key children well and confidently speak about children's development, their next steps and care routines. They share detailed information with parents to ensure there is consistency between the setting and home. Staff support children's cultural and social differences well as they talk to children about their families and help them celebrate their personal festivals together. Multilingual signs, books and small world resources, reflect the children's home backgrounds and help to ensure they feel welcome and included in the nursery.

Children are cared for in group rooms according to their age, stage of development and needs. They benefit from the stimulating, welcoming environment and care they receive. Resources are of good quality and suitable for children and babies. Everything is stored safely and allows children safe access to promote their emerging independence. Children make friends and are encouraged to share, be kind and show respect for one another. Staff promote children's good behaviour, confidence and self-esteem by praising them and recognising their achievements. For example, children are rewarded for sitting nicely at the dinner table, by choosing a shape to go in the reward jar. Since its introduction, this practice has significantly improved the behaviour of children during mealtimes, as they all want to gain this simple reward. Staff model good social manners, ensuring children use 'please' and 'thank you' at appropriate times.

Children are learning to be independent in their self-care and staff encourage them to develop a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. For example, children know they need to wash their hands before meals or messy activities. Staff effectively support children who have special dietary requirements, liaising with parents to ensure that these are successfully met. Meals are freshly prepared on site each day and are healthy and nutritious. Mealtimes are social occasions with children sitting in small groups with a member of staff. This ensures that children get the support they need to feed themselves and staff are able to encourage children to try a variety of foods. Furthermore, it enables staff to closely supervise what children are eating and record this in their communication book, so the information is passed on to parents. Drinks are accessible to children at all times, so they are able to drink when they become thirsty. Babies routines are respected and the key person, where possible, undertakes most of their key children's personal care. Children are settled to sleep as they become tired, with babies settled into cots and younger children provided with small mattresses. Staff attach great importance to the children being outside and enjoying and benefiting from fresh air. Recent alterations to the outdoor area, enable babies and toddlers to have free flow between inside and outdoor play and the surface of the baby area is now soft and more suitable for crawling babies. Children enjoy many opportunities for physical exercise in the challenging and well-resourced garden. They energetically ride small wheeled toys or test their balance and coordination as they cross balance tyres or climb up to the slide. Children learn how to keep themselves safe with gentle reminders from staff, such as how to sit securely on chairs or handle scissors safely. They are learning to take managed risks in their play, for example, as they climb increasingly challenging pieces of equipment. Visitors to the nursery, such as a police or fire officers, reinforce the safety message as children learn about road and personal safety. The nursery makes good use of local facilities, visiting the library, shops, park and duck pond. This helps children to learn about the community in which they live. Furthermore, staff plan activities around festivals and celebrations throughout the year, which promotes children's understanding of diversity and the wider world.

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

The management team and staff have a good understanding of safeguarding procedures. They know how to identify and report concerns they may have about the children in their care. Effective policies and procedures support their work and means that children are as safe as possible when at the nursery. All staff attend safeguarding training, which is refreshed at regular intervals to ensure their practice remains up-to-date. Recruitment procedures are thorough and together with background checks, good performance management procedures and team meetings, mean that only suitable, enthusiastic and skilled staff are employed. Staff are keen to improve their skills and knowledge and where possible attend training, which they subsequently cascade to colleagues. Management also take an active interest in new local projects, taking part in one currently looking at children's key skills before transition into the local schools. This means that management and staff meet with other professionals and childcare practitioners frequently and are able to share ideas and enhance their skills, which means that children benefit from current

childcare practice.

Since the last inspection, the owner/managers have worked hard to implement changes, which have had a significant impact on raising the quality of the provision for children and their families. A new portacabin has been installed, which provides a child-focused space specifically for children aged two to three years. This age group now have free-flow access to outdoor space, benefiting those children who learn best outdoors and impacting positively on children's behaviour. The baby room has been moved downstairs, enhancing their provision and enabling toddlers to access outdoors easily when they want. A review of the space in the pre-school room has meant that improvements have been made to the creative area and a quiet, communication friendly space developed. The owner/managers have introduced more effective performance management systems, which include regular supervisions, room and peer observations, so that strengths and weaknesses in staff practice are identified and suitable training or mentoring is offered to help enhance skills across the staff team. Self-evaluation has been fully implemented and captures the views of the staff, parents and children. Areas of strength have been identified and aspects for improvement are being systematically targeted, to support continuous improvement. Monitoring of planning and assessment is effective and ensures that the progress of all children is understood and any interventions to support progress are well-targeted and have maximum impact. Planning for the educational programme is scrutinised and, as a result, children benefit from a broad range of experiences that supports their positive progress towards the early learning goals.

Partnerships with external agencies and other providers are good and this means that children benefit from a coordinated approach to their care and development, so that they make good progress. Partnerships with parents are strong. Daily discussions, newsletters, information on the website and around the nursery plus regular 'fun days', all contribute well to the effective partnerships built, which in turn have a positive effect on the children. Parents spoken to on the day of the inspection were very complimentary about the nursery provision, commenting on the friendly and supportive staff, how happy and settled their children were in the nursery and the progress they could see that their children were making.

### 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

|                                    |                                 |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>     | EY440629                        |
| <b>Local authority</b>             | Norfolk                         |
| <b>Inspection number</b>           | 951483                          |
| <b>Type of provision</b>           |                                 |
| <b>Registration category</b>       | Childcare - Non-Domestic        |
| <b>Age range of children</b>       | 0 - 17                          |
| <b>Total number of places</b>      | 44                              |
| <b>Number of children on roll</b>  | 69                              |
| <b>Name of provider</b>            | Little Footsteps of Dereham Ltd |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b> | 04/07/2013                      |
| <b>Telephone number</b>            | 01362 693937 or 07591 531240    |

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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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