

First Steps Nursery

Ice House, Victor Street, Grimsby, North East Lincolnshire, DN32 7QN

Inspection date

29/05/2014

Previous inspection date

16/02/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

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

- Planning is very good. It is based upon good observation and assessment information and leads to challenging, interesting and exciting activities that staff adapt when necessary. This means that children can continue to be engaged in their learning and make good progress.
- Relationships are strong between staff, children and their families. As a result, children are happy and secure and learn to relate well to each other and adults.
- The nursery places utmost priority on safety and welfare, which ensures children are very well safeguarded. Any concerns are rapidly and effectively dealt with.
- The manager of the nursery strives for excellence, ensuring that the nursery continues to develop the highest possible standards.

It is not yet outstanding because

- On occasions, staff do not maximise learning opportunities because they do not always use open-ended questions to extend children's thinking and language development.
- Monitoring of staff performance is not always effective in ensuring all staff make the most of every opportunity to extend 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 activities in each room of the nursery and outside.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager of the nursery, children and the room staff.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with children, the nursery's self-evaluation and development plan.
- The inspector took account of the views of parent's spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Sharon Alleary

Full report

Information about the setting

First Steps Nursery was registered in 1988 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in the former ice house in the Grimsby area of Lincolnshire, and is privately owned by two directors. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from one main room and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The nursery employs 12 members of childcare staff, 10 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. Of these, two hold qualifications at level 6, three at level 4, three at level 3, two at level 2 including the manager with Early Years Professional Status. The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 101 children attending who are in 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:

- review how staff use language and open-ended questions so that all opportunities to support children's communication development and extend their thinking are maximised
- strengthen the monitoring of staff performance to ensure staff have a secure knowledge and understanding about how to use interaction and teaching more effectively to expand and reshape children's learning during play.

Inspection judgements

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

Teaching is good overall across the nursery, with some excellent elements. The manager demonstrates outstanding teaching skills, this means that the consistently good staff have an excellent role model to aspire to. Staff have realistic expectations of the children. They understand that children learn best when they are active and through purposeful play. Consequently, children are thoroughly motivated and active learners. Staff use initial observations when children start at the nursery, alongside information provided from parents, as a clear starting point on which to build children's learning. The manager has worked tirelessly since the last inspection to perfect the planning technique in the nursery. As a result, observations and assessments of individual children clearly link to the challenging, interesting and exciting activities on offer. In addition, the planning clearly focuses on next steps for children. The enhancement to the environment supplements the planning by adding resources that attract children and support their engagement and involvement. The key people use accurate observations and tracking of children's progress

to ensure they are making good progress in their learning in preparation for starting school. Staff precisely identify children's age and stage of development. The nursery completes the progress check at age two and written summaries are shared with parents.

Children form good relationships with adults. They are confident to initiate conversations. For instance, children tell staff, 'It's my birthday in twenty days and it's my sister's first swimming lesson tonight'. Children are generally well supported in the acquisition of language and communication skills through running commentaries and interactions. However, this is not always used to the optimum because occasionally staff do not naturally ask open questions to challenge thinking and so extend learning. Children show increasing control of their body as they experiment with different ways of moving, such as when taking part in the regular music and movement session at circle time. This supports physical development. Outside, children explore with enthusiasm. They confidently ride bikes and scooters; they manoeuvre them around objects with good levels of control. Children have opportunities to climb and slide on larger play equipment indoors. Adult-focused activities engage the children's interests and support their learning very well. For instance, children take part in a food tasting opportunity. Healthy diets are explored as children identify the good and bad foods. All children are keen to try the foods, some of which they had never seen before. They discover new textures and flavours, such as, lemon and pomegranate. Staff introduce new words, for instance, 'sour' and 'juicy'. Children enjoy story time and participate well. Staff use an animated voice to help children tune in. This means, their listening and attention skills are supported. Throughout the story, children anticipate repeated phrases; as a result, they develop an early love of books and reading. Mathematics is incorporated into everyday events. For example, children count one to six before lunch to check the number of children.

Staff play with the children and show an interest in what they are doing. For instance, staff engage children in sustained shared thinking as they attempt to construct a car. Staff talk through the process, encouraging children to think about whether the screws are big enough or what piece they may need next. Children have opportunities to learn about technology using computers which work through mouse control. Children patiently wait for their turn to have a go at the interactive, age-appropriate game. Children successfully click and drag objects. Through role play children are learning about safety measures. For example, children tell staff, 'I need my protector so I don't burn my hand'. Consequently, children are basing their play on their own first hand experiences. There is a strong focus in the nursery on increasing children's readiness for school. For instance, at small group time staff introduce phonics to develop early letter recognition. In addition, this supports children's listening and attention skills. Parents receive clear and regular information about their children's progress and development and very good systems are in place which support them to be involved in their children's learning. For example, parents and carers are provided with their child's next steps each term and the nursery are available to suggest ideas of how they can extend their learning at home. Each week, the nursery posts the activities that will be taking place and how the parents can support and extend this at home. Consequently, partnerships with parents are highly effective in order to ensure consistency of care and learning.

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

The manager and staff strive to welcome every family into the nursery and provide them with a secure, warm and nurturing environment for their children. The nursery has an effective key person system, which provides consistency for the child and their families. Staff know the children and their carers well and as a result, they form meaningful relationships and strong emotional attachments. For example, toddlers who are new to the nursery constantly seek reassurance from their key person. Children's individual needs are thoroughly known because staff take time to find out about each child's individual needs and background during the registration visit. This approach ensures the settling-in process from home to nursery is smooth. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the children in their care, which allows them to tailor care routines to their individual needs. For example, although children do not usually require a sleep during the day, there are several quiet areas to sleep if they wish. The nursery make good use of the wall space to display children's work, this ensures children feel valued and acknowledged.

Children are well behaved in the nursery. Staff act as good role models, reinforcing positive behaviour. The manager attributes the good behaviour to the fact the children are actively engaged in playing and exploring with activities that interest them. Children demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of hygiene because they know why they need to wash their hands before food and after using the bathroom. Children show that they are developing good levels of independence for their age. They are encouraged to serve their own meals at lunchtime and are able to help themselves to snacks. The nursery is committed to teaching children about maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Children are provided with a healthy menu that is freshly cooked on a daily basis. Children tuck into pasta bolognese and they are positively animated when the jelly dessert arrives. Clear procedures ensure that the cook and all staff members are clear about children's special dietary requirements, preferences and allergies. This ensures their needs are met and respected. Children have regular access to the outdoors for fresh air and exercise and are encouraged to be active and energetic.

Staff support children to manage risks for themselves when using the indoor climbing and sliding equipment. For instance, children are not discouraged from coming down the slide, forwards, backwards or on their tummies, yet staff encourage them to identify the possible dangers. As a result, they are developing a good awareness of their own safety. Furthermore, children always remember to wear a helmet when riding a bike. The environment is attractively organised, safe, homely and well resourced, allowing children to freely move around and to take their learning where they choose, whether inside or outside, which develops their decision-making skills. In addition, resources are well labelled with both pictures and the written word. In order to foster an understanding of the local community, the manager has invited a selection of visitors to come to the nursery and talk about their occupation. This encourages children to develop a positive relationship with community members. The move on to school is supported by the nursery as they strive to have strong links with the local schools. Key people visit the new class teacher to share significant information about individual children. As a result, children's learning is not disrupted when they move on to the next stage in their learning.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years

provision

The manager is a very good role model and values the varying individual skills of the staff team. Safeguarding is of paramount importance to the nursery and the welfare of the children is at the heart of everything the nursery does. All staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in protecting children in their care. They fully understand the signs and symptoms to be aware of and know when and from whom to seek advice. There are clear procedures to follow if there is an allegation against a member of staff. Any concerns about children or staff are acted upon immediately. The nursery has an excellent relationship with the local social services department. Staff are confident to speak to the manager if they are concerned about a colleague mistreating children. Safeguarding is high on the agenda at team meetings. As a result, children are completely safeguarded while at the nursery. The manager collates next steps and tracking information to monitor specific groups to ensure all children are making good progress within the seven areas of learning. For example, the manager identified children were not achieving as well as they could in the areas of mathematics and health and self-care. As a result, a planning focus addressed the short fall. There is a thorough recruitment process that involves the views and opinions of several different people, including both directors of the nursery and the room supervisor. Thorough suitability checks are carried out on all staff. This is monitored with an effective induction process.

Yearly appraisal interviews help the manager to determine the continued suitability of each individual working in the nursery. Informal supervisions are conducted and generally support the continued development of staff practice. The manager leads by positive example and works alongside her staff, enabling her to assess their performance and monitor the teaching and learning for children. However, there is scope to strengthen this process to fully support staff with an understanding of how develop their already good teaching techniques to always extend and reshape learning. Team meetings are held regularly for staff to share good practice and new ideas. The management has a training matrix that gathers information regarding staff knowledge and skills and this clearly identifies relevant training. The manager is has Early Years Professional Status and as a result, she demonstrates a passion and dedication to improving outcomes for children. For instance, the nursery access in-house training and the manager cascades training that she accesses through her Early Years Professional network meetings. These opportunities have a positive impact on the children. Recently staff has learned about conflict resolution, forest school approaches and delivering phonics. Policies and procedures are well written, regularly reviewed by the manager and implemented well by all staff. Risk assessments are conducted to ensure all areas used by children are safe and secure. Daily checks to all areas of the nursery, further helps to protect children's welfare.

Since the post-registration inspection of the nursery the manager and staff have worked very hard to ensure children's care and learning needs are fully met at all times. The manager demonstrates that she continues to be committed to the ongoing improvement of the overall quality of the nursery. She effectively uses self-evaluation and reflective practice to ensure that the nursery is consistency striving to improve. As a result, targets are set for ongoing improvements. For example, an Early Years Foundation Stage board has been created in the foyer after parents asked for more information about their child's

learning and development. Partnerships with parents and professionals, particularly social services are a strength of the nursery. Staff are friendly and chat openly with parents as they share information and make time to ensure that they have the opportunity to discuss any needs. Thus, parents are well informed about the learning and development needs of the children and learning is successfully supported and extended at home. Parents are complimentary about the nursery and emphasise their disappointment that their children will be moving on to a pre-reception class this year, claiming, 'It's the end of an era'. The nursery is flexible and accommodating and will support parents' needs if at all possible. For example, short term care is offered for children who previously attended the nursery and who are re-visiting the area. Staff support children who share their care with other settings and share information about children's learning. This ensures that children have continuity in their learning. The manager understands the importance of sharing information other professionals and they attend meetings to support children with additional social needs. As a result of these partnerships, children have a consistent approach to caring that supports their development and contributes to the good progress they make.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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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	205542
Local authority	North East Lincolnshire
Inspection number	876243
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	101
Name of provider	First Steps Grimsby Ltd
Date of previous inspection	16/02/2010
Telephone number	01472 352524

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Type of provision

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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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