

# Little Steps

Tenby Street, ROCHDALE, Lancashire, OL12 7ES

## Inspection date

Previous inspection date

26/06/2014

Not Applicable

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

**This inspection:**

3

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

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

3

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

2

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

3

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision requires improvement

- Assessments regularly identify children's progress and where they need support. Therefore, activities are based on children's individual current stages of development and their current interests.
- Children form strong bonds with key persons who support their emotional needs well. Consequently, children feel secure to explore the environment and play.
- Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of how to keep children safe. They attend relevant safeguarding training and take appropriate action to minimise risks. Therefore, children are protected well.
- Staff work closely with parents to promote children's learning and care and the partnerships with other professionals contribute effectively to the support children receive in the nursery.

### It is not yet good because

- The quality of teaching and staff interaction with children is variable, particularly for toddler-aged children, so not all children make good progress in their learning.
- The quality of teaching is not sufficiently well monitored to ensure that weaknesses in practice are identified and addressed.
- Self-evaluation is not sufficiently robust to identify the weaknesses in the monitoring of teaching practice, to ensure all children receive good learning opportunities.

## 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 toured the premises.
- The inspector observed teaching and learning activities in all of the playrooms and outdoors.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and the planning documentation.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the nursery manager.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of staff working with children, a selection of documentation related to children's learning and welfare and the nursery's plans for self-evaluation and improvement.
- The inspector took account of the views of children, staff and parents spoken to on the day of inspection.

## Inspector

Joanne Parrington

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Little Steps was registered in 2013 on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from a detached, two-storey building situated in the Spotland area of Rochdale, Lancashire. All children are cared for on the ground floor. There are three separate age-designated rooms and two age-specific outdoor play areas. The nursery serves the immediate locality and the surrounding areas and is accessible to all children. It operates Monday to Friday between the hours of 7.30am to 6pm, all year round, with the exception of public holidays and a week at Christmas. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 54 children attending who are all within the early years age range. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language. The nursery employs eight members of childcare staff, including the manager, of whom seven hold appropriate early years qualifications. These include one member of staff with Early Years Professional status, one member of staff with level 5, four staff members with National Vocational Qualification level 3 and one member of staff who is working towards a level 3 qualification. The nursery also employs a full-time cook. The nursery has been awarded a level 5 quality assurance award through the local authority and is currently working towards a level 6 award, which is the local authority's top quality assurance award. The nursery is a member of the National Day Nursery Association and receives support from the Sure Start, Early Years and Childcare Service.

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

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

- develop teaching strategies, particularly for the two-to-three years age group, so that staff consistently give children thinking time to put their thoughts into words in order to effectively support children's language development
- ensure that all staff develop the quality of their interactions with children in order to improve teaching and consistently promote children's good progress across all areas of learning.

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

- review the self-evaluation process to identify and prioritise targets for improvement, including the monitoring of the quality of teaching.

## Inspection judgements

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

Staff have an adequate knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They provide an environment that is bright and the educational programme covers the seven areas of learning. Children are able to independently choose from a wide selection of age-appropriate toys and resources. Resources are clearly labelled and are presented at a low-level so children can help themselves freely. Children are familiar with the nursery's daily routines and follow staff prompts well.

The quality of teaching is generally secure in the baby unit and in the pre-school. However, it is not consistently strong enough in the two-to-three years room, therefore, the quality of teaching in this age group requires improvement. Consequently, some children do not make good progress in their learning. The staff in the two-to-three years room do engage in children's play. However, they do not consistently give children thinking time to put their thoughts into words to further support their language development. For example, children take part in a focused activity in which the learning intention is to support language development through role-play. This is age appropriate and follows next steps planned for the children taking part. However, staff at times are over vocal and miss opportunities to allow the children time to think and respond.

The positive interaction of staff in the baby unit suitably promotes the communication skills of the youngest children. They babble in response and look to staff for support while they play with the cornflour and water mixture. Babies smile while enjoying the sensation of the mixture poured gently onto their arms, hands and feet and before you know it they are in the tray with their whole bodies making lots of marks and having lots of fun. The new extension offers pre-school children the space to explore and learn effectively within their environment. The pre-school children are very imaginative in their role-play. This is because, staff resource this area well and the children have an input into the decision making. Children have access to authentic resources and have first-hand opportunities to visit the local fruit and vegetable store. This provides them with valuable support in developing their imagination. Children write price tags for each of the items on sale at the green grocers, which further promotes their early writing skills and introduces numbers within their play. Children extend their technological skills as they play in the role-play pre-school office. They confidently use computers, printers and other resources to support their learning. The pre-school children are well prepared for school, as they learn to recognise the shapes and sounds of letters, numbers and develop early writing skills. Children learn to follow instructions, sit and listen for periods of time and make independent choices so that they are ready for the next stage in their learning. Children who speak English as an additional language are supported well. Staff obtain basic words, key phrases and correct pronunciation from parents and use picture cards to assist when needed.

Staff work in partnership with parents and value their contributions. They gather information from parents about their children's individual interests on entry. This provides staff with a starting point for a baseline assessment. Staff use baseline assessments to

plan initial activities to support children's next steps in their learning and development. Staff use a tracker document, therefore, know each child's current next steps in learning so that mostly, they can guide them and build on their progress well during their play. Relevant support and guidance documents are used as a reference to allow them to identify if children are operating within the expected bands of development for their age.

Individual learning journals are available for parents to view at any time. Parents are encouraged to share information regarding children's further development at home. Parents speak highly of the nursery and make comments, such as 'I am very happy with the nursery', 'staff are lovely and are available to talk to anytime' and 'I am really happy, we have noticed my children's confidence grow'.

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

Children and their families are welcomed into this friendly nursery. As the children arrive, they immediately settle and confidently begin to explore the range of activities on offer. As a result, children demonstrate that they are feeling emotionally secure within the environment. The flexible admissions process in place allows children and parents to build warm relationships. Children demonstrate secure attachments to staff and confidently interact with visitors, which shows they feel safe and self-assured. The nursery has an effective key person system in place. The key person works closely with parents ensuring that they continue younger children's routines, such as potty training. This promotes consistency of care and ensures all children's care needs are met. Parents and children are suitably prepared for the times of change, as the nursery supports them in making the move within the nursery to the next age group and on to school. Staff share development records with the new key person, so they are well informed about children's needs. Additionally, teachers are invited to observe the children in the nursery so they have a good understanding of the children's needs before they start school.

Children are encouraged to learn about healthy lifestyles. They spend time in the fresh air each day. Babies and young children have a separate, direct access to the garden, where they can use a range of age appropriate resources. Babies and young children also go on regular walks, to explore the environment around them. Children aged two, three and four years participate in physical activities, such as, peddling bikes and climbing the frame to slide down. Children search for bugs whilst in the garden and when they collect some in their bug bag, staff remind them about being careful not to hurt the creatures and that they might miss their mummy so they will have to put them back gently. Children enjoy fresh fruit throughout the day. The children enjoy tucking into nutritious, home-cooked food and manage their cutlery and drinks well, with the younger children receiving support when needed. The pre-school appoints a child to be a lunch monitor, who helps set the tables for lunch and children serve themselves so that they learn to be independent and gain some of the skills required for their next stage in learning. Children help themselves to their water cups at any time and choose when to have their snack so that activities can continue. Children learn about their own safety and that of others. For example, as they take part in a cutting and sticking activity, staff support them to use scissors safely. Children also take part in the evacuation drill, so they know how to keep themselves safe

in an emergency.

Children demonstrate good behaviour, which is influenced by the positive role modelling of staff. Children's behaviour is managed effectively in the nursery because staff provide clear boundaries. On the rare occasion, staff do have to intervene they get down to children's level and talk to them calmly, explaining the importance of being kind to friends. Staff talk to children throughout the session, praising good behaviour. Children receive star of the day certificates to share information about good achievements. Consequently, older children learn to negotiate and compromise as they learn to share, take turns and make the right choices about their behaviour. Staff provide children with praise and encouragement demonstrating that they value the achievements and efforts that are made, therefore, promoting children's confidence and self-esteem. The staff model courteous language, such as, 'please' and 'thank you' so children learn from their example.

Staff work in partnership with other professionals and outside agencies to support children and their families, particularly children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Additionally, a local authority early years advisor supports the staff with issues such as, planning effectively and improving the provision. There are close links with the local children's centre, schools and social services, which have a positive impact on children's care and learning.

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

Safeguarding procedures in the nursery are effective in ensuring that children's welfare, care and development are generally assured. All staff have completed safeguarding training and demonstrate a good level of understanding about their role to protect children in their care. They know what procedures to follow should they have a safeguarding concern or be concerned about a child's welfare. The higher levels of ratios of staff to children ensure children are well supervised, consequently, children are suitably protected.

Accidents and other incidents are recorded and parents are informed about any injuries to a child. Staff attend to children when they are hurt or upset so that their health and well-being is well protected. The premises are secure. Senior staff open the main door to parents and visitors. Parents sign their children in on arrival and out when they collect them. Visitors are asked for identification, they sign the visitor's book, detailing times of arrival and departure and are given a visitor badge. Effective risk assessments and daily checks ensure the environment is safe for children. The policy on the use of mobile phones and cameras is made clear to staff and parents, so that children are well protected and are safe.

The manager has a generally sound understanding of the learning and development requirements. Planning and assessments are monitored by the manager. Supervisions take place, so that staff can evaluate their performance, discuss key children's progress and their own well-being or concerns. Targets are set and further training needs are addressed. However, the monitoring of staff practice particularly in the two-to-three age group, is less effective in highlighting the weaknesses in teaching practices. The manager

and staff monitor the assessment of progress children make across all areas of learning and analyse the data to identify any areas of learning where children may have gaps. This enables them to address the issue speedily. For example, the recent cohort tracking, showed that children in the pre-school were not currently working within the appropriate bands in mathematical development. This was addressed by staff who developed a mathematically rich environment, incorporating numbers and shapes into everyday play situations. Consequently, tracking documents show an increase in children's progress.

Self-evaluation involves staff and parents. Parent's views are actively sought through questionnaires, direct conversations and the suggestion book, promoting a collaborative approach to driving improvement. The manager has a strong motivation to improve the service provided, so that children receive high-quality learning and care. However, the current self-evaluation process fails to identify that teaching practice in the two-to-three years room requires improvement and that the monitoring of the quality of teaching is a priority for improvement.

### **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>	EY473586
<b>Local authority</b>	Rochdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	949523
<b>Type of provision</b>	Full-time provision
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 17
<b>Total number of places</b>	57
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	54
<b>Name of provider</b>	Little Steps (Rochdale) Ltd
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	not applicable
<b>Telephone number</b>	01706641499

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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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