

First Steps Nursery

Meadowbrook, Ruskington, Sleaford, Lincolnshire, NG34 9FJ

Inspection date

19/08/2014

Previous inspection date

25/05/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

2

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision	2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Children form secure emotional attachments with staff and show high levels of confidence within the nursery. They enthusiastically explore their environment and participate in activities with enjoyment.
- Skilled and knowledgeable staff support children's learning well. They understand how children learn best and provide them with a range of experiences. Consequently, children make good progress in all areas of development.
- The well-established management team work successfully together and communicate high expectations to the staff team. Effective monitoring of staff performance and training ensures that any improvements made are maintained.
- All staff are committed to safeguarding children. They fully understand their roles and responsibilities, and the procedure to follow should they have any concerns.
- Partnerships with parents are firmly established. Parents feel their children's learning and development is well supported and they are kept well informed about their child's progress.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Some children have fewer opportunities to develop their independence at snack and lunch time.
- Staff do not always provide sufficient opportunities for children to gain awareness of diversity as there are fewer resources that show differences and similarities.

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 had a tour of the nursery and held discussions with the manager.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector observed adult-led and free-play activities taking place in the playrooms and outside area.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with children, and the nursery's self-evaluation and improvement plan.

Inspector

Hayley Ruane

Full report

Information about the setting

First Steps Nursery was registered in 1990 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in purpose-built premises in Ruskington and is part of a small chain of nurseries in Lincolnshire. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The nursery employs 17 members of childcare staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 6, one at level 5, 13 at level 3 and one at level 2. The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 175 children attending, 142 of whom are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of 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:

- extend opportunities at snack and lunch time for children to further develop their already good independence and self-help skills, for example, by giving them opportunities to prepare and serve themselves in the toddler and pre-school rooms
- enhance children's awareness of diversity through play opportunities, for example, by providing more resources that show positive images of diversity.

Inspection judgements

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

All staff have a good knowledge of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. As a result, all children are supported to make good progress from their starting points. Children show good control and coordination as they move confidently in the outdoor area and handle equipment, tools and resources effectively. For example, they use spades and buckets to make sand castles, and enjoy riding bikes. They join in circle games and enjoy running around the edge of the circle when they are chosen to be a 'goose'. In addition to this, children use tools for planting, digging and making mud pies. As a result, children develop their growing physical skills. Children develop their knowledge of information and communication technology, and competently use technology appropriate to their stage of development. Babies play with toys, which are pressed to make noises and pre-school children use a computer to move pieces of a jigsaw puzzle to complete it. Children particularly enjoy singing nursery rhymes with staff, who engage their interests very well. Staff stop singing towards the end of a nursery rhyme, allowing children to finish the

rhyme on their own, therefore supporting their communication and language development, and confidence in large group situations. This prepares children well for their next steps in learning as they start school.

Children can choose from a wide range of well-organised and stimulating resources, which enhance their development. The layout of rooms within the nursery is similar and is enhanced depending on children's interests. This helps support children when moving from room to room. Activities are planned well and organised to cover all areas of learning, both inside and outside. Staff are highly skilled at asking open questions as they support children in their learning. Therefore, they are encouraging children to think further and enjoy learning. For example, children look at the nursery's guinea pigs and push carrot stalks through the wire of their cage. They ask staff if the guinea pigs can be let out of the cage. Staff ask children 'what would happen if they are let out?' encouraging children to think further. As a result, children are supported in their knowledge of how to care for animals and keep them safe. Different cultures are celebrated within the nursery. However, children have opportunities to develop further their awareness of diversity during play opportunities, to extend their knowledge of similarities and differences. Children are confident, self-motivated and acquire good skills ready for school. Arrangements for the next phase of children's education are well planned for. For example, routines, such as tidy up time and songs to support good manners, prepare children well for their next steps in learning. Children visit the school and are invited to join in celebrating special event, such as Chinese New Year.

Parents are fully involved in their children's learning through sharing information on their progress and achievements daily through discussion with their child's key person, and also during parent's evenings. Parents can also contribute to daily diaries for babies and provide information about their child's learning on the 'sentence starter' sheets, which are displayed at the entrance to each of the play rooms within the nursery. Effective systems are in place to support children with special education needs and/or disabilities. Practitioners work closely with parents and appropriate professionals to ensure that strategies, which best support children's needs, are shared at home and in the nursery. Therefore, children, who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, also make good progress, relative to their starting points. The completed progress check for children aged between two-and-three years includes comments from parents and is used well to inform them about their child's development in the seven areas of learning. It is used well to identify any gaps in learning at an early stage so that swift action can be taken.

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

Children form strong, secure emotional attachments with staff, which provide a solid foundation to develop their personal, social and emotional skills. The sensitive and caring interactions between staff and children, through a strong key-person system, ensure that all children form positive and trusting relationships. They provide a happy, homely and loving environment to support children's emotional needs. Children settle well because staff find out good information from parents about their child before they start at the nursery. Parents complete All about me booklets to ensure all children's needs are known and effectively met. Staff plan varied and imaginative learning opportunities based upon

the individual interests of each child.

Children have good opportunities to learn about following a healthy lifestyle, and they take part in healthy eating week and undertake regular physical exercise. Staff support children to take risks. For example, they closely supervise older children when playing musical statues outside, by telling children to be aware of the space around them. Children have access to drinking water throughout the day. Children's special dietary requirements or medical needs are catered for to ensure their welfare needs are fully met. Toddlers and older children develop their independence suitably well. For example, children help to lay the table cloth in readiness for snack and wash their hands before meal times. However, the opportunities to develop children's independence further are not always maximised. This is because staff do not enable children to select their snack in the toddler room and pour their own drinks at lunch time in the pre-school room. Children develop friendships and have conversations with each other at lunchtime, which supports their communication and language development. Children are familiar with the routines of the day. For example, a tambourine is shaken before tidy up time. On hearing the tambourine they stop playing and say 'tidy up time'. Children have their own coat peg, which displays their name and picture. In addition, their drawings are displayed throughout the nursery. This shows children that their art work is valued by staff and further promotes their sense of belonging.

All children have access to a highly stimulating wealth of quality resources, which are thoughtfully stored and labelled at a low level to encourage children's engagement. Children develop their independence and confidence as they choose their activities and help to tidy away, so that they know where the toys belong. Children's behaviour is managed well. Staff in the baby room use warmth and comfort to support children when they become upset. Stickers are used in the toddler room to support children through toilet training. Staff frequently praise children's efforts and achievements. As a result, the focus is on a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust. Children are supported very well when moving from room to room within the nursery and are supported on visits with their key person. Therefore, children are familiar with their surroundings, which support their emotional well-being and confidence.

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

Safeguarding procedures are very thorough. All staff prioritise children's safety and they have a very good awareness of safeguarding issues. They are competent in their knowledge of the procedures to follow and who to contact in the event of any concerns about children or colleagues. Staff are fully aware of who the nursery's designated child-protection managers are and the process to follow if they are concerned about any issues within their practice. An extensive range of policies and procedures successfully underpin daily practice and regular reviews are carried out. Extensive risk assessments for all areas of the building, the outdoor area and resources, ensure that children's safety remains paramount. Effective recruitment and vetting systems ensure all adults working with children are suitable to do so. As a result, children are safeguarded appropriately.

The management team have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements. They keep their knowledge and understanding up to date through team meetings, regular training opportunities and seminars, so they are aware of legislation and current practices. Staff are enthusiastic, motivated and committed to providing a high standard of care. They are already well-qualified, and ongoing supervisions and appraisals support their progression further, which has a positive effect on the teaching practice in the nursery. Staff have attended training on outdoor play, which has developed the outside area, enhancing further opportunities to support children's learning in this area. There is a good overview of the children's progress towards the early learning goals because staff carefully track their development. The manager and staff use an effective electronic monitoring tool to review this information and provide parents with regular assessments. This means any necessary interventions are clearly identified and steps taken to close any gaps in learning.

Excellent relationships with parents are formed, and staff warmly share information about their children upon arrival and collection times. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the benefits of working closely together with parents and carers in order to meet children's needs. Parents are highly complimentary about the nursery staff and the way in which they provide a friendly and caring environment, to help their children settle very well. The nursery has good lines of communication with other professionals. Staff attend meetings to support children with additional needs. Effective systems are in place to ensure regular information is exchanged with other settings children attend and the nursery has established good links with local schools. This fully supports their learning and well-being. As a result of these strong partnerships, children benefit from a consistent approach to teaching that supports their development and contributes to the good progress they make towards their early learning goals. Self-evaluation shows clearly areas for development, which include plans to develop further the already good outside area for children in the baby and toddler rooms. These improvements, combined with the continuing development of the nursery, demonstrate the dedication and commitment to the entire staff team.

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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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	EY217413
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	869742
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	70
Number of children on roll	175
Name of provider	Diane Smith & Susan Jenkins Partnership
Date of previous inspection	25/05/2011
Telephone number	01526 832518

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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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