

First Steps Pre-school

Bradfield Road, CREWE, CW1 3RB

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

11/09/2014

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	3
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

- Children are safe in the pre-school because practitioners understand how to manage risk. For example, doors and gates are kept locked.
- The pre-school room is welcoming. There is an appropriate range of activities that adequately support children's learning.
- Parents describe practitioners as friendly and approachable. Relevant information that supports children's development and welfare is, therefore, shared effectively between parents and their child's key person.

It is not yet good because

- Practitioners do not use assessments accurately enough to plan challenging and measurable next steps for children's learning and, consequently, children do not make the best possible progress.
- Leadership and management are not yet secure. The manager does not efficiently ensure that accurate records are kept of the Disclosure and Barring Service checks she obtains. Daily routines are not consistently monitored to ensure that they fully meet children's development and welfare needs.
- Children do not always know the expectations for their behaviour, because not all practitioners are consistent in promoting the established rules.

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.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the hall and the outside environment.
- The inspector met with the manager.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents, including those used for assessment, planning and observation.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of all practitioners working with children.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers.

Inspector

Susan King

Full report

Information about the setting

First Steps Pre-school opened in 2014 and is registered on the Early Years Register. It is privately owned and operates from Coppenhall Methodist Church in Coppenhall, Crewe. The pre-school serves the immediate locality and the surrounding areas. It opens five days a week, from 9am until 12pm, term time only. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Children are cared for in one room and have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 25 children in the early years age range. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. There are currently eight staff working directly with the children. Six staff hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 3, including one qualified teacher. The pre-school receives support from the local authority and is a member of the Preschool Learning Alliance.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- ensure that ongoing assessment of children's progress informs next steps for their learning that are specific, challenging and measurable
- keep accurate records of Disclose and Barring Service checks obtained for all practitioners.

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

- promote children's positive behaviour through consistent teaching of the established rules
- improve the monitoring of daily routines to ensure that they consistently meet children's development and welfare needs.

Inspection judgements

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

Practitioners plan a suitable range of activities for the children, and these provide adequate coverage of the Early Years Foundation Stage areas of learning and development. For example, children engage in role play, build railway tracks and experience the texture of shaving foam in a table-top tray. Children learn about

technology by operating a remotely controlled vehicle. Practitioners understand how young children learn actively and they provide a suitable balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. For example, the older children learn to recognise the numbers one, two and three as they respond to the practitioner's instructions to run, jump or crawl to find each number in the outside area. However, the quality of teaching is variable and, therefore, children do not make best progress. During the snack routine, practitioners do not recognise and use opportunities to interest and challenge children across the areas of learning and development. They do not, for example, count with children or support them to speak and listen as they participate in the social time.

The planning of the educational programme is adequate. Practitioners meet at the end of each session and suggest activities for the next day that follow children's interests. For example, one child is interested in using scissors and, subsequently, appropriate activities are provided and a practitioner teaches children to use scissors skilfully. The pre-school session is organised, so that children learn how to respond in a range of situations. For example, they participate in key-group activities for increasing periods of time. This helps to ensure that children are ready for the routines they will meet when they start school. Practitioners make observations of children and these are recorded in learning journals alongside photographs. Practitioners write summaries of children's achievement and progress, and these are generally accurate. However, where next steps for children's learning are stated, they are not specific enough to support the accurate measurement of children's progress or the planning of challenging experiences. Consequently, children do not make best progress.

Parents provide information to inform the starting points for their children's learning. The pre-school welcome pack for parents provides useful information about the Early Years Foundation Stage and about learning through play, so that parents can continue their child's learning at home. Practitioners know what they should do if they are concerned about a child's progress. The special educational needs coordinator liaises with other professionals, and ensures that individual planning is in place for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The pre-school works in partnership with parents whose children are learning English as an additional language. For example, practitioners learn relevant vocabulary in children's home languages, to support children's developing communication.

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

Parents report that practitioners are friendly and approachable. These relationships support communication that generally ensures children's welfare. However, the emotional well-being of all children, particularly two year olds, is not consistently promoted through daily routines. For example, the routine for welcoming children at the start of each session is not tailored to meet the needs of all children. As a result, a number of the younger children begin the session upset following the sudden separation from their parents at the door. While staff swiftly offer sensitive support to comfort and reassure the children, the current settling-in arrangements are not wholly conducive to children being emotionally ready to play and learn on arrival. Older children, who are familiar with the environment and the routine, confidently move about as they interact with each other and with

practitioners. This demonstrates that they are emotionally settled and preparing well for their move to school.

Children learn to keep themselves and others safe because practitioners assess and manage risk. For example, the children learn that they must keep the toys on or near the play mats, so that they do not trip. However, there are times when children do not know the expectations for their behaviour, because practitioners do not consistently teach the established rules. For example, snack time involves setting six places for children who then serve themselves. However, when other children bring chairs to the snack table, the rules are not explained and modelled and, therefore, children are confused about how they must behave if they want a snack.

The play and learning space is set up and cleared away each day. Resources are well maintained and are suitable for the children present. Children can choose to play indoors or outdoors for part of each session and, therefore, they are able to be in the fresh air. There is plenty of space in the hall and outdoor area and, subsequently, children exercise as they move about freely and run. Water is always available and children learn to be independent when they pour their own drink and dispose of the cup. The daily snack includes fruit, as well as a choice of milk or water to drink, so children gain an awareness of eating healthy food at the pre-school. Practitioners are alert to individual children's personal care needs. They encourage older children to manage their own personal care needs, so that by the time they transfer to school, they are independent.

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

The manager understands the safeguarding and welfare requirements. For example, she checks all of the indoor and outdoor areas diligently before every session, as the premises are used by other groups at various times. Practitioners are able to give clear explanations of what they must do if they believe that a child may be at risk of harm, or if they were to be concerned about the behaviour of a colleague. There are sufficient practitioners with paediatric first-aid training for at least one to be present at all times and, therefore, children who suffer minor accidents and injuries receive timely first aid. Procedures are in place to share information that safeguards children's health and welfare. For example, when a child bumps their head, parents are informed, so that they can be alert to any signs of concussion later in the day. Recruitment processes are sufficient to ensure that practitioners are suitable to work with children. The manager obtains Disclosure and Barring Service checks for all practitioners, but does not efficiently ensure that the required details of these are recorded and available for inspection.

The manager and her team demonstrate sound knowledge of the learning and development requirements. There are systems in place to plan an educational programme based on children's interests and across the areas of learning and development. However, the manager's monitoring of the assessment of children's progress is weak. As a result, the next steps for children's learning are not always specific and measurable and, consequently, children do not make best progress. Daily routines are not effectively monitored to ensure that children's individual needs are met consistently. The manager

demonstrates a commitment to staff development. She seeks out training courses and recruits well-qualified practitioners who aspire to improve. Procedures for the supervision of practitioners are emerging and practitioners comment that they feel supported by the manager.

The manager seeks written feedback from parents following their child's admission to the pre-school. She uses this information to inform self-evaluation and improvement. Partnerships with other providers, including schools, are at an early stage and plans are in place to develop them further. The special educational needs coordinator actively seeks support and advice from specialist professionals when children have, or may have, special educational needs and/or disabilities. Key persons attend meetings concerning vulnerable children, and the pre-school participates fully in actions to support individual children and their families. The manager has clear ideas for improving the pre-school. She demonstrates that she uses her knowledge of how children learn to inform continuous improvement. For example, she recognises that children do not have enough opportunities to choose toys independently. To improve this, she has purchased high-quality, wheeled storage units that can be easily brought into the hall.

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	EY468608
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	966231
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	28
Number of children on roll	25
Name of provider	Mr Edward Bell and Mrs Christine Elizabeth Bell
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01270 505737

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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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