

# Tiny Steps Pre-School

St. Martins Lane, Murdishaw, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 6HZ

<b>Inspection date</b>	05/12/2014
Previous inspection date	05/02/2009

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	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

- Teaching is good. Staff know children well and plan a range of interesting play opportunities to support the next steps in their learning. As a result, all children are making good progress.
- Children form positive bonds and close attachments to the staff because they are caring, friendly and approachable, which means that children are well supported in the pre-school environment.
- Effective safeguarding policies and procedures are known and implemented by the staff, who place utmost importance on ensuring that children are safe, protected and secure at all times.
- Parents speak highly of the pre-school as staff involve them in all aspects of their children's learning.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- Occasionally, staff are less effective at always giving children more time to respond to their skilful questioning, in order to support children's creative and critical thinking.
- Group activities do not always actively involve all children at all times. Consequently, some children can lose interest and, on occasion, become distracted.

## 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 carried out a tour of the nursery with the manager.
- The inspector observed teaching and learning activities in the playroom and the outdoor learning environment.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and the planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of all staff working with the children and the nursery's self-evaluation form.
- The inspector took account of the views of children, staff and parents spoken to on the day of the inspection.

## Inspector

Nicola Norton

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Tiny Steps Pre-School was registered in 2000 and is on the Early Years Register. It is run by a management team and operates in the grounds of St Martin's Catholic Primary School in the Murdishaw district of Runcorn. Children access one large playroom and an outdoor area, and make regular use of the hall and playground of the host school. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 12noon and 12.30pm to 3.30pm, during term time only. There are currently 33 children on roll, all of whom are within the early years age range. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. It supports children who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school employs six members of staff, all of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 3 and above.

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

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

- enhance the already good questioning skills of staff by allowing children time to respond to open-ended questions to extend their thinking skills
- review the size of the group of children taking part in the interesting activities carried out by staff, to provide all children with opportunities to actively take part and maintain interest, in order to enhance their learning.

## Inspection judgements

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

The quality of teaching is good because all staff have a good understanding of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They use this knowledge to plan interesting and challenging activities and experiences which cover the seven areas of learning. Consequently, children are motivated to learn and make good progress. There is a good balance of child-initiated and adult-led planned activities which capture children's interest and imagination. For example, children take pleasure in painting pine cones to make Christmas tree decorations. They select interesting materials to decorate the pine cones and show pride in the finished product. However, whole group activities, despite being interesting, do not always include all children fully due to the size of the group. This means children sometimes lose interest and become distracted. Through a highly effective process of observation, assessment and planning for children's learning, key persons collect information from parents to help them get to know children when they start. They ensure that activities meet children's next steps, maximise learning opportunities and close any gaps in development. Assessments of children's progress show that they are working comfortably within the typical range of development expected

for their age. Key persons carry out the check for children aged between two and three years. This enables early identification of any gaps in children's development and is shared with parents. A high priority is placed on improving children's communication and language development. Staff skilfully use open-ended questions and narrative to extend children's speech and language development. However, on occasions, staff are less effective at always allowing children more time to respond to these good questions before answering, in order to further support all children's communication and critical thinking skills. The use of sign language and visual aids around the playroom supports children's communication skills, especially those with language delay or English as an additional language. Consequently, all children are able to express their needs and follow simple instructions.

The playroom is inviting and well organised. Children display high levels of confidence as they access a wide range of interesting resources and equipment to support their play. For example, children show great confidence and skill in using an interactive tablet to develop their problem-solving skills. All resources are stored at a low level to encourage children's engagement and independence. Attractive displays, some at child height, show examples of children's individual artwork, photographs from home and cards they have made to celebrate Christmas. Consequently, children have a strong sense of belonging.

Parents are informed about their child's learning through a variety of methods, such as effective daily verbal communications, parent meetings and opportunities to share individual development files. Parents record achievements at home in their child's 'smiley book' and these are celebrated by staff and noted as part of the assessment process. Parents comment that they feel well informed about what their child has been doing during their time at the pre-school and that children's needs are well met. This means that parents are fully included in their children's development and progress.

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

Children are warmly welcomed into this pre-school by friendly and approachable staff. Good settling-in procedures mean that children settle quickly and are happy and eager to learn. Children's close relationships with all the staff mean they display high levels of confidence and well-being within the pre-school. Staff give children reassuring smiles, positive comments and cuddles when they need these. This helps children to feel safe and secure and develop a sense of belonging. Children's behaviour is good because staff act as good role models; they treat each other and all children with respect and patience and provide consistent messages about right and wrong. Children respond well to praise and encouragement, and the clear boundaries reinforced by staff help children to learn to manage their own feelings. A 'stamp' reward chart is displayed as a celebration of children's good behaviour. Visual displays reinforce 'good sitting' and 'good listening'.

Children happily play alongside each other, for example, digging together in sand or playing in the water tray. They are encouraged to share and take turns. Children are beginning to develop friendships with others, linking up to share experiences. For example, they play imaginatively in the home corner role-play area. Children learn to use the toilet independently and know they need to wash their hands after using the toilet and

playing outside, in order to prevent the spread of infection. Children's good health and their understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle are promoted as they go outside for play and exploration on a daily basis. This means children benefit from fresh air and exercise and learn through the sensory experiences of playing in various weather conditions. Children sit together to enjoy a healthy and nutritious snack each day, and use this time as a social occasion to talk to each other and to staff.

Children's safety is assured through regular fire evacuation practises, which enable the children to develop an understanding of keeping themselves and others safe. Detailed risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly in order to ensure that children are kept safe at all times. Staff support children to take risks through outdoor activities, such as using the climbing frame in the school playground. They talk to children about potential dangers, such as being careful riding bikes and toy cars so as not to crash in to each other.

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

Self assessment is accurate and the management team have a vision of continuous improvement for the pre-school. The Ofsted self-evaluation form is used to identify strengths and prioritise areas for further development. The management team also make use of a variety of audit tools to monitor the environment and safeguarding practices. Recommendations from the previous inspection have been considered and, as a result, practice has improved. The management team work closely together and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities regarding the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff have a good knowledge of the procedures to follow if they are concerned about a child's welfare. Daily risk assessments are carried out by staff and good security systems are in place for the dropping off and collection of children; therefore, children are kept safe at all times.

Management systems are in place and well organised. Regular management team meetings and staff meetings ensure all staff are fully informed of developments within the pre-school, such as children's progress and safeguarding issues. Staff have regular performance management meetings and the manager makes regular observations of staff to ensure the quality of teaching is consistently good. Peer observations are also embedded into practice in order to strengthen and enhance the quality of teaching and learning. Any weaknesses in teaching are identified early and appropriate training opportunities and coaching are provided both in-house and through the local authority.

A strength of this pre-school is its partnership work with the host school. Staff from the school make regular informal visits to the pre-school to chat to the children and join in with activities with great enthusiasm. Staff from the pre-school make use of the school hall on a weekly basis for physical activities and also use equipment in the school playground regularly. This helps children become familiar with the school surroundings. Key persons and parents meet with the reception class teacher to update her on children's progress prior to children starting school. Visits to the school play and pantomime, joint

playtimes and a 'class swap' with the reception class in the summer term, ensure the move into school is seamless and successful.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	303486
<b>Local authority</b>	Halton
<b>Inspection number</b>	867463
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	17
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	33
<b>Name of provider</b>	Karen Reese
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	05/02/2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	0777 952 8926 or 07790 362051

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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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