

First Footsteps Ltd

17 Oakfield, Anfield, LIVERPOOL, Merseyside, L4 2QH

Inspection date	08/01/2015
Previous inspection date	02/12/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
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

- Staff have a very good understanding of children's learning and development needs, which helps all children to make good progress across all areas of learning.
- Partnerships with parents are very effective. Excellent relationships, information sharing and good communication systems ensure that parents are kept fully informed of their children's progress.
- Children form close bonds and secure attachments with their key person. As a result, children are happy and feel emotionally secure in their care.
- Staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities and the procedures for protecting and keeping children safe. They implement robust safeguarding and child protection procedures, which ensure that children are kept safe at all times.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not always give children sufficient time to respond to questions to further promote their critical thinking skills.
- Opportunities to extend the use of children's home language in the nursery are not fully developed.

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 looked at children's assessment records and the planning documentation.
- The inspector spoke to parents, children and staff and observed play and learning activities within the playrooms and outdoors.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager of the nursery.
The inspector carried out a meeting with the management team. She checked the
- evidence of qualifications and suitability of staff and looked at a range of action plans, policies, procedures and documentation.

Inspector

Kellie Lever

Full report

Information about the setting

First Footsteps Ltd was registered in 2002, and is on the Early Years Register. It is situated in the Anfield area of Liverpool and is managed privately as part of a chain of three nurseries. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from a converted house and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The nursery employs 15 members of childcare staff. Of these, 13 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, including one with Early Years Professional status. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 72 children attending who 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 who speak English as an additional language and 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:

- strengthen the monitoring of staff practice to ensure any emerging weaknesses are promptly identified and addressed, for example, provide sufficient time for children to think before answering questions in order to fully develop their critical thinking skills

- extend the use of children's home language, for example, by displaying dual language labels, signs and symbols and introducing more resources reflecting a variety of cultural backgrounds.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have a very good understanding of children's learning and development needs, which helps all children to make good progress across all areas of learning. A strong partnership with parents from the outset allows staff to have a good knowledge of each child's stage of development. For example, 'All about me' booklets are completed and shared by parents detailing what their child can already do, which allows staff to identify an accurate starting point for each child. Staff complete regular observations and assessments on each child. This allows them to accurately plan exciting activities to challenge children according to their stage of development. As a result, children make good progress in their learning. For example, babies explore sand with their feet; they walk across the tray making footprints and giggle with delight. Staff extend the activity further as they make marks using their finger, which babies then copy. Consequently, from an early age children are inquisitive and quickly become active learners who are making good progress with their

early writing skills.

The quality of teaching is good and strategies are in place to meet children's specific needs and consequently, promote their all-round development. Staff develop children's communication and language skills. For example, staff support babies' emerging language by repeating back what they say and using short sentences. Pre-school children are provided with a commentary of what they are doing and staff ask them open-ended questions. However, on occasions staff pose too many questions and children are not always given sufficient time to think about their responses. As a result, at times children have fewer opportunities to put their thoughts into words. Children develop their physical skills by moving confidently outdoors. They climb onto crates, run around and develop their balance and speed as they walk up and down a ramp. Indoors, babies explore their environment by touching and investigating resources. Staff are attentive to their needs and interact with babies well. Toddlers build towers out of blocks and pre-school children enjoy listening attentively to clues given as they play a guessing game. As a result, children of all ages acquire the skills, attributes and dispositions, which they need for their next stage in their learning.

Staff have very good partnerships with parents. Parents share key information about their child's abilities and interests with staff. All children have their own learning journal, which includes photographs, observations and their next steps in learning. From the information gathered, staff are able to complete a written progress summary for each child. For example, progress checks for children between the ages of two and three years are completed. Parents are invited to make comments to contribute to any progress that has been made and are free to look through their child's journal. As a result, parents are well informed about their child's progress. Staff work closely with parents when there are any emerging concerns about a child's progress or if children have an identified special educational need and/or a disability. This means they share information and work together to agree individual learning plans to ensure that all learning is targeted and tailored to meet each child's specific needs.

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

A well-embedded key-person system is in place and children form a close bond and secure emotional attachment with their key staff. As a result, children are happy and feel emotionally secure in their care. Children benefit from well-planned settling-in sessions, which are flexible to meet the individual needs of the child. Staff are able to nurture children's needs very well because parents provide information regarding their child's likes and dislikes. For example, children are quickly comforted if they become upset. This supports children's emotional well-being and their move from home to nursery. Staff have established links with the several schools in the area, which children will eventually attend. Staff complete a final summative report which they share with parents and new teaching staff. They take time to talk to the children about their future move and the changes to their daily routine and environment. As a result, children are supported well in readiness for starting school. Staff are sensitive and caring in their approach to managing children's behaviour and provide them with reminders and age-appropriate explanations. As a result,

children behave very well. Children use good manners and say 'please' and 'thank you' and staff acknowledge this and praise them for doing so. Children play well together, support one another and are beginning to make strong friendships. Consequently, children are developing good social skills.

Healthy lifestyles are promoted as children benefit from daily outdoor play where they are in the fresh air and have space to be active. Children develop their independence and self-help skills throughout the day. For example, they learn to use the toilet themselves and serve their own meals and pour their own drinks at mealtimes. Children learn how to make healthy food choices and help to plan the well-balanced, nutritious meals that are freshly cooked. Menus are varied and dietary requirements are well catered for. This means children learn about the importance of health lifestyles.

Daily risk assessments are completed to ensure that hazards are kept to a minimum. As a result, children are able to take risks and play in an environment that is safe and secure. Equipment is age appropriate and organised in a way, which encourages children to access toys independently. Children take many trips out in the community, such as to the park, library and local shops. As a result, children learn about their own community and feel a sense of identity as they begin to notice the difference and diversity of the world around them. Staff use keywords in children's home language, which provides opportunities for them to communicate further with staff and promotes their emotional well-being. However, the use of dual language labels, signs, symbols and resources in the nursery are not as well promoted, to support children who speak English as an additional language.

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

The manager and staff work closely together to provide a safe and secure learning environment for all children. They are fully aware of their role in protecting children and what to do should they have a concern about children's welfare. There are secure procedures for recruitment and vetting of all staff working with children. Risk assessments are in place and reviewed regularly to ensure that hazards are kept to a minimum and fire evacuation drills are thoroughly recorded. As a result, safeguarding arrangements are very strong and children are kept safe at all times. The nursery has a comprehensive set of policies and procedures, which are reviewed on a regular basis. These effectively underpin good practice and all relevant documentation is current and up to date. Induction procedures are effective in supporting staff to settle into the nursery and work effectively in their roles. As a result, the manager has recruited and retained a staff team who are experienced and qualified and actively support her in maintaining a good quality provision.

The manager and staff team have a good understanding of their responsibility to meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The manager tracks children's progress and monitors the nursery provision. As a result, the manager has a clear overview of the good progress children are making. This ensures that any gaps in children's learning are swiftly identified and acted upon at the earliest opportunity. There are systems in place to

monitor the ongoing development of staff. Staff receive regular supervisions and opportunities to extend their knowledge by attending training specific to the needs of the nursery. However, the monitoring of staff practice is not focused, in order to identify any emerging weaknesses in teaching.

There are clear focused improvement plans in place to secure continuous improvements, staff, children and parents are fully involved and share the managers vision of the nursery. The manager is very proactive and strives for improvement. As a result, all previous recommendations have been addressed. Staff work closely with other professionals to ensure children are further supported in their care, learning and development. For example, the local authority and other inclusion and health teams if needed to ensure all children's needs are fully met. Partnerships with parents are effective. Excellent relationships, information sharing and good communication systems ensure that parents are kept fully informed of their children's progress. Parents feel that they receive good information about their child's progress and comment that they have made good progress in their learning since starting at the nursery.

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	EY227324
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	855773
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	59
Number of children on roll	72
Name of provider	First Footsteps Ltd
Date of previous inspection	02/12/2009
Telephone number	0151 260 5143

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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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Piccadilly Gate
Store St
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M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
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