

First Steps Private Day Nursery

Newall Street, Littleborough, Lancashire, OL15 9DL



Inspection date

Previous inspection date

6 March 2015

6 September 2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Requires improvement	3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Requires improvement	3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Requires improvement	3
The setting does not meet legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision requires improvement. It is not yet good because:

- The quality of teaching and staff interaction with children is variable. Some staff supervise children while they play and others use a range of teaching strategies to extend children's learning. As a result, children are not always effectively supported to make good progress in their learning.
- Babies are not always provided with a secure foundation on which to build their future learning, as planning does not focus sufficiently on all three prime areas of learning.
- Planning systems across the nursery need updating. There is a strong focus on topics, rather than taking into account children individual needs, interests or learning styles.
- Strategies to engage parents in their children's learning are not always successful. Consequently, partnerships with parents do not consistently support children's learning at home.
- Learning opportunities are missed and children's welfare is not fully supported, because at lunchtimes staff are not deployed to the best effect and at other times they are too reliant on following the nursery routines.

It has the following strengths

- Staff focus on helping children develop the skills required to prepare them for school, for example, by using music and songs to help them learn about phonics.
- Children enter confidently, and enthusiastically greet their friends and the staff team.
- Staff are knowledgeable on how to keep children safe. They have attended relevant safeguarding training and take appropriate action to minimise risks.
- Staff value the opinion of parents and work hard to develop relationships with other professionals, so that all children's care and learning needs are met.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- improve the effectiveness of staff practice to 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
- ensure that staff working with the youngest children focus strongly on all three prime areas of learning, so that they have a secure foundation for their future learning
- improve and update planning to ensure that activities take full account of children's individual learning needs, interests and learning styles and support them to make consistently good progress
- review staff deployment at lunchtimes and the associated routines at other times, so that valuable learning experiences are not missed and children's needs are fully supported.

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

- explore further strategies to involve parents more in their children's learning by developing more effective ways of sharing information about children's progress, to help parents support children's learning at home.

Inspection activities

- The inspector had a tour of the nursery with the manager.
- The inspector observed activities and the quality of teaching in all three age groups, inside and outdoors.
- The inspector spoke to members of staff, parents and children at appropriate times during the inspection and held meetings with the provider, manager and deputy manager.
- 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 staff working with the children and the manager's procedures for self-evaluation.

Inspector

Joanne Parrington

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This requires improvement

Staff are qualified, but this is not having enough impact on children's learning. Staff observe children and plan some learning experiences. However, the weekly planning for all ages has too sharp a focus on the topic, rather than the individual interests or further development needs of the children. For example, all babies produce the same picture of a shamrock. Furthermore, planning for these children does not focus on developing all the three prime areas of learning sufficiently. Staff interactions with children are variable. Some staff skilfully engage children and use strong techniques. For example, staff in the pre-school room model language during play and make good use of strategies, such as signing, to support children's communication and language skills. However, other staff simply supervise children's play rather than engaging with them to extend their play and learning. Parents speak positively about the nursery. They enjoy attending parent evenings and 'stay and play' sessions. However, information about how parents can best support their child's learning at home is not established.

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

Staff gain information from parents when their child first starts at the nursery. This helps staff build a picture of each child and to support children's emotional development during the initial settling-in period. Children follow good hygiene routines and enjoy tucking into healthy meals and snacks. Children behave well. This is because most staff encourage the children to share with each other and be kind to their friends. Children enjoy playing outside, which contributes towards their physical development. They have a wide range of resources, including natural materials, such as logs and den building equipment, to further promote their imagination. For example, children gather twigs to make a campfire in the den. They sit on the logs around the fire and discuss keeping warm while sharing stories.

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

The manager has an understanding of her role and responsibilities. During children's lunch several staff take a break, which results in numbers of staff working with the children being stretched. Having said that, staff remain on site and are available should the need arise. At other times, staff are too focused on following nursery sleep routines, as opposed to using a more flexible approach. As a result, learning opportunities are missed and children's needs are not fully supported. The manager observes staff practice and reviews professional development. She is aware of areas that require improvements and has plans in place. The manager monitors children's progress assessments and group tracking. This identifies areas of learning which are less than expected. For example, pre-school children's attainment levels in mathematics were slightly below what is expected. Staff further resourced areas within the playrooms and the outdoors, played games with a focus on number and counting, and sang number and shape related songs and rhymes. As a result, many of these children are working within the typical level of development expected for their age and some show positive signs of exceeding in this particular area.

Setting details

Unique reference number	316452
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	868363
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	36
Number of children on roll	63
Name of provider	Tina Stafford-Smith and Alan Smith Partnership
Date of previous inspection	6 September 2011
Telephone number	01706 378 888

First Steps Private Day Nursery registered in 1995. It is open from 7.30am until 6pm, all year round, excluding public holidays. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free education for children aged two-, three- and four-year-old children. A team of 10 staff work at the nursery, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications, including one member of staff with a degree and one with a foundation degree. The nursery also employs a cook.

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.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2015

