

First Steps

Fulwood Lodge, Longsands Lane, Fulwood, Preston, Lancashire, PR2 9PS



Inspection date

27 May 2015

Previous inspection date

29 May 2012

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Good	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Good	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Good	2
The setting meets legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Staff use effective methods to deal with unwanted behaviour; the methods used are consistent and suitable for young children.
- Leaders use self-evaluation as a tool to continuously improve areas of their practice. The views of staff, children and parents are taken into account when setting targets for improvement.
- Practitioners have high expectations of what children can do and they encourage all children to take an acceptable level of risk during activities.
- Children are provided with constant mark-making opportunities, both indoors and outside. A wide range of resources are provided to encourage small and larger scale mark making.
- Parents are kept informed of their children's progress through daily access to an online system. Staff update this regularly and parents are able to contribute. Strong partnership working between home and nursery is evident.
- Children's emotional well-being is given a high priority during times when children move between rooms. Therefore, children feel secure in their new group.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- During free play times, staff sometimes unnecessarily direct children's choice of activities and learning opportunities.
- Staff do not always ensure that individual planning continues to be carried out for children that are moving between key persons.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- ensure learning opportunities are not restricted unnecessarily; to allow children to follow their interests more readily during free play times
- ensure that there is no break in planning and carrying out plans for children's next steps in learning when key persons change, or during staff absences.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching and learning, both indoors and outside.
- The inspector spoke to members of staff and children at appropriate times throughout the day, and carried out a meeting with the management team.
- The inspector spoke to parents and took their views into account.
- The inspector looked at documentation including children's records, planning and assessment, staff suitability and a selection of policies and procedures, for example, safeguarding and the complaints procedure.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.

Inspector

Estelle Noblett

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is good

Children play in a welcoming, well-resourced environment both indoors and outside. They are able to access a wide range of experiences daily which includes a variety of sensory and messy play. Babies explore paint using their bodies and watch gloop drip from their fingers. Children in the toddler room enjoy experimenting with water and dressing up as doctors. Practitioners interact well with the children encouraging them to think of their own ideas and by giving them time to answer. Language is modelled and extended, and therefore, children benefit from the introduction of new vocabulary. Occasionally, children are unnecessarily directed away from various activities by staff, therefore, children's ability to follow their interests and extend their learning by accessing certain areas of provision is limited. Activities planned are well thought out and often linked to children's interests. In pre-school a child became fascinated with bones. The child also has the opportunity to place the bones in order, according to their height.

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

Children are cared for by staff who have a good understanding of safeguarding procedures. They are happy and confident learners who know that they can go to their key person for reassurance or support. Procedures to support children moving between the nursery and local schools are strong. Teachers are invited to visit the children in their nursery environment and a detailed report is sent to school. Children learn how to stay healthy as they make good choices during snack time, choosing fruit and milk to drink. The outdoors is given a high priority with all children having free access to the area in all weather conditions. They are able to move around freely engaging in physical activity, such as crawling through tunnels and climbing grassy hills. Children are supported to settle in by being greeted by the same person every time they attend. Through this they begin to build relationships with staff quickly.

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

Leaders are well qualified and have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They use their knowledge to influence practice and provide support to the other staff members. Termly appraisals ensure that staff continuously reflect on their own practice and set targets to improve. Training needs are identified quickly and staff are sent on appropriate courses to fill any gaps in their knowledge. On occasion, when staffing issues arise contingency plans are not consistent enough for all children. This does not ensure that they continue to make the best possible progress, as planned next steps are not always carried out. Managers use an online tracking system to ensure that all children are making progress and support plans are quickly put in place when a child is below expected levels of development. They have recently signed up to a dental health campaign after the tracking system highlighted a gap. The management team work closely with outside agencies for support when needed.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY295765
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	980068
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	88
Name of provider	Michael Robert Melville
Date of previous inspection	29 May 2012
Telephone number	01772 792 644

First Steps nursery was registered in 2005 in Preston, Lancashire. The nursery employs 13 members of childcare staff. Of these, 12 hold appropriate early years qualifications at levels 2 and 3, including one with Early Years Professional status. One staff member also holds a level 6 and two hold level 4 qualifications. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday for 51 weeks a year. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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