

Little Steps at St Georges School

28-30 Priory Road, Dunstable, Bedfordshire, LU5 4HR



Inspection date

29 January 2016

Previous inspection date

10 January 2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement	3
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Inadequate	4
Outcomes for children		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is inadequate

- Induction procedures are not robust. Some new staff members are not fully aware of their role and responsibilities. They do not understand how to report any concerns they have about children's welfare to the designated person for safeguarding.
- The systems in place for the supervision and performance management of the managers and staff are not effective enough to identify their ongoing training needs.
- Assessments of children's learning are not carried out frequently enough to ensure that all children make consistently good progress. Furthermore, the system in place to track children's progress is weak.
- Some staff's knowledge and understanding of how to plan for all the prime and specific areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage is weak.
- The key-person system is not used well enough to support children's well-being as they settle. Some parents are not aware of who their child's key person is.
- The initial information about children's learning that staff obtain from parents is not detailed enough to help staff identify children's learning needs from an early stage.
- The staff are not always successful in engaging all parents to share information about what their children do and learn at home, to accurately inform the planning for children's learning.

It has the following strengths

- Children are happy and enjoy their time at the nursery. Babies enjoy exploring musical instruments. The older children benefit from having a wide range of activities to choose from.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

	Due Date
■ ensure a robust induction procedure is in place, so that all new staff swiftly understand their responsibilities and the nursery's policies and procedures, including the safeguarding procedures	12/02/2016
■ implement more effective systems for the supervision and performance management of all staff which identify their ongoing professional development needs	12/02/2016
■ improve the procedure for assessing and tracking children's development to ensure all staff have an accurate understanding of children's skills and abilities, and are able to swiftly identify and close any gaps in children's learning	12/02/2016
■ ensure that all staff have a good understanding of the learning and development requirements in order to plan and support children to make good progress and provide appropriate challenge	12/02/2016
■ improve the key-person system to ensure that children new to the nursery are fully supported as they settle, and ensure all parents are aware of who their child's key person is.	12/02/2016

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

- introduce more effective ways to gather detailed information about children's learning from parents when children start at the nursery, and on an ongoing basis to inform planning.

Inspection activities

- This inspection was carried out following concerns being raised with Ofsted and further notifications to Ofsted.
- The inspector observed activities both indoors and in the outside play area and spoke to the staff and children at appropriate times.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the nursery manager and discussed this with her.
- The inspector held meetings with the nursery manager, the provider and the designated person for safeguarding.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documents and a range of other documents, including the safeguarding policy and procedure.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of staff working with children and took account of the views of parents.

Inspector

Jill Hardaker

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is inadequate

The inspection found that some staff's knowledge of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage is weak. They do not consistently track children's development thoroughly enough to ensure any gaps in children's learning are swiftly recognised and addressed. The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective. The induction procedure is not implemented in a timely manner to ensure that new staff are informed of their responsibility to report any concerns to the designated person for safeguarding. However, staff are confident in their ability to recognise child protection issues. The provider carries out supervision and appraisals with the manager, who in turn manages the performance of the staff. However, they do not use these opportunities to effectively address all weaknesses and identify further professional development opportunities. Staff are generally deployed well to supervise and meet the needs of children. Most of the staff hold a first-aid qualification. They respond to accidents quickly and they complete accident forms and share these with parents. Thorough risk assessments are regularly carried out and any medicines on site are stored appropriately. Appropriate fire evacuation procedures are in place and practised regularly.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

The staff collect some information from parents when children start at the nursery. However, this is not detailed enough to help them to identify children's starting points in learning to accurately inform individual planning. Although observations are regularly carried out on children's learning, staff do not consistently use this information to assess children's development. In addition, not all staff are confident in planning next steps for children's learning in all areas. There are some strategies in place to share children's learning and development information with parents. However, the nursery is not successful in gaining ongoing information from all parents about what children learn at home. Staff in the baby room interact with babies well. Babies enjoy listening to staff singing; they demonstrate their interest as they move their bodies and clap. However, staff in the toddler room do not support children's learning effectively as they play with toys. For example, they tell children to make sure sand stays in the tray as children try to fill up pots. Pre-school children enjoy acting out their favourite books and films. They discuss their roles and work together well. Some children show a high level of mathematical understanding, but staff do not consistently provide each child with appropriate challenges. The staff support disabled children and those with special educational needs. They work closely with parents and other professionals to ensure these children are fully included in all activities.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are inadequate

As previously detailed in the report, the provider has failed to meet some of the safeguarding and welfare requirements, which compromises children's safety and well-being. Children who are new to the nursery are not always adequately supported to settle in. For example, their allocated key persons are not in attendance on the day some children start. The staff who are in the room are unaware of their needs and interests. This results in children wandering round, not engaging in activities. Furthermore, some

parents are unaware of who their child's key person is. Most of the children enjoy daily fresh air. They have opportunities to be active as they ride on bikes and cars. Children are excited to look for worms under tyres. Staff speak appropriately to children and are consistent in their approach to behaviour management and children respond well to this. Staff ensure the environments are clean and safe at all times. Children understand the need to wash germs off their hands at appropriate times to support their health. They are encouraged to be independent, for example, they help themselves to bowls and plates at breakfast time and find their coats and boots to go outside. Parents speak highly of the nursery staff; they feel their children are happy and well cared for.

Outcomes for children require improvement

Most children are working comfortably within the range of development typical for their age. However, they do not make consistently good progress while they are in the nursery, because some teaching lacks appropriate challenge. They gain some of the skills that they need in readiness for school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY297718
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	1036686
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	0 - 11
Total number of places	70
Number of children on roll	51
Name of provider	Patricia Rosemary Beverley Plater
Date of previous inspection	10 January 2013
Telephone number	01582 661 471

Little Steps at St Georges School was registered in 2005. The nursery employs 12 members of childcare staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6.30pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The nursery supports disabled children and those with special educational needs.

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