

First Steps

129 Medway, Great Lumley, CHESTER LE STREET, County Durham, DH3 4HU



Inspection date

16 May 2017

Previous inspection date

29 May 2015

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Outstanding	1
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Managers use their reflections effectively, overall, to assess all areas of practice and continuously improve the provision. There are high expectations of the staff and of the children in their care.
- Staff provide safe and exciting play environments for children both indoors and outdoors. They plan a wide variety of fun activities and experiences based on children's individual interests. Children make good progress.
- Teaching is good. The development of communication and language skills is prioritised. Staff skilfully ask questions to help extend children's learning.
- Children's behaviour is exemplary. Staff form warm and caring relationships with children and are very positive role models. They offer a wealth of encouragement and support to help children develop high levels of self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Partnerships with parents are very strong. There is an effective two-way exchange of information to ensure all those involved are well informed about children's care and learning. Children have excellent self-care skills and complete age-appropriate tasks independently. This helps them to prepare for their future learning and the eventual move to school.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff do not rigorously use information from monitoring the progress of specific groups of children to support the highest level of outcomes for all children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the use of information from the precise monitoring of progress made by specific groups of children to inform planning that helps promote outstanding outcomes for all children.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children during the inspection.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the nursery manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery manager. She looked at documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working at the nursery.
- The inspector spoke to a number of parents during the inspection and took their views into account.

Inspector

Cathryn Clarricoates

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

Safeguarding is effective. Staff have a secure knowledge of the signs and symptoms of abuse and how to report any concerns regarding children's welfare or safety. The management team supports all staff well to continually develop their professional development and share good practice. Staff work effectively with other professionals and agencies to help address any gaps in learning. Information is effectively exchanged to help ensure that there is consistency in children's care and learning. Staff, parents and children are consulted about the quality of the nursery provision and their views are taken into account to support improvements.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff provide many opportunities for babies and young children to investigate a range of stimulating and well-presented resources, including natural materials. Older children enjoy using their imaginations while playing with water outdoors, as they pretend to take their sit-and-ride toys through a car wash. Staff encourage their interests and provide a commentary and introduce new vocabulary. Children concentrate for significant periods of time as they delightedly create fairy houses, using stones, sticks and leaves from the garden. Staff engage playfully with children and make the most of opportunities to promote their problem-solving skills. For example, children are encouraged to try different ways of pouring water into sections of drainpipe to find out what makes the water flow faster or slower. Children are motivated, happy and enthusiastic learners.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

Settling-in sessions are extremely carefully tailored to help support children to settle quickly and very well. Staff encourage babies to point to photographs of their family members. Staff speak very warmly and knowledgeably about their families and activities that they enjoy at home. This helps children feel a very strong sense of belonging and emotional security. Parents comment that the nursery provides a 'home from home' for their children with exceptional individual care from staff. They highly value the nutritious meals provided. Children thoroughly enjoy developing their physical skills outside in the fresh air every day. They learn to take age-appropriate risks. For example, children help each other to move tyres closer together so that they can balance on these and jump off safely. Very young children delight in helping with small tasks, such as tidying away toys. Staff frequently give specific praise to celebrate and support children's achievements.

Outcomes for children are good

Children of all ages make good progress and develop the skills required for the next stage in their learning and their eventual move to school. Older children play very cooperatively together. They are kind and help one another. Babies independently explore resources and equipment to support their interests. Children enjoy frequent local outings which helps to promote their understanding of the wider community. They have many opportunities to practise their excellent social skills during daily routines.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY415762
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	1094508
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	33
Number of children on roll	53
Name of registered person	First Steps Nursery (Lumley) Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP547142
Date of previous inspection	29 May 2015
Telephone number	07594 371849

First Steps in Chester-le-Street, Durham, registered in 2010. The nursery employs eight members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds an appropriate early years qualification at level 5 and six at level 3. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round, except for bank holidays. Sessions are from 7.30am to 6pm, including before- and after-school care. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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