

Little Steps Pre-school

Village Hall, Church Road, North Newton, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA7 0BG



Inspection date

18 January 2018

Previous inspection date

8 December 2014

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		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Strong systems of self-evaluation help the manager and staff team to prioritise improvements that have a positive impact on children's learning. For example, focusing on the adult's role in supporting speech in role play helped all children develop more confidence in communicating their thoughts and ideas, particularly younger ones.
- All children make good progress, relative to their starting points. Effective systems of observation, assessment and tracking help the manager and staff identify any gaps in learning and address these through the planning process.
- Children who have special educational needs (SEN) benefit from the good relationships staff have with parents and with other professionals. Effective communication ensures a consistent approach to planning and monitoring, helping these children to achieve well.
- Children are confident with good self-esteem, and they show through their behaviour that they feel emotionally secure. For example, older children showed younger children how to operate the water fountain and watched to make sure they could manage without help.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff are partially successful in involving parents in their children's learning. Some parents now understand the importance of their contribution in helping staff to monitor children's progress. However, staff do not involve all parents effectively.
- Activities that help children to develop their understanding of weight, shape and measure lack challenge for older children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop more effective systems to involve all parents in their children's learning
- provide more challenge for older children as they learn about space, shape and measure.

Inspection activities

- The inspector had discussions with parents, children, staff and the manager.
- The inspector and the deputy manager conducted a joint observation of an activity.
- The inspector observed staff and children engaged in learning activities, indoors and outside.
- The inspector sampled required documentation, including safeguarding procedures and assessments of children's progress.

Inspector

Julie Neal

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The management committee supports the manager and staff well, and encourages their professional development. The manager effectively monitors the positive impact of any changes on children's learning. For example, following workshops about the learning environment, the manager and staff evaluated the different ways older and younger children used space and resources, and made changes. For instance, they observed how the two-year-olds had little interest in building with bricks, but enjoyed moving and transporting these and other small objects. They now make sure there are a good variety of small items, with a range of bags and boxes available for children to carry them. Safeguarding is effective. The manager and staff have a good understanding of local safeguarding procedures. They know what to do to help protect children from harm.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff plan interesting and challenging activities that encourage children's learning well. Staff effectively involve children in planning what they do, which encourages them to be keen participants. For example, older children talked excitedly about the space rocket experiment they planned with staff, and the ingredients they needed to make sure it 'blasts off' properly. Staff use their very good knowledge of individual children and their interests to help them achieve and make progress. For example, younger children who are fascinated by cars designed racing tracks in the shaving foam, developing the skills they will need later on for writing. Staff use their good communication skills very well to extend children's developing speech, exploring and using new language. For example, while making spacesuits, children talked about astronauts, gravity and the moon.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children's behaviour is very good. They understand why there are rules, and confidently remind each other not to break them. For example, children exploring the lunar landscape made sure that there were never more than three at a time, as this allowed sufficient space to investigate safely. Additionally, children took care to make sure everybody had a turn, using a timer to ensure fairness. Children enjoy being active, indoors and outside. They move with confidence and good control as they climb, balance and dance, and show good awareness of each other's space to keep safe.

Outcomes for children are good

Children of all ages learn good skills that help to prepare them for their next stage in learning, including going to school. They are very independent. For example, two-year-old children proudly announced they had zipped up their coats without help. Older children confidently share their ideas with staff, who encourage them to try these. For example, updating the weatherboard as the weather changed during the day.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY219553
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	1070447
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	19
Name of registered person	Little Steps Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP903923
Date of previous inspection	8 December 2014
Telephone number	07745 229438

Little Steps Pre-school registered in 1978 and is run by a parents' committee. It operates from North Newton Village Hall in North Newton, Somerset. The pre-school is open on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 9am to 3pm and on Wednesday from 9am to midday, term time only. It receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are three members of staff. The manager holds an early years qualification at level 4 and two members of staff hold a qualification at level 3.

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