

Inspection of First Steps Community Playgroup

C/O Stoke Hill First School, Stoke Hill, Exeter, Devon EX4 7DB

Inspection date: 19 November 2019

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

The manager and staff at the playgroup develop warm and caring relationships with children and their families. Parents comment that they feel welcome at the setting and that information about their children's learning is shared regularly with them. Staff know the children well and respond to their interests, extending their learning as they play together. Children choose to build rockets from construction equipment and staff support children's understanding of number as they practise counting backwards from five. Where children attend the setting for breakfast club or after school, staff engage with them and make links with their schools. This helps children to feel happy and settled. The manager identifies ways to improve the provision, focusing on the importance of developing children's speaking and listening skills. Staff carefully assess children's development and plan activities to support children to move forward in their learning. Younger children learn to name familiar objects as they play with baby dolls, developing their personal skills as they dress and care for them. Older children benefit from challenges from staff. For example, they experiment with enthusiasm when wrapping a 'Humpty Dumpty' egg in different materials to test their ideas on whether it will crack.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Staff ensure that parents are kept up to date with how their children are progressing. They informally discuss children's learning from day to day as well as arranging parents' evenings to share children's development. Staff identify children's individual developmental needs and work in partnership with other professionals. This helps children to make good progress.
- The manager ensures that staff attend training and develop professionally, and share their practice and ideas with each other. As a result, staff have developed strategies to improve children's communication skills. Staff teach children songs and rhymes and use signs and gestures to help with their interactions. They listen carefully to children's ideas and help them to build new vocabulary, such as 'zooming rockets'. Staff support children to hear the sound at the start of their name and children enjoy recognising and making animal sounds as they develop listening and communications skills.
- Staff develop ways to support children's emotional well-being as they join the setting and then move on to school. They develop partnerships with local schools, in order for children and families to benefit from provision before and after school. Parents comment on how the consistency of staff ensures that their children feel secure. Staff develop individual approaches to help children to adjust and settle in at the setting, such as toys that travel with the child between home and the playgroup.
- Staff develop children's literacy skills effectively and, as a result, children demonstrate an enjoyment for stories. Children enjoy sharing books with their

friends in the reading corner and concentrate as they sit together in a small group while staff read to them. Children enjoy making marks as they paint at an easel, learning to handle brushes and mix paints. Staff show children how to practise early writing skills as they use their fingers to draw lines in dry sand.

- Staff make effective use of routines to develop children's independence. They teach the children about hygiene as they wash and dry their hands. Children develop coordination as they carefully carry and use jugs to pour drinks of milk and water. Staff encourage children to learn to put their own coats on themselves and they praise children's efforts as they learn new skills.
- Staff provide opportunities for children to learn about traditions and festivals to help them gain an understanding of each other and the wider world. Children celebrate Bonfire Night and use their creative skills to make bright paintings. Staff provide some activities for children to hear other languages. However, they do not provide regular opportunities for children to develop and use their home languages in play and learning.
- Children use a variety of different outdoor spaces leading from the playgroup as well as in the school grounds. They enjoy being active as they run around navigating cones in the playground. Staff introduce singing games outside in a group circle where children use actions and learn to move in different ways. At times, however, staff do not provide sufficient opportunities for children to choose freely and become independent in their learning outside. As a result, some children lose engagement in their play.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager ensures that staff are kept up to date with training to help them understand how to keep children safe. Policies are in place to help staff understand what to do if they are concerned about a child. Staff have a secure knowledge of the signs that a child could be at risk and have an understanding of wider safeguarding concerns. The provider ensures that staff recruited are suitable to work with children. The manager ensures that there are appropriate risk assessments in place to protect children from harm.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- develop more opportunities to celebrate the diversity of languages spoken in the setting and for children to develop and use their home languages
- improve the opportunities for children to choose and explore resources for themselves as they learn outside.

Setting details

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| Unique reference number | 105976 |
| Local authority | Devon |
| Inspection number | 10062518 |
| Type of provision | Childcare on non-domestic premises |
| Registers | Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register |
| Day care type | Full day care |
| Age range of children | 2 to 11 |
| Total number of places | 24 |
| Number of children on roll | 107 |
| Name of registered person | First Steps Community Playgroup Committee |
| Registered person unique reference number | RP521271 |
| Telephone number | 01392 251 885 |
| Date of previous inspection | 16 December 2015 |

Information about this early years setting

First Steps Community Playgroup registered in 2000. It operates from the grounds of Stoke Hill Infant School in Exeter. The playgroup is open from 9am to 3pm on weekdays during term time only, and offers wrap-around care for school-aged children from 7.30am to 9am and 3pm to 6pm. A holiday club runs from 8am to 5pm. There are eight members of staff working regularly with children. Of these, one holds an early years qualification to level 6, six hold level 3 and one holds level 2. The playgroup receives funding for early years education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Stephanie Wright

Inspection activities

- The inspector spoke to a number of parents in order to gain feedback about the provision.
- The inspector spoke to the manager, staff and children during the inspection.
- The inspector made a joint observation of practice with the manager.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation, including policies, children's tracking and records of the suitability of staff.
- The inspector observed practice both indoors and outdoors.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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