

Inspection of First Steps Day Nursery

44 Compton Road, Shepton Mallet, Somerset BA4 5QT

Inspection date: 30 June 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children have fun in the well-equipped outdoor area. Older children are enthusiastic about the new football goals. They show good skills in kicking and aiming the ball to score penalties against a member of staff.

Younger children enjoy being with their older siblings now that restrictions due to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic have eased and they can play together again. Older children show care and concern when playing with others or exploring nature. They hold a spider carefully on their hands to let others see and remind younger ones to be gentle, so they do not squash it. The children are fascinated by the thread the spider spins and tell adults that it uses this to make its web and to get down from high places. They then return the spider carefully to the nearby plant.

Indoors, children build a complicated train track with ramps, twists and turns. They let the toy trains run down the track, comparing how fast they can make the engines go.

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

- Staff support children's communication well. They recognised that some children were not making the progress that they were capable of and introduced interventions to help. Children have fun joining in small group times, singing, signing, playing guessing games and learning new words. All children, including those with special educational needs and/ or disabilities or those who are learning English as an additional language, have made great improvements in their speaking and listening skills.
- Leaders and managers have made many changes since the last inspection, including constructing a new building, changes to staff and reducing the numbers of children who attend. They have supported staff, children, and families well through these changes. For example, they encourage staff to access training to gain more skills and knowledge to improve the quality of teaching further. For parents, they have encouraged staff to maintain two-way communication with them throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and the changes. Staff send parents photographs and videos with activity suggestions for what children can continue learning at home and keep parents informed about any changes.
- Key persons know children well and provide play activities to follow what interests children. For example, when children ask to play with the dough, staff help them to make it. Staff provide simple picture and word recipes and the ingredients needed. They talk with children about how the flour changes when water is added. They ask questions but on occasion they do not leave sufficient

time for children to respond or think of an answer. They make sure children at the activity all get a turn to stir the mixture. However, staff do not spot when other children want to join in.

- Children are confident, make choices about what they would like to do and recognise when they might need help. Children choose to play in the nature area. Younger children balance across the wooden logs and ask for adult support to help them jump down from the highest one, landing safely. Older children discuss different topics with staff. They talk about whether lava is hotter than the sun. Children agree with staff suggestions that they could look at books or the computer to see if they can find this out. Children show curiosity and understanding that books and technology can provide more knowledge.
- Children's behaviour is good, overall. Staff support children to share and take turns. Children show care and consideration for others and use conventions, such as please and thank you at mealtimes. However, there are occasions when staff miss chances to support well-being and care better. For example, at lunchtime, although children can choose when they would like to eat, sometimes there is no space available and children are disappointed as they must wait.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers make sure staff complete updated training for safeguarding. Staff know what to do if they have concerns about children's welfare. Staff also know who to contact if they have concerns about the wider safeguarding issues around child sexual exploitation and extremist views. Staff understand how to make a referral or contact other agencies if they have a concern about the behaviour of an adult. Staff carry out risk assessments to keep children safe. They provide places for children to play, rest and sleep. Although children do have cots and sleep mats, staff do not always use these for sleeping children as well as they could.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- ensure staff support children in ways that help engage them in different activities, including providing sufficient time for children to think and express their ideas
- improve routines to make sure that children's needs are met more effectively.

Setting details

Unique reference number	142796
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10197566
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 5
Total number of places	42
Number of children on roll	87
Name of registered person	First Steps Childcare Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP527920
Telephone number	01749 346733
Date of previous inspection	13 February 2017

Information about this early years setting

First Steps Day Nursery is privately owned. It registered in 1993. It is located in Shepton Mallet, Somerset. The nursery offers care from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday all year round, except public holidays. There are 14 members of staff who work with the children. Of these, four hold appropriate childcare qualifications at level 6, two hold appropriate childcare qualifications at level 5 and one at level 4, and four staff hold appropriate childcare qualifications at level 3. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Anita McKelvey

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk to see how staff plan a curriculum to meet children's needs and development.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager to look at the quality of teaching.
- Parents' views were gathered from speaking with the inspector and through written testimonies.
- Children talked with the inspector about what they liked doing at their nursery and what they had learnt.

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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