

Inspection of Footsteps Ponteland

Ponteland Community Primary School, Callerton Lane, Ponteland, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE20 9EY

Inspection date: 17 March 2022

The quality and standards of early years provision

This inspection

Met

Previous inspection

Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

This provision meets requirements

Children benefit from a wide range of fun, exciting and challenging experiences at this friendly and inclusive setting. For instance, they engage in birdwatching with staff and make displays of the birds they identify. Children make potions with herbs, such as rosemary and lavender, from bushes in the enclosed garden. They gather leaves on walks to make pictures with on their return. Staff are warm, caring and kind. They form lovely relationships with the children, who are happy, settled and secure. Children are enthusiastic and excited about the activities on offer. For example, children eagerly create a pretend restaurant and cook their own pizzas. They engage in their roles as they pretend to be kings and queens during imaginary play.

Children are confident and are growing in independence. For example, they learn to cut up their own fruit at snack time and choose what they want to play with next. A water butt in the garden enables children to access water independently to make mud pies. Children's behaviour is good. Secure routines and gentle reminders from staff help to support positive behaviour. Children learn to take turns when they play board games. They help draw up the rules for the setting, with the support of staff.

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

- Children confidently help to organise toys and resources at the setting. For example, they choose to turn the role-play corner from a veterinary practice into a classroom. Staff follow children's interests and take their lead in play. They provide registers and books, so children can pretend to be at school and practise early writing. Children are encouraged to hang up their own coats and bags. They collect, tidy up and put away their toys and resources.
- Staff use lots of language around the children and encourage detailed conversations. This helps support children's developing communication and language skills. Staff promote a love of books and provide warm and comfortable spaces for children to share stories together. There is strong support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Managers provide training to staff on sign language. They support them to understand relevant expectations of children's behaviour in relation to their age or stage of development.
- There is strong support for children's physical development. Children climb on equipment and use the slide outside. They swing from ropes and concentrate well while they practise their football skills. Children lift and roll large tyres. They use these to balance on and jump from. Children strengthen their smaller muscles through activities with collage and craft materials. They develop

coordination as they fill and empty containers with soil.

- Screen time at the setting is limited and children are encouraged instead to explore with their senses, for example, through investigating with water or shaving foam. Children have daily access to fresh air and exercise. Staff encourage them to learn about nature and how to care for the natural environment. For example, children go on nature walks and explore insects through a 'bug hotel'. They enjoy a range of healthy and nutritious snacks. Children enjoy eating these together at picnic benches outside.
- The setting has established a very strong relationship with the neighbouring school. Setting and school staff work well together to help provide a joined-up approach to support children's development. Staff at the setting aim to complement children's learning at school by providing activities linked to current school themes or projects. For example, when children learn to care for caterpillars at school, staff at the setting follow up this interest by providing resources to help make mosaic pictures of butterflies.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Parents praise the setting for its good systems of communication, the friendliness of staff and the wide range of activities available to children. Staff gather the views of parents and reflect well on the experiences for children. They use this information to help plan continuous improvements.
- There is robust support for the manager through the setting's wider organisation. The manager, in turn, provides very effective support for her staff team through training, supervision meetings, observations and constructive feedback. There is a strong focus on staff well-being. Staff are encouraged to complete a questionnaire about job satisfaction and achievements. All staff work together well as a team. They are dedicated and passionate about the service they provide.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager has a robust understanding of her responsibility in relation to safeguarding. All staff complete safeguarding training and hold current first-aid certificates. They keep up to date with any changes in legislation and are aware of broader safeguarding issues. Staff know what might cause them to be concerned about a child. They know who to contact and the procedure to follow to help keep children safe. Staff help children to learn how to keep themselves safe and healthy. For example, they encourage them to wash their hands before meals and support them to play safely on the slide outside.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2580293
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10226030
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Out-of-school day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	3 to 11
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	22
Name of registered person	Footsteps Children's Service Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP909252
Telephone number	07943 570 258
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Footsteps Ponteland registered in 2020. The club employs four members of childcare staff. Of these, two hold childcare qualifications at level 4, and one holds a qualification at level 3. The club opens Monday to Friday, from 3pm until 6pm, during school term time only.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Julie Foers

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 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 welcomed the inspector and showed her around the setting. The manager and staff discussed with the inspector the resources and activities provided for children.
- The inspector observed play opportunities for children, indoors and outdoors.
- The inspector reviewed a sample of documents. This included evidence about staff suitability and training.
- The inspector spoke to parents to gather their views on the setting.

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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