

Inspection of Little Stars at First Steps

First Steps Outreach Centre, Princess Street, Accrington, Lancashire BB5 1SP

Inspection date: 8 July 2022

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

Children are happy and settled. They have strong relationships with all the staff in the setting. This helps children to feel secure and confident. Younger children enjoy time with their key person for cuddles and reassurance. Children take part in activities which follow their interests. For example, they play with firefighter dressing-up resources and use cardboard tubes in their role play, after a child recently showed an interest in this. Children are supported in their behaviour by staff using positive reinforcement and praise for good behaviour.

Children arrive excited to begin their day. They find their friends and begin to play, with the support of welcoming staff. Children work together with peers in the construction area, pretending to be builders and building houses. Children display high levels of self-confidence and self-esteem. Older children confidently greet new people and are happy to talk to them about their experiences at nursery. For example, children in the pre-school room talk about how the sand needs to be wet to build sandcastles.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, parents do not come into the building when dropping off and collecting children. However, staff use methods, such as online learning journals, to ensure that parents are kept up to date with their children's learning and development.

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

- In the main, the manager has a clear focus on the curriculum. Children's learning is based around social development, physical abilities and communication skills. However, staff are not always clear about the intent of the learning for individual activities. This limits their ability to specifically build this learning provided as part of the wider curriculum.
- Managers monitor staff performance through regular supervisions and observing practice. However, plans for the professional development of staff are not precisely targeted to help raise the quality of teaching and ensure there is clear intent for learning.
- Staff gather children's starting points from parents. They use this information well to consider children's interests, development and next steps in learning.
- Children's physical skills are challenged regularly. They benefit from weekly forest school sessions, where they have the chance to explore environments that they would not normally be exposed to. They explore flowers and plant vegetables, which broadens their learning experiences. As a result, overall, children have access to a meaningful curriculum which supports their individual learning needs.
- Parents speak highly about the care, friendliness and support offered by staff.

Many families have been attending for a number of years. Parents comment on how well the manager supports them in providing professional support and advice. As a result, children benefit from consistency between home and the setting.

- Staff use positive behaviour strategies to support children to learn right and wrong. They encourage children to take turns, and they listen and praise children for their efforts and achievements. This helps children to build good levels of self-esteem and be confident to try new things.
- Children learn how to keep themselves healthy. Staff encourage children to manage tasks for themselves at snack time. Children prepare their own snack, for example cutting and peeling fruit and pouring drinks. Children have plenty of opportunities for fresh air and exercise.
- The support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is good. Staff quickly identify children who need support. They liaise with other professionals and the local authority to create targeted plans to ensure children make good progress.
- The manager and staff value different cultures and implement these into the curriculum. Children visit the local mosque and they celebrated the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. As a result, children develop a sense of belonging in the setting and broaden their experiences.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff understand how to keep children safe. They receive up-to-date training and can accurately identify the possible signs that a child may be at risk of harm. They know the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child, including issues such as radicalisation. Staff complete regular risk assessments of the indoor and outdoor environments, to ensure children's well-being and safety. The manager follows effective recruitment and supervision procedures to ensure staff working with children are suitable to do so.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- develop adult-led activities further to have a sharper focus on the learning intent and consider the knowledge and skills each individual child needs to acquire
- strengthen peer observations and supervisions to ensure that training needs are identified which link to each staff member's individual goals.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY482813
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10231275
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	46
Name of registered person	Adventure Hyndburn Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP523296
Telephone number	01254 232393
Date of previous inspection	19 September 2016

Information about this early years setting

Little Stars at First Steps registered in 2014. The nursery employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and one holds a qualification at level 6. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions are from 9am until midday and from 1pm until 4pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Stacey Wendrenski

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 inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.

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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