

# Inspection of Next Steps Childcare Centre

The Royal Bath & West Showground, SHEPTON MALLET, Somerset BA4 6QL

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Inspection date: 29 June 2022

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## **Overall effectiveness**

**Inadequate**

The quality of education

**Inadequate**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Inadequate**

Personal development

**Inadequate**

Leadership and management

**Inadequate**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

## What is it like to attend this early years setting?

### The provision is inadequate

Children's safety and welfare in the nursery are compromised due to significant weaknesses in leadership and management. For example, the provider has failed to identify that staff do not fully understand their own roles and responsibilities to safeguard children. Staff do not have a good enough knowledge of the signs or symptoms which may indicate a child is suffering or at risk of harm. They do not know the procedure to respond to allegations against staff.

Children do not consistently experience quality interactions with staff. Children wander, disengaged, with little to occupy them. Systems to assess children's progress are weak and ineffective. As a result, staff cannot successfully identify areas in which children need more support, and they do not have a secure understanding of what they want children to learn. Staff do not have high expectations for children. They plan activities which lack focus and are not tailored to meet children's individual needs. Children do not make the progress they are capable of and are at risk of falling behind.

Some staff caring for babies and toddlers do not support children's emerging communication and language or their individual needs. Resources and activities for younger children do not provide challenge or invite engagement. At times, older children's learning is compromised due to ineffective deployment of staff.

Staff are kind and caring and children show they have formed secure relationships with them. Children enjoy physical activity, including 'yoga' and 'wake and shake' sessions and pre-school children particularly enjoy being active in the outdoor area.

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

- Leadership and management of the nursery are poor. The provider does not ensure that all staff have a good understanding of the setting's safeguarding procedures.
- Staff do not know how to identify safeguarding issues and lack knowledge of how to report concerns outside of the nursery. This puts children at potential risk of harm.
- The curriculum is poorly designed. Staff do not have a secure understanding of the curriculum or what they can expect children to achieve. As a result, age-appropriate and meaningful activities are not in place for all children. The quality of interactions and activities provided, especially for babies and younger children, is mediocre.
- Teaching is weak. Interactions during play do not stimulate children's curiosity, interest or excitement. Staff do not extend and build upon what children already know and can do. This does not help children to develop a positive attitude

towards learning.

- Staff do not consistently promote children's communication and language development well. For example, they do not use good questioning skills to encourage the development of language and communication in younger children or use eye contact and gestures to communicate with babies.
- Managers do not ensure staff receive effective support to enable them to carry out their roles and responsibilities, to aid children's learning and development. For example, staff do not receive regular coaching opportunities, and managers do not ensure that any training staff access is targeted to raise improvement. As a result, some staff do not have the skills needed to fulfil their individual roles and are not supported to raise the quality of their practice.
- The deployment of staff requires significant improvement. Leaders do not consider how to deploy staff effectively when working across the different age groups of children. Due to constant staff changes between rooms, staff are not always familiar with the children and fail to recognise their individual needs and support their development.
- The key-person system is not effective. This has a negative impact on children's learning. For example, adequate processes are not in place for part-time staff to share information with each other about children's next stage of development.
- Children who are not progressing as expected are not sufficiently supported. Staff who are aware of a child's delay do not provide activities or experiences that help them narrow the gap in their learning or stage of development.
- Staff share information with parents at handover time. They tell parents about their children's day and keep them informed about things they can do at home to support their children.
- Children happily follow the rules of the nursery, such as not running inside the nursery and sharing with their friends. Staff support older children's independence to put on their own coats and shoes.
- Staff are not alert to potential hazards. For example, when children play outside, they pick up glass and give this to staff, who fail to locate where the glass was found or undertake further checks of the outside area.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The provider does not have sufficient oversight of safeguarding. They have not addressed the gaps in staff's knowledge and understanding of how to keep children safe, despite being aware of them. Staff do not successfully identify risks in the environment and do not notice potential risks as children play. Leaders, who are responsible for safeguarding in the nursery, fail to notify concerns to all the relevant agencies with statutory responsibilities. Some staff understand that they should share any concerns they have about children's welfare. However, they do not know how to escalate their concerns if information that they report is not acted on. In addition, they do not know what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of a colleague. Not all staff are aware of the need to be alert to children arriving with unexplained bruising and marks.

## What does the setting need to do to improve?

**The provision is inadequate and Ofsted intends to take enforcement action.**

**We will issue a Welfare Requirements Notice requiring the provider to:**

	Due date
ensure all staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues and that safeguarding notifications are completed and reported to appropriate agencies with statutory responsibility	01/08/2022
ensure staff are alert and can identify signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect, including unexplained bruising or marks	01/08/2022
put in place effective risk assessments that identify hazards and implement appropriate safety measures so that children are not exposed to unacceptable risks	01/08/2022
implement effective systems for training, supervision and coaching to support staff in their ongoing professional development and to promote consistently good teaching and learning	01/08/2022
deploy staff effectively to ensure that the needs of all children are met	01/08/2022
develop an effective key-person system that supports all staff to meet children's needs.	01/08/2022

**To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:**

	Due date
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plan a challenging curriculum which is age-appropriate and provides activities that focus on what children need to learn next based on their emerging interests and needs	01/08/2022
ensure staff consistently promote children's communication and language development.	01/08/2022

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY263811
<b>Local authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	10244093
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	0 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	46
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	66
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Next Steps Childcare Limited
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP901889
<b>Telephone number</b>	01749 346 808
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	30 May 2017

## Information about this early years setting

Next Steps Childcare Centre registered in 2003. It is located near Shepton Mallet, Somerset. The nursery is open Monday to Friday, from 8am to 6pm all year round except for bank holidays. The nursery employs 14 members of staff. Of these, nine staff hold appropriate early years qualifications, including three members of staff qualified at level 6, three at level 5, and three at level 3. In addition, the nursery employs a cook and housekeeper. Funded early years education is provided for children aged two, three and four years.

## Information about this inspection

**Inspector**  
Lin Harvey

## 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.
- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The inspector and the manager completed a learning walk across all areas of the nursery to understand how the early years provision and the curriculum are organised.
- Two joint observations were carried out by the inspector and the owner's nominated member of staff. They discussed the impact of teaching on children's learning.
- The inspector held discussions with staff, children and the management team at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector spoke to parents and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at a sample of the nursery's documents, including evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery and safeguarding records.
- A meeting was held between the inspector and the nursery manager/owner/chair of committee.

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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