

# Inspection of First Steps Oldbury

Church Hall Edward Street, Oldbury, West Midlands B68 8RH

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Inspection date:

16 September 2022

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## **Overall effectiveness**

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## **Requires improvement**

The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

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

### **The provision requires improvement**

Despite the weaknesses in the quality of education, children settle well and have their care needs met by a nurturing staff team. Babies enjoy a calm and nurturing environment. They demonstrate that they feel secure by seeking out their key person for comfort and cuddles when needed. Toddlers enjoy the company of other children. Pre-school children are beginning to build friendships with their peers and play cooperatively together, developing their turn-taking skills. Staff work closely with families from the outset to support children to settle and become familiar with the nursery. This helps to promote children's emotional well-being.

Children of all ages develop their physical skills. They enjoy the time they spend outdoors. For example, babies climb up small steps to come down the slide. Toddlers explore throwing balls into a bucket, and pre-school children enjoy using the swing, pushing their legs in and out to go higher.

Children are becoming independent learners. They generally have good attitudes to learning and want to take part in activities. However, staff do not focus sufficiently on embedding children's key areas of development, to build firm foundations for their future learning. They do not always plan and prepare activities well. This means that children do not make as much progress as they could.

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

- Leaders do not have a good enough understanding of what they want children to learn. They have not yet implemented a curriculum that is ambitious and focuses on all children acquiring new skills and knowledge. As a result, the learning and development opportunities available are not effectively sequenced. At times, children remain unmotivated by the activities on offer, as staff fail to capture their curiosity or spark their creativity successfully. This has an impact on children's overall engagement and behaviour.
- Staff do not have a clear enough intent of what they want individual children to learn. Activities are more in response to children's interests and do not support what they need to learn next. As a result, activities are not always challenging enough to help children make progress in all areas of their learning.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well. Staff listen to parent concerns and seek advice promptly. They recognise and identify any concerns early on and work closely with the local authority to get additional support as needed.
- Children are gaining some awareness of healthy lifestyles, such as the importance of washing hands before eating. The nursery provides healthy food choices. Staff sit with children at mealtimes and encourage them to serve themselves, to help develop their independence. Staff praise children for their

efforts and achievements. This raises their self-esteem.

- Staff throughout the nursery help children to develop a love of reading and singing. This in turn supports children's language and extension of vocabulary. Children enjoy listening and engaging with staff as they enthusiastically sing songs. For example, babies take turns to choose a song from the 'song bag' and join in with words and actions. Children who speak English as an additional language are supported because staff take time to get to know some words in their home languages and include these in activities.
- Staff support children's emotional development. Children have formed secure bonds with key staff. For example, they comfort young children and give them cuddles and reassurance when they become distressed. Staff working with the older children offer regular praise and encouragement to boost their confidence. However, effective behaviour management strategies have not yet been embedded to ensure they are used consistently by all staff.
- Parents speak highly of the friendly staff in the setting. They say they value the detailed information they receive, both in person and online, about what their children play with and the activities they have experienced during the day. Parents feel included in their children's learning journey.
- Staff receive mandatory training. They receive regular supervision and feel supported by leaders. However, there are not yet effective monitoring arrangements in place to ensure the quality of teaching remains at least good.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff are clear about their responsibility to keep children safe. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that staff are suitable for their roles. Risk assessments are effective. Staff check all areas of the nursery each day to ensure children play in a safe environment. Leaders and staff attend regular child protection training to keep their knowledge and skills up to date. They have a good understanding of the indicators that a child is at risk of harm and are clear on the procedures to follow should they have any concerns about a child's welfare.

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

**To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:**

	Due date
improve the quality of teaching and learning to a consistently good level and ensure activities are pitched at the right level of challenge for all children	16/03/2023

improve monitoring systems to ensure that the curriculum is securely implemented into practice and that staff provide an appropriate level of support and challenge to help build on what children need to learn next	16/03/2023
ensure the intention for the curriculum is understood and consistently delivered by all staff so that children receive experiences that sequence and extend their individual learning needs to build on prior knowledge.	16/03/2023

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

- continue to embed effective behaviour management strategies, to ensure that children are deeply engaged in their play and learn to recognise how their feelings and behaviour impact on others.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY480750
<b>Local authority</b>	Sandwell
<b>Inspection number</b>	10236444
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory 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>	63
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	32
<b>Name of registered person</b>	First Steps Oldbury Partnership
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP533901
<b>Telephone number</b>	07956352684
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	24 October 2016

## Information about this early years setting

First Steps Oldbury registered in 2014. The nursery employs 11 members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds qualified teacher status and eight hold a level 3 qualification. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Carli Mccallin

## Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the setting and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- A meeting was held between the inspector and the manager.
- The inspector looked at a selection of documentation and checked the suitability of staff working with the children.
- The inspector spoke to children, staff and parents at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together. They observed staff's teaching practice during activities.

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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