

Inspection of First Steps Nursery Collegiate Academy Trust

Shireland Collegiate Academy, Waterloo Road, SMETHWICK, West Midlands B66
4ND

Inspection date: 26 January 2023

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 are happy and confidently separate from their parents on arrival. They have established strong bonds with the staff and can express their wants and needs. Staff encourage children to be kind to one another and to demonstrate respectful behaviour. Children receive praise for their contributions and 'high fives' as rewards for participation within a group activity or for an individual achievement.

Children explore a wide range of activities. Babies and toddlers delight in discovering a tray of animals frozen in ice and attempt to free the animals using paint brushes and warm water. Older children work together to problem-solve when completing puzzles.

Children have access to a large inviting garden area that is resourced well and supports the development of large and small physical skills. For example, bikes and scooters are available, and a natural digging and discovery area that contains plastic dinosaurs is planted with lavender to stimulate the children's senses. Children chase bubbles in the wind with great excitement. Staff support this activity by singing songs as the bubbles are floating in the sky and encourage the children to join in.

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

- Staff deliver an ambitious curriculum that is adapted to meet the needs of all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Although learning is provided across all areas of the curriculum, staff do not provide enough opportunities to help children enhance their understanding of mathematics.
- Children have access to a wide range of mark-making materials that help them to develop early writing skills. For example, they manipulate play dough with encouragement from staff through the delivery of dough disco songs. Children follow the instructions in the songs and exercise the muscles in their hands. This helps them to develop the strength required when holding a pencil to form marks to which they can give meaning.
- Staff ensure that all children are exposed to a language-rich environment to support communication needs. Children access inviting and stimulating book areas that contain props to support story telling. Younger children take part in 'What's in the box?' singing activity as they select a toy that represents a song. Children and staff use varied actions to support children's understanding of spoken language.
- Staff teach children about environmental issues. For example, the older children enjoy taking part in an activity where they sort through and remove plastic waste from a water tray containing toy animals. The staff talk to the children

about the importance of recycling and the positive impact this can have on the planet and all living creatures.

- Staff work hard to help children establish healthy habits. Children are encouraged to select from a healthy snack bar twice a day and are provided with picture prompts when handwashing or brushing teeth. Staff talk to the children about the choices they make and what the benefits of these healthy choices are.
- Staff help children to be prepared for school by establishing routines that support independence. Children collect their own coats, hats and scarves when going out into the garden. Staff demonstrate how to fasten zips, buttons and poppers and children are keen to have a go and practise these important skills.
- Managers and leaders encourage the well-being of staff and parents. A parent pantry is available in the reception area, which is regularly stocked with food, toys and clothes for families to help themselves to. Staff are also provided with an area where they can access well-being baskets that contain sanitary products and healthy snacks.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Managers have effective procedures in place to ensure that children are safeguarded. This includes safer recruitment processes with thorough induction procedures that ensure individuals working with children are safe to do so. Records are in place and the continued suitability of employees is checked as appropriate. Staff complete effective risk assessments and take steps to keep children safe when at nursery. Staff receive regular supervisions and are given plenty of opportunities to share any safeguarding concerns. Staff pay particular attention to children's attendance. They record any absences in line with the setting's policies and procedures and make well-being calls when necessary. Staff receive effective training and demonstrate a good understanding of reporting any concerns about a child's welfare or the behaviour of a colleague.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- make the most of opportunities for children to explore maths in the environment and enhance their emerging mathematical understanding.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY280454
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10262872
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	60
Name of registered person	Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust
Registered person unique reference number	RP523733
Telephone number	0121 558 8086
Date of previous inspection	6 April 2017

Information about this early years setting

First Steps Nursery Collegiate Academy Trust registered in 2004. The nursery employs 13 members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds an appropriate qualification at level 6, seven at level 3 and one at level 2. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 5.45pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Nichola Patel

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 joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- Children spoke to/communicated with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation on a group activity with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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