

Inspection of Footsteps Nursery & Pre-School

11 Albany Road, LEIGHTON BUZZARD, Bedfordshire LU7 1NS

Inspection date: 17 February 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 arrive at the nursery excited and eager to go inside. Staff know all children and families well. They greet them warmly and are welcoming. This helps children to settle, feel safe, and secure. The children enjoy playing outdoors. They spend time using magnifying glasses to look at insects. As they do this, they engage in rich conversations with each other and adults. The children also enjoy counting the insect's legs and talk about, and compare, the various shapes and sizes of them. This supports their understanding of the world and mathematics.

Younger children confidently move around the garden in a range of ways. They jump, crawl and enjoy climbing in and out of cars. They also delight in playing hide and seek with each other. This supports their physical development and social skills. Babies enjoy playing with balls and instruments. They use their increasing physical skills to reach, grab, crawl and shake them. As they do this they say 'shake, shake'. This supports their physical skills and their emerging communication and language development.

Staff are good role models. They teach children the nursery rules and the importance of being kind. All children behave well, are motivated to learn, and make good progress. This ensures they are ready and well prepared for their next stage in learning.

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

- The dedicated team plan and organise the curriculum well. They put children's interests at the heart of everything they do. The managers and staff team support children to become curious, confident, and independent with a love of the outdoors. The intent, implementation and impact of the curriculum are evident throughout the nursery.
- Children develop good literacy skills. A wide range of books are available throughout the nursery. Staff provide a book swap, where children can bring in their own books from home and swap them for ones from the nursery to enhance their early reading skills.
- Children visit places of local interest, including the local farm. They visit residential care homes, where children interact and sing with the residents. Children develop a sense of community. These experiences ensure children have a wide range of exciting opportunities that support their cultural capital.
- Leaders and managers are duly focused on supporting staff's well-being, and provide them with valuable professional development to extend their knowledge and skills. Managers support new staff through a thorough induction process. As a result, all staff, including those new to the role, are very knowledgeable about the policies and procedures of the nursery.

- Children are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles. They learn about the importance of good oral hygiene and practise the correct way to brush teeth and understand that they become 'germ free' when they wash their hands.
- Children are given many opportunities to enjoy fresh air and exercise. They show growing competency in manoeuvring around obstacles on their bicycles. This helps enhance children's understanding of good health and well-being.
- Children are confident communicators. Babies babble with delight as they play with the dry rice. Staff use single words, such as 'more' and 'pour', to build on their vocabulary and understanding. Toddlers use simple phrases, such as 'more please', as they request another drink or more food. Pre-school children speak with increased confidence. For example, they introduce themselves to the inspector and relish telling her their names, ages and what they enjoy doing while at the setting.
- Overall, children make good progress in their communication skills. However, staff do not always make the best of questioning techniques or give children time to process and answer questions that they are asked.
- Children have opportunities to explore their local community. However, staff do not widen children's opportunities to learn about the diversity that exists in their locality and further afield.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a good knowledge of a range of safeguarding and child protection matters, including the awareness of the signs of radicalisation. Staff know the procedure to follow to report concerns about a child's welfare or if an allegation has been made against a colleague. Leaders have effective recruitment processes in place and do ongoing checks on the suitability of staff who work with children. Staff carry out regular checks of the learning environment, indoors and outdoors, and identify potential hazards that could harm children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support staff to develop their teaching skills, so that they consistently use skilful questioning techniques
- strengthen opportunities for children to learn about cultural diversity in their community and the wider world.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY394420
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	10276258
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 4
Total number of places	45
Number of children on roll	67
Name of registered person	Footsteps Nursery Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP904527
Telephone number	01525 375 679
Date of previous inspection	7 July 2017

Information about this early years setting

Footsteps Nursery & Pre-School registered in 2009 and is located in Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire. The nursery employs 19 members of childcare staff. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above, including the manager who is qualified at degree level. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6.30pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Julia Maynard

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 the curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this was having on children's learning.
- Children spoke to the inspector about what they like doing while at the setting.
- The manager took part in a joint observation of an activity with the inspector.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents by means of written feedback provided for the inspection.

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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