

Inspection of Little Steps (Higham Ferrers) Ltd

5-7 College Street, Higham Ferrers, RUSHDEN, Northamptonshire NN10 8DX

Inspection date:

22 May 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children thrive and are at the heart of everything that the staff do at this exceptional nursery. From the moment they arrive, children engage in rich experiences that motivate and inspire them to learn. Children receive the utmost care and attention from staff. Interactions are sensitive and nurturing. As a result, children demonstrate that they feel safe and secure in the nursery.

Across the nursery, children show a deep engagement in their play. Experiences are highly ambitious and carefully planned to introduce children to the wider world. Young children show delight as they use their whole bodies to explore painting on large rolls of paper. Older children test their creative skills as they design and make flower arrangements. They use their problem-solving skills to decide how best to secure the flowers into the oasis base without the flowers falling over.

Children of all ages become absorbed in books that adults read enthusiastically. The outdoor environment is carefully planned to provide exciting areas for children to explore. Children transport water, mix mud, experiment with bubbles, and share books in the tepee. Staff provide a rich set of experiences in the local community. Children attend owl handling, explore wildlife in the local heritage gardens, and visit the church space to look at the architecture.

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

- Leaders have developed a curriculum that is ambitious for all children. They focus highly on a respectful, nurturing partnership with staff, children and parents. Staff confidently and consistently deliver the curriculum through inspirational teaching. Children learn to understand their emotions. They demonstrate, through excellent behaviours, the positive impact that this has.
- Staff provide children with a wealth of experiences and build on children's wonder of the world. When children plant pansies in the garden, staff use this opportunity to extend children's knowledge of letters and sounds. They say the sound 'p' for petal. Staff encourage children to think for themselves and find out more. For example, they encourage children to feel the soil and roots of the plants. The staff explain that the roots take up rainwater from the soil. Children explore and learn that plants need sunlight, developing their understanding and learning.
- The staff know the children very well and confidently talk about their needs, interests, and development in detail. They plan meaningful activities that extend their learning and practise previously learned skills. Children recall past experiences. For example, when they see a bee, they talk about the drone bee and use the words 'nectar' and 'honey'.
- Staff have high expectations for children's behaviour. They teach children about

different emotions and feelings. When children become upset, staff talk to them about how they are feeling. They give children unlimited time, comfort, and reassurance. Children demonstrate consistently positive attitudes to their play. They are highly motivated to join in with the vast range of activities on offer. As a result, their behaviour is exemplary. Staff teach children about the impact that their different behaviours have on others, and empower children to learn how to say 'stop' and tell an adult.

- Staff provide outstanding support to children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Children with SEND achieve the best possible outcomes. Staff offer support and guidance for parents and ensure that children receive one-to-one support when needed. Other professionals speak of working with the nursery staff, which excels in providing support for children and families.
- The manager is knowledgeable and strives to provide the best care for children and families. Staff work closely with parents to develop supportive relationships and build trust. Parents speak of the 'amazing', 'kind' and 'caring' staff. They talk about the 'fabulous' communication and that their shy children are developing into being 'super confident'. The manager discusses the curriculum goals with parents. Parents state that they feel supported to help understand what their children need to learn and how they can support this at home.
- The manager ensures that the staff receive focused and highly effective support for their professional development. Staff receive regular supervision and attend training to enhance their practice, such as training in communication-friendly settings. Staff consistently report high levels of support. For example, the manager meets with room leaders daily to offer help and discuss events for the day.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a secure knowledge of the types of abuse and signs to look for. All staff understand their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe. They know the procedures to follow if they have a concern regarding a child's well-being. The manager provides safeguarding information at staff meetings to enable staff to keep their knowledge up to date. For example, she discusses safeguarding children with SEND. Robust recruitment and induction procedures are in place to ensure that staff are suitable to carry out their roles. Children are well supervised both in the indoor and outdoor environments to ensure that they remain safe.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY378109
Local authority	North Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10286041
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	0 to 8
Total number of places	99
Number of children on roll	197
Name of registered person	Little Steps (Higham Ferrers) Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP906897
Telephone number	01933 357400
Date of previous inspection	30 October 2017

Information about this early years setting

Little Steps (Higham Ferrers) Ltd registered in 2008 and is located in Higham Ferrers, Northamptonshire. The nursery employs 32 members of childcare staff. Of these, 20 hold early years qualifications between levels 2 and 6, including one with early years teacher status. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, for 51 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 7.45am to 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Caroline Winterton

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 the children to learn.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with the leaders and manager about the leadership and management of the nursery.
- 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 observed the interactions between staff and children.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation 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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