

Inspection of First Steps Oldbury

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

Inspection date: 22 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children happily separate from their parents and are greeted warmly by the friendly staff. They become engaged in their play and make independent choices on what they would like to do. Children learn through a balance of adult-led activities and child-initiated play. All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make good progress. Children display positive behaviour. They are beginning to learn the language of feelings and emotions, which helps them to understand and regulate their behaviour. Children develop good social skills and build friendships with their peers.

Children form strong attachments to their key person and staff. They seek them out for comfort and to proudly show off their achievements. Staff are attentive and give children lots of encouragement and praise, which helps to support their confidence and self-esteem. Babies snuggle up to staff to look at picture books together, and they confidently explore their environment. Staff join in with children's play. Babies copy actions and words modelled to them. For example, they copy staff and hold a pretend telephone to their ear and say 'hello'.

Children are supported in their independence and self-care skills. For example, toddlers are encouraged to pour their own drinks and peel their fruit. They know to put their peelings into the bin. Children follow good hygiene practices, such as washing their hands before eating and after using the toilet.

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

- The provider is dedicated and has worked hard to make improvements since the last inspection. She has a clear vision for the nursery, which is shared by staff. The provider has worked closely with the manager to implement a broad and sequenced curriculum that includes all areas of learning.
- Support for children with SEND is good. The nursery's special educational needs coordinator works well with other professionals to develop individual targets to support each child's development.
- Staff benefit from regular supervision and observations of practice to help identify strengths and areas for improvement. They are provided with targeted training and coaching to strengthen their skills further.
- The provider and the manager have established good partnerships with parents. Staff share information with parents each day, including face-to-face and online. Parents are invited into the nursery to join their children for celebrations and special events. Feedback from parents is positive. However, parents do not receive enough information about what their children have been learning so that they can continue to support their learning at home.
- Children have fun as they develop their creative skills. Pre-school children

explore a range of resources, including glue, tissue paper and lollipop sticks, to create their own interpretation of a duck. They build the muscle control in their hands as they carefully peel and purposefully place stickers onto their artwork.

- Staff hold positive interactions with children to support their communication and language development. They provide a narrative during activities and ask some good questions to support children's thinking and listening skills. However, on occasion, staff do not recognise opportunities during children's play and conversations to extend their learning further.
- Staff help to keep children safe in hot weather by applying sun cream before they go outside to play. However, this routine becomes disorganised, and staff are unsure as to which children have had sun cream applied. Therefore, the transition to outdoor play is prolonged and children become restless waiting to go outside.
- The outdoor area is well resourced, and children thoroughly enjoy their time playing in the fresh air. They develop their core strength as they swing on swings independently and ride on wheeled toys. Children use their imagination in the mud kitchen. They enthusiastically scoop soil into pots and tell the inspector that they are going to add water and make 'chocolate pancakes'.
- Children have opportunities to learn about the world around them. They take part in outings in the community, such as to the local shop where they learn the value of money. Staff help children to develop an awareness of diversity. For example, children learn about festivals and cultures that are different from their own through craft activities, food tasting and discussions.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities in safeguarding children. They are alert to the signs and symptoms that may indicate a child is at risk of harm. Staff know what to do if they have concerns about the welfare of a child or the conduct of a colleague. The provider follows safer recruitment and induction procedures to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. Staff carry out daily checks to ensure that children play in a safe and secure environment.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- increase the information shared with parents about what children are learning, to help parents to continue their children's learning at home
- support staff to improve their understanding of how they can extend children's learning so that all children make the best possible progress
- consider how to embed routines, particularly at transition times, to ensure that children are not waiting for prolonged lengths of time.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY480750
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10259262
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	63
Number of children on roll	57
Name of registered person	First Steps Oldbury Partnership
Registered person unique reference number	RP533901
Telephone number	07956352684
Date of previous inspection	16 September 2022

Information about this early years setting

First Steps Oldbury registered in 2014. The nursery employs 10 members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds a qualification at level 6 and seven hold qualifications at level 3. The nursery is open from Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions are from 7.30am to 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Angela Hulme

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the nursery.
- The provider joined the inspector on a learning walk and discussed how the curriculum is organised.
- The inspector spoke to the provider, staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact on children's learning.
- 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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