

# Inspection of Footsteps Stafford

Newport Road, Stafford ST16 1BA

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Inspection date: 21 June 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
The quality of education	<b>Inadequate</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Inadequate</b>
Personal development	<b>Inadequate</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Inadequate</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

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

### **The provision is inadequate**

Children's safety and welfare is significantly compromised. Recruitment processes do not ensure that newly appointed staff are suitable. Staff lack understanding of their roles and responsibilities, which means that children are not safeguarded. They fail to supervise children properly while they are eating, which puts children's safety at risk. The premises are not adequately maintained, and the provider has failed to ensure that there are basic facilities to meet the needs of children.

The quality of education for younger children is poor. Staff provide very few resources for them to choose to play with. Consequently, some children occupy themselves by pulling themselves up on doors or chairs. Staff fail to recognise the emerging skills children show. They do not provide them with opportunities to practise standing and walking that will help them to make progress in their physical development. Young babies sit down where staff place them. Those who are mobile wander around aimlessly. At times, younger children get bored, and some become upset. That said, older children access a broader range of activities. They take turns in learning how to use tools safely to cut sticks from a branch. Staff have regard for their early mathematical skills. Pre-school children count bolts as they screw together strips of wood and talk about the shapes they have made.

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

- The provider has made several changes to the premises but has failed to ensure that all areas remain fit for purpose and have necessary facilities for staff and children. For example, there is no access to running water in the baby unit. Staff rely on using sanitising gel for handwashing, including after changing children's nappies and when serving them food. Younger children do not have access to toileting facilities. Although a potty is available, this is emptied into a sink that is used by staff for handwashing. These arrangements do not promote children's safety and welfare.
- Managers and staff do not ensure that the premises are suitably clean and hygienic. Nappy-changing mats have torn, which poses a risk of cross infection. Children's bathrooms are dirty, which also impacts on their health.
- Although managers ensure that there are enough staff on site, staff fail to deploy themselves effectively at mealtimes. Young children are not properly supervised while eating because staff are busy completing other tasks or changing children's nappies. This could result in children eating food that is not in line with their dietary requirements or staff not being able to respond promptly if children were to choke.
- Recruitment procedures are not rigorous enough to ensure that all staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their work effectively. Although managers are aware that some staff lack knowledge or experience when being

appointed, they do not provide enough training for them. Staff work directly with children without fully understanding the nursery's policies and procedures. This impacts on the quality of care and safety of children.

- Staff receive some opportunities to meet with managers and receive feedback on the quality of their work. However, managers do not swiftly or accurately identify weaknesses in staffs' teaching and practice. As a result, training and professional development opportunities are not provided at the right time to improve the quality of provision for all children.
- Staff are not alert to children's basic care needs. They do not always recognise or respond to children who have wet clothing or need their noses wiping. On occasions, children play outdoors with no shoes on. Although staff can identify and recognise the risks to their safety, they do not take any action to minimise or remove these.
- Staff do not fully understand or implement the setting's medication policy and procedure. They do not consider children's general health and are not always aware of why they are administering medication to them. This means that children's welfare is not supported.
- Educational programmes do not help children to make good enough progress. Younger children become bored because there are not enough opportunities provided to help them to make progress in their learning. Where activities are provided for children, these do not always consider what children need to learn next.
- Parents speak positively about the nursery. They say that their children are happy and sing songs at home that they have learned. Parents are happy with the information they receive about their child's care.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The deployment of staff is poor. Children's safety is not assured because they are not always properly supervised. Medication procedures are not well enough understood by staff to ensure children's safety and welfare. Managers and staff have a poor regard for hygiene practices, which affects children's welfare. Managers do not ensure that staff who have been recruited to work with children have the necessary knowledge and skills to fulfil their role and meet children's needs. That said, they do carry out and maintain records of the vetting checks completed on all staff. Staff and managers complete some training to keep their knowledge of safeguarding issues up to date. They are alert to signs that could indicate a child is at risk of harm and know the procedures to follow to report any concerns to other agencies.

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

**The provision is inadequate and Ofsted intends to take enforcement action.**

**We will issue a Welfare Requirements Notice requiring the provider to:**

	<b>Due date</b>
implement effective systems to ensure that practitioners, and any other person who may have regular contact with children, are suitable	05/07/2023
provide staff with induction training and continuous professional development opportunities to ensure that they fully understand their roles and responsibilities	05/07/2023
improve the deployment of staff to ensure that children are adequately supervised at all times, including while eating	05/07/2023
ensure that all areas of the premises are fit for purpose and suitable for the ages of children being cared for	05/07/2023
improve hygiene practices and cleanliness of the premises to promote children's health and safety	05/07/2023
ensure that all staff are responsive to and meet children's basic care needs to keep them safe and well	05/07/2023
implement appropriate policies and procedures for administering medication and responding to unwell children to promote every child's health and well-being	05/07/2023
improve the supervision of all staff to effectively monitor their teaching and practice in order to ensure that every child receives at least a good quality of care and education.	05/07/2023

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

	<b>Due date</b>
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improve the educational programmes for the youngest children to provide appropriate activities and experiences that support their development across all areas of learning	31/07/2023
ensure that planning for activities and experiences takes account of children's individual needs, interests and stages of development so that every child makes good progress in their learning.	31/07/2023

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY542647
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10299330
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years 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>	81
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	145
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Footsteps Day Nurseries Limited
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP520741
<b>Telephone number</b>	01785 215347
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	3 February 2022

## Information about this early years setting

Footsteps Stafford registered in 2017 and is located in Stafford. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. There are 33 members of staff employed. Of these, one is qualified to level 6, three are qualified to level 5, 12 are qualified to level 3 and three are qualified to level 2. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Lisa Bennett

## Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk to gather information about how the provision and curriculum are organised.
- The manager and inspector carried out a joint observation to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching to assess the impact of this on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke with the manager and a senior manager about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The inspector spoke to parents and took account of their views.

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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