

Inspection of Footsteps Nursery Hawthorn

The Hawthorns, Walsall Road, LICHFIELD, Staffordshire WS13 8JL

Inspection date: 4 June 2024

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

Staff greet children and their parents warmly. They are kind and caring and listen intently to what children have to tell them. Staff build incredibly strong, trusting relationships with children. This helps children to feel safe, and as a result, they flourish in nursery. Staff plan an ambitious curriculum for all children. They take account of children's interests and their planned next steps, which means that learning opportunities are sharply focused and challenging. As a result, children make good progress.

Children quickly become involved in activities, and the nursery is a hive of activity, both inside and outdoors. Very young children explore mixing paints in plain yoghurt. They use various brushes, such as shaving brushes and household paintbrushes, to make marks on paper. Children enjoy pretending to be doctors and nurses. They carefully bandage the staff's arms, pretend to administer injections and give medicine to make them feel better. Pre-school children show great enjoyment when planting seeds as they learn about the life cycle of plants. They carefully place seeds in pots of soil and, using rulers, they make sure the seeds are two centimetres apart to allow plenty of growing space. They talk about the nutrients that the seeds need to help them grow.

Staff are positive role models and show children the importance of being kind and courteous to each other. Children learn to share and take turns as they play, and little disagreements are over swiftly. Staff praise children's efforts and achievements, which builds children's self-esteem and confidence.

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

- Managers are passionate about ensuring that children access a wide range of learning opportunities and experiences. They recognise the skills of the staff team and value what each staff member brings to the nursery team. Staff deployment is effective, and staff-to-child ratios are maintained.
- Staff's health and well-being are given high priority. Regular supervisions enable managers and staff to identify professional development opportunities that continually enhance their knowledge and skills. Staff work harmoniously. They support one another, share ideas and cascade their knowledge to each other. This has a positive impact on the nursery as a whole and the service provided.
- Children's language and communication skills are supported very well. Staff ask open-ended questions and give children plenty of time to think about what they have been asked and respond. Children enjoy listening to stories and join in, recognising characters and pre-empting what will happen next. A wide variety of books are available for children to access freely. However, some books are not in a good state of repair, so children may not always get the most from looking at

them independently.

- Children learn about the world around them. They enjoy looking for places they have visited on a globe and try foods from different countries. Children use technology to find out which took the longest to build, the pyramids or Stonehenge, and they recreate their own Stonehenge using dough. Families play an active role in the life of the nursery, and children see positive images of families from different cultural backgrounds. However, opportunities for children to see families that have a different makeup to their own are not yet available.
- Parents are delighted with the care provided and the personalised care given to their children. They feel that staff take pride in their work and are really impressed with what their children are learning.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well. Staff use observations and assessments to identify gaps in children's learning and work closely with parents and other professionals to access additional support. This ensures that children make the best progress from their individual starting points. Staff use simple sign language throughout the nursery to enable all children to communicate their needs.
- Children enjoy being physically active and spend lots of time outside in the fresh air. They develop dexterity by using various small tools as they dig, and they fill and empty various containers with soil and make marks using chalks. Children benefit from freshly prepared home-cooked meals each day that take account of their dietary needs and preferences. They learn to use cutlery competently and access fresh drinking water throughout the day. Children rest and sleep during the day according to their needs.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- ensure that books that are freely available to children are well maintained so that they can gain the most from them
- consider ways of building children's awareness of families that are different from their own.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY454662
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10348976
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	91
Number of children on roll	186
Name of registered person	Footsteps Day Nurseries Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP520741
Telephone number	01543250049
Date of previous inspection	6 October 2022

Information about this early years setting

Footsteps Nursery Hawthorn registered in 2012. The nursery is open from Monday to Friday, 7.30am to 6.30pm, all year round. The nursery employs 30 members of childcare staff, of whom 17 hold an appropriate qualification at level 2 or above. The nursery provides funded early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Tracey Boland

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.
- 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.
- The inspector spoke to children to find out about their time at the setting.
- 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 joint observations of group activities with the manager.
- Parents shared their written views of the setting with the inspector.
- 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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