

Inspection of First Steps Nursery

Robson Way, Lowton, Nr. Warrington, Cheshire WA3 2RD

Inspection date: 26 November 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Staff greet children with a smile at the front door as they arrive full of chatter and excitement ready for photo day. Children separate from their parents with ease and go off to find the inviting learning environments staff have created for them.

Leaders and staff have designed an ambitious, well-planned curriculum to ignite children's imagination and curiosity. Children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and children in receipt of additional funding, are well supported. The excellent key-person system and accurate use of assessment means that gaps in children's learning and any specific needs are identified early and acted on quickly. All children make good progress in their learning and development.

Staff model expectations for children's behaviour and routines. For example, following the five-minute warning for tidy-up time, children vigorously work together to tidy up their classroom. They ensure that the inspector is aware that she too must tidy up. Additionally, younger children remind the inspector that they are to be rewarded with a sticker for their good work. Children know what is expected of them. Consequently, they are well behaved and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning.

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

- The quality of education is good. Staff provide many fun experiences to support children's development. For example, they provide many opportunities for babies to crawl and pull themselves up. This helps them develop the skills needed for walking unaided. Older children make gingerbread men with play dough, taking great care in putting them in the pretend oven to bake. However, when routines are changed, for example on photo days, leaders and staff do not routinely monitor the implementation of the curriculum to ensure that all children's learning needs are met.
- Overall, leaders and staff plan effective care routines to support children's personal development. For example, all children have opportunities to be physically active both inside and outside. Additionally, staff give clear and consistent hygiene messages in encouraging children to wash their hands and wipe their nose. However, the mealtime routine is not consistently well organised. Children have to wait too long for their meals. Consequently, some children become unsettled and learning is limited at such times.
- Staff support the development of communication and language well. The nursery is full of chatter and song. Babies and toddlers are enthralled when staff sing 'Row, Row, Row Your Boat'. They attempt to follow the actions and babble tunefully. They eagerly anticipate the sounds, such as 'pop', in familiar songs.

Older children spontaneously sing 'Old McDonald Had a Farm' when staff support them in the construction area to build roads and bridges for their animals. Children are developing their language structures and vocabulary and are becoming confident communicators.

- Staff support children to understand their own feelings and emotions. For example, staff ask babies if they are sad when they are unsettled. This helps children from a very young age to put a name to their emotions.
- Effective relationships with parents and professionals have a positive impact on children's learning and development. Leaders and professionals share ideas with parents, such as doing specific activities at home that are linked to special events or developmental targets. These partnerships are helping children to thrive and flourish.
- Following a recent concern of a safeguarding incident, leaders failed to notify Ofsted of this significant event. Notifying Ofsted of significant events is a requirement of registration. Leaders fully understand how they have made this error and have been working with other safeguarding professionals. There was no impact on children's safety and welfare because of this breach of requirements.

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:

- improve deployment and organisation of staff at lunchtimes to meet children's needs
- monitor more closely the implementation of the curriculum when routines change to ensure that all children's learning needs are met.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY101522
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	10371842
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 4
Total number of places	226
Number of children on roll	209
Name of registered person	First Steps Private Day Nursery (Lowton) Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP517068
Telephone number	01942 678 803
Date of previous inspection	2 September 2022

Information about this early years setting

First Steps Nursery was registered in 2002 and is situated in the Lowton area of Warrington, Cheshire. The nursery employs 47 members of childcare staff. Of these, 39 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above. The nursery opens each weekday, from 7.15am until 6.30pm. The nursery provides government funded early education for children aged nine months to four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors

Anita Dunn
Chris Scully

Inspection activities

- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- Children spoke with the inspectors during the inspection.
- The inspectors talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- Staff spoke to the inspectors about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspectors observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspectors carried out joint observations of group activities with the manager.
- The inspectors spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspectors looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The assistant managers and inspectors completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.

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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