

First Steps Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY416180
Inspection date 01/06/2011
Inspector Wendy Dockerty

Setting address 1 Orrell Street, Bury, Lancashire, BL8 1PB

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

First Steps Nursery opened in 2010. The setting is privately owned and managed. It operates from a large detached property that has been converted from a school. Children have access to five nursery rooms, a large hall, a sleep room and a sensory room. The nursery is situated in the town of Bury, Lancashire and serves the local area and beyond. There is a fully enclosed play area available for outdoor play.

A maximum of 78 children may attend the setting at any one time. The setting also offers care to children aged over five years in the out of school provision and holiday club. There are currently 56 children on roll within the nursery and 48 children on roll in the out of school provision. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery opens six days a week all year round, except bank holidays and the week between Christmas and New Year. Times of opening are Monday to Friday 7am until 6pm and Saturday 9am until 3pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. The setting employs 14 members of staff. Of these, 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications, including two with Qualified Teacher Status. The setting also receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

A well-developed knowledge of each child's needs makes sure that staff promote children's welfare and learning. Children's development in all areas of learning is supported, although the links between children's observations and the planned activities are not always clear. Effective partnerships with parents and carers, outside agencies, the local authority and other settings support children's development. The management team regularly evaluate the provision and identify areas for improvement. However, some aspects of the daily routines within the nursery require further consideration.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- ensure that the next steps identified through the observations of children's learning are clearly linked to the planning of guided activities
- ensure that the hygiene procedures in place within the nursery are followed consistently throughout the setting to ensure children's health and well-being

- are promoted at all times
- consider revising the systems for lunch time and sleep time for the younger children to ensure that individual needs are met at all times.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety is given high priority and all staff have a secure understanding of safeguarding children's welfare. A written policy is in place which is shared with all staff during their induction period and includes appropriate information regarding the local authority child protection procedures. Training in this area is offered to several staff members and the manager currently takes responsibility for dealing with any welfare concerns. Detailed written risk assessments of the setting, the outdoor area and routine visits to collect children who attend the out of school provision are in place. Children are cared for in a secure, safe and comfortable environment and steps are taken to protect them from harm.

Effective partnerships with parents and carers ensure that children settle into the nursery and are cared for according to their individual needs. Parents are provided with a parents booklet when they first visit the nursery and information regarding the more pertinent policies is shared during the admissions procedures. Key workers discuss children's individual needs with parents when they begin to attend and make a record of their interests, likes and development levels. This information is used as a starting point to help staff to plan for children's future learning. Parents are kept informed of their children's progress and achievements through regular verbal feedback. Daily diaries and children's individual learning journeys are shared with parents frequently. Recent parental questionnaires have given parents the opportunity to share comments with the setting and raise any areas for future development. These have been taken into consideration by the management team. Parents spoken to at the time of the inspection made positive comments regarding their children being happy and settled in the nursery and felt that as parents and carers they were kept well informed of their children's development.

The nursery works closely with outside agencies in order to support children's progress and development. Professional colleagues come into the setting to work alongside nursery staff to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Links have been established with other early years settings which children attend, and the nursery welcomes visits from teachers in preparation for children's transition to school. Children begin to learn about diversity and the wider world as they take part in outings within the local environment, such as going to the local library to meet a popular children's book monster. Activities support children to learn about the world around them and they are encouraged to celebrate a range of cultural and religious festivals.

The management team have a clear vision for the future of the nursery. Since opening, significant changes have been made to the building and outdoor area which have had a positive impact on the children who attend. Resources have been enhanced in several areas and those areas which require further resources,

such as those which promote equality and diversity, have been identified. Through liaison with the early years support team, areas for development have been discussed and action plans put in place.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Throughout the nursery children are assigned to a key worker who supports the child to settle into the environment and develops an understanding of each child's needs and preferences. Observations and assessments of children's development are completed and entered into their learning journey, which tracks the progress children are making. Key workers identify next steps for children's learning based on these observations and help children to make progress as they play. Written plans are in place which indicate the activities and resources required for each week. However, the link between the next steps identified for children and the plans for activities is not clear. This means that children's individual progress and development is not promoted to full potential.

Children enjoy their time at the nursery and are provided with a wide range of experiences and activities which promote their learning. In all rooms children have free access to age-appropriate toys and equipment and are encouraged to make choices about their play. Babies and young children spend time playing on the carpet area with sensory toys, such as rattles, shakers, toys that light up and play music and creative resources, such as sand, play snow, jelly and gloop. Staff sit with children to share stories, support them to explore materials using their senses and offer a helping hand as children develop their physical skills when sitting, crawling and walking.

As children get older and more confident they move to another room where they have free access to mark-making materials such as paint and crayons and have opportunities to use their developing imagination as they act out everyday experiences. Children rock baby dolls to sleep in their arms and play house in the role play area. Children in the pre-school room are supported to develop their creativity as they model with play dough, use small world play to act out situations and have access to dressing-up clothes and role play equipment. Children of this age are beginning to put meaning to marks and staff work with them to recognise individual letters in their names. However, older children are not always significantly challenged in order to become more confident at writing their names, familiar words and numerals with growing independence.

Children enjoy listening to the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' and become involved in the tale. Staff ask for children's comments and encourage them to think about the events of the story. Children who attend the out of school facility and holiday club take part in a wide range of activities which they enjoy. For example, children join in with physical play indoors and outside, they take part in art and craft activities, read books and spend time on the computer and games console. Visitors come to the setting to enhance the experiences provided, such as Bury football club who supported children's enjoyment and skills when playing

football. A large and well-equipped outdoor play area gives children of all ages opportunities to climb, run, swing and slide on the play equipment, dig in soil planters and relax in cosy, shaded areas.

Children's safety and well-being are promoted within the nursery. Fire drills are carried out at regular intervals to support children's and staff understanding of how to keep themselves safe in an emergency. Children are reminded of appropriate behaviours in order to keep themselves and others safe and well. Older children are reminded to wash their hands when they visit the toilet with staff supervision. Procedures are followed with regard to nappy changing, providing individual bedding and drinks beakers to prevent cross-infection. However, procedures are not followed consistently throughout the nursery and some children are not encouraged to clean their hands after messy activities and before eating. Some routines within the nursery have not been considered carefully, in particular the lunch and sleep times for the babies and younger children. There are times in the day when children's well-being is not fully addressed as the routine makes it difficult for staff to meet each child's individual needs. However, key workers are aware of children's individual needs and during the majority of the day children are cared for in a calm, relaxed and happy environment.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong
Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound
Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met