

# Footsteps Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

---

**Unique reference number**

EY415737

**Inspection date**

04/07/2011

**Inspector**

Gyatri Rupal

**Setting address**

Biddenham Upper School, Biddenham Turn, Biddenham,  
BEDFORD, MK40 4AZ

**Telephone number**

07977148386

**Email**

sally.quinton@ukonline.co.uk

**Type of setting**

Childcare on non-domestic premises

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2011

## 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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

## Description of the setting

Footsteps Nursery School registered in 2010. The nursery operates from a self-contained unit set within the grounds of Biddenham Upper School, Biddenham, Bedfordshire. The building access is via steps and decking to the main door. There is ramp access to the rear playroom entrance. Children have access to a secure outdoor play area. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It is registered to provide care for 30 children under the age of eight years, all of whom may be in the early years age range. There are currently 36 children on roll, all of whom all are in the early years age range. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four years. It is open each week day from 7.30am to 5pm, during school term time only. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs five full-time and three part-time members of staff, three of whom hold level 3 early years qualifications and one of whom holds a level 2 early years qualification. The manager has recently completed a degree in early years and one staff is a qualified teacher. One staff member is working towards a level 2 qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff create a welcoming, secure and safe environment in which children feel confident to explore the good range of activities provided. Planning is flexible, taking into account children's individual needs and enabling them to make good progress in their learning and development. Children's individual needs are met well as staff are proactive in ensuring they have a good knowledge of the children in their care, and strong relationships with parents and others support this effectively. The managers lead a culture of reflective practice where all staff are committed to working together to continually monitor the nursery and improve the outcomes for all children.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- obtain information from all parents about who has parental responsibility for the child (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare). 26/07/2011

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

- increase the range of information shared with parents in order to establish clear starting points for children's learning and development
- improve the system of keeping records of arrival and departure for staff.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Children are cared for in a safe, secure setting, where staff are deployed effectively to ensure children are well supervised. All staff have attended safeguarding training to have a secure understanding of how to protect children. They are aware of signs and symptoms of possible abuse. There is a named person responsible for ensuring that any child protection concerns are dealt with promptly and appropriately. Children are further safeguarded by the setting's robust recruitment, vetting and induction procedures which help ensure the suitability of staff who work with the children. Clear procedures are in place to monitor their ongoing suitability. Security is especially monitored with very strict arrangements for visitors. For example, the setting has a policy that only senior staff manage the access to the nursery so they are fully aware of who is on site at any time. A comprehensive risk assessment supported by effective daily checking procedures, ensures that potential hazards are identified and minimised. The setting ensures that qualified first aiders are always present in the setting so that the children can receive immediate first aid should the need arise. Parents' written consent is obtained for emergency medical treatment and who has legal contact with the child. However, the information from parents about who has parental responsibility for the child is not obtained for all the children. Staff attendance records are not always recorded appropriately. This could potentially impact on children's safety. Good hygiene practices are followed to prevent the risk of infection.

The learning environment is very well organised, with easy access to resources that meet the needs of the children attending. Inclusive practice is threaded through everything the children experience, with their awareness and respect of each other's differences and equal access to everything on offer. Children access a variety of visual aids and activities to help them positively explore and value differences and similarities in the wider world. The staff team work well together, supporting each other to ensure consistency of care for individual children. Children's individual development is well promoted because the nursery has effective procedures in place to support, monitor and evaluate their progress. Staff have established good relationships with parents, carers and other providers. They work well with parents to ensure that there is an exchange of information to promote children's well-being and overall development. Questionnaires, newsletters, learning books and daily discussions and both written information and photographs, are all positive methods of sharing information. A good level of information is gathered from parents at the outset to support children's settling-in and to enable staff to respond well to their care needs. However, this information does not yet extend to include information relating to what children can do in relation to their learning and development which means that clear starting points for learning are not swiftly established. Effective systems are in place to support children with special educational needs and children with English as an additional language, resulting in them making good progress. Strong relationships have been

established with other providers, particularly the local school and pre-school, to promote consistency and continuity of children's care and learning.

Good systems are in place to support the staff to develop professionally. Annual appraisal interviews for staff enable individuals to look at areas for their own personal development linked to the needs of the setting. The staff regularly attend a variety of courses and workshops to enhance their good practice. The effective system of self-evaluation, which also incorporates input from parents and other professionals, ensures all aspects of the provision are monitored and evaluated, therefore supporting ongoing improvement.

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

Children are offered interesting and stimulating opportunities to help them progress and develop across all the areas of learning through play. Staff record children's attainments by observing them through a good range of adult-led and child-initiated activities and then assessing their progress. They know the children very well and use this information, together with their observations, to plan for the children's next steps effectively, promoting their development. Staff make good use of their observations to base activities on children's interests. Therefore, children are actively engaged.

Children are confident and play a full part in the daily routine, for instance, making decisions for playing inside or outside and selecting their play resources to initiate their play. The good range of equipment in both areas means children are supported to make good progress in all areas of their learning regardless of where they prefer to play. Through effective interaction with the children, the staff draw out learning and ensure appropriate levels of challenges are available for all. Children's sense of belonging is well fostered as children, feel confident enough to explain to staff what activities they would like to do.

Children are highly supported to develop problem-solving and other mathematical skills within their daily play. They learn about different shapes, sizes, quantities and colours as they use a wide variety of resources and take part in serving their own snacks. They use numbers during cooking activities to make cakes and building a town with wooden blocks. This makes learning fun. Children practise their writing skills as they use paint, pencils and crayons to write letters and draw pictures. Popular circle time and story books are used very productively, engaging children's attention to encourage literacy and express their thoughts to reinforce their own home life and experiences. Children communicate effectively, sharing ideas, asking questions and responding positively to requests from the staff. Young children enjoy their learning as staff interact with them well at their level. This is a most effective way of teaching. Staff ask simple questions to young children such as 'where is your nose?', 'where are your feet?' and 'where are your eyes?' Children are encouraged to sing nursery songs, for example 'heads, shoulders, knees and toes'. This helps young children to develop their language and learn the names of their body parts.

Children particularly enjoy sticking and play dough activities and have ample opportunities to explore textures and to produce their own individual creations. They use their regular building bricks to build town centres, extending their awareness of other buildings in the town, such hospitals, fire stations and shops. Theme projects and first-hand experiences, such as learning the lifecycle of a butterfly and planting and growing vegetables and herbs, enhances children's knowledge and understanding of the world. A variety of programmable toys and equipment is available to support children's awareness of technology.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene habits, such as using tissues to wipe their noses and putting their hands over their mouth when coughing. They follow routines successfully, such as washing their hands before meals and discussing the importance of hand washing. Children enjoy healthy snacks and nutritious meals. They also learn where food comes from as they take part in discussions and water their plants. Children gain an appreciation of personal safety as they practise an emergency evacuation and take part in daily excursions, discussing road safety. They have good opportunities to become physically healthy because they explore the school playground frequently and freely use the outdoor play area for various activities. Children behave very well. They clearly understand the golden rules for their expected behaviour and are engaged in interesting activities. During group activities they learn to share, take turns and respect the needs of their peers, supporting the development of skills they will need for the future.

## 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

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

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
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
--	---

### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

## **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