

Footsteps Nursery

Stepping Stones, Ochil Terrace, BILLINGHAM, Cleveland, TS23 2QL

Inspection date	19/11/2012
Previous inspection date	02/06/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- There are secure procedures in place for safeguarding children's welfare. Robust vetting procedures ensure that staff are suitable to work with children and regular risk assessments provide a safe and suitable environment.
- Children are happy well-motivated and keen to learn. Transitions between nursery rooms and other settings are well managed. Consequently, children show good levels of independence and have good relationships with each other and members of staff.
- Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to provide effective support for all children in their care, including those with additional needs.
- Performance management is consistently applied; staff supervision is good and all members of the staff team understand their roles and responsibilities.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The views of parents and all staff have not yet been introduced into the systems for self-evaluation.
- The outdoor environment does not provide children with sufficient opportunities to observe and explore things closely.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector held discussions with the manager at the beginning of the inspection and throughout the day.
- The inspector observed activities in the four base rooms and in the garden area and spoke to staff and children.
- The inspector held discussions with parents and obtained their comments from parental surveys the nursery had carried out.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector sampled children's assessment records and planning documentation, checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with children and looked at the nursery's self-evaluation form and some policies.

Inspector

Karen Tervit

Full Report

Information about the setting

Footsteps Nursery was registered in 2008 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in a purpose-built premises

within Footsteps Children's Centre in the town centre area of Billingham, and is managed by the Pre-School Learning Alliance. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from four main rooms and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 17 members of child care staff, including a manager. Of these, 16 staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and one has an early years qualification at level 2. The manager has an Early Years Foundation degree and one member of staff has a BA Honours in Childhood Studies. The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 80 children attending who are within this age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special needs and/or disabilities. The nursery receives support from the local authority and the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- build on self-evaluation by extending how the views of parents, staff and children are incorporated so as to assist in identifying areas for further improvement
- extend the opportunities for children to independently observe and explore things closely through a variety of means, including magnifiers and photographs.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Staff have a good understanding of the seven areas of learning and have implemented systems for observation, assessment and planning. Children's developmental journeys and tracking systems show how children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Observations of children's interests and progress are used to plan challenging learning experiences for children. The next steps in children's learning are clearly highlighted for staff to follow when planning further activities.

Staff show great interest in what children are doing, and notice and praise their achievements. This encouragement motivates children to persevere. They talk with the children about what they are doing and ask questions to help them make links in their

learning. For example, when very young children explore items in the treasure basket, such as shells, brushes and pieces of net staff ask them what they feel like, offering new words about the different textures. Older children excitedly contribute to a discussion about what they have done throughout the morning as they complete their diaries with their key person. They also talk about taking 'Holiday Harry' home with them and how he had ice cream and went to bed with them. Some pre-school children are able to recognise their names as they self-register on arrival. Pre-school children are enthusiastic singers skilfully using musical instruments to make quiet and loud noises. They are developing good imagination skill as they use the role play area as a spaceship, wearing wellies and helmets.

Babies delight in exploring a variety of materials such as paint, glue, foam, bubbles and flour. They develop good social skills as they mix with older children at different times throughout the day. All children receive good opportunities to make marks, for example they paint outdoors and use tractors and vehicles in wet sand. Children enjoy a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities based upon their individual interests. Children have free-flow opportunities, dependant on weather, between indoors and outdoors, with staff mostly planning for an exciting and challenging outdoor environment. However, opportunities for children to independently observe and explore things closely through a variety of means, including magnifiers and photographs are less readily available. Children develop good physical skills as they confidently ride their bikes, play hide and seek and make their own obstacle courses. Pre-school children confidently count to 10 and beyond in their games and by using the attractive number line.

Well planned systems to identify children's starting points on entry are in place. Parents complete 'All about me' documents which help staff to recognise children's individual needs and plan activities at an appropriate level for each one. Children's learning journals are shared with parents to ensure they are included in setting targets for their child's future development and understand how to support their child's learning at home.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

The effective key person system and the good level of adult attention ensures that all children form positive and trusting relationships with the staff. They go to them for reassurance and cuddles when they are feeling tired or a little unwell. This provides them with a secure and safe environment for them to develop their confidence and self-esteem. Key persons provide reassurance when parents arrive, by meeting and greeting the children and parents in a friendly and welcoming manner. They confidently chat to parents about holidays and important events in children's lives. Photographs of staff clearly displayed in the entrance to the nursery rooms enable parents to talk to their children about who will look after them. Key persons plan for their children's individual needs and spend time during the day supporting them in specific activities. Highly effective settling-in procedures, both for children new to the nursery and those moving rooms within the nursery, ensure children settle quickly. Close working relationships between staff in all the nursery rooms and carefully planned routines help ensure children's individual needs are met as they move onto their next stage of learning.

The learning environment is enabling and helps children make good progress in their learning and development with a wide range of resources being easily accessible for all children. The nursery effectively promotes all children's understanding of diversity and plans activities that encompass different celebrations, for example, Diwali where children make lanterns and look at Indian writing. Children have good opportunities to gain an awareness of diversity as they use dolls, books, maps of the world, pictures, puppets and small world toys that reflect positive images of difference. Interesting displays help children learn about foods from different countries, such as, Italian lasagne and Scottish shortbread. Foods from different cultures are incorporated in children's meals with clear information about this being displayed for parents. Children stay healthy because the nursery follows effective procedures and daily practices, which meet the children's physical, nutritional and health needs. Children and staff sit together at meal times enjoying the social occasion. The nursery cook prepares nutritious meals and snacks using fresh ingredients that take account of children's individual dietary needs. Drinks are readily accessible to them in age-appropriate cups. Children's behaviour is good. This is because staff are attentive and when slight conflicts arise they offer timely and sensitive intervention appropriate to the ages of the children.

Daily routines support children's independence skills. For example, pre-school children set the table for meals and butter their own crackers, as well as skilfully serving their own lunch using large spoons and tongs. Younger children are encouraged to 'try and have a go' at serving themselves and receive meaningful praise when they say 'please' and 'thank you'. Posters in the bathrooms offer reminders about hand-washing routines. Good nappy changing procedures are in place with staff wearing disposable aprons and gloves. Children develop a good understanding of personal safety. They practice the evacuation procedures regularly. Children have frequent opportunities throughout the day to experience fresh air and be active. Wellington boots and all weather suits are readily available so children can access outdoors no matter what the weather is like. They are beginning to take safe risks and understand that the outdoor plastic tunnels and climbing equipment can become slippery because they are wet.

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

All practitioners have attended recent basic safeguarding training, with the manager and deputy having attended Designated Safeguarding Officer training. Good systems are in place to renew and refresh this training as needed. Consequently, the management and staff team have a good knowledge of child protection issues and demonstrate a secure understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse and the importance of acting swiftly to safeguard children. There are clearly defined roles and responsibilities for leading and managing the setting to meet the welfare and safeguarding requirements. There are effective recruitment procedures in place, which ensures that practitioners are suitable to work with children. The nursery manager oversees the educational programme and successfully supports staff to promote children's learning and development through room observations, staff meetings, regular supervision sessions and training. Risk assessments

are comprehensive and conducted regularly. Practitioners identify and minimise potential hazards effectively on a daily basis. The deployment of practitioners is good and ensures that children are well supervised and kept safe indoors and outdoors. Written risk assessments are in place, which are regularly reviewed to ensure that risks are identified and evaluated. There are good procedures in place to collect and deliver children to and from nursery and school. The nursery keeps thorough records of accidents, medication and attendance to further protect children and promote their welfare.

Effective systems have been put in place to ensure that there is a good two-way flow of information about children's learning and developmental needs and progress between practitioners and parents. For example, parents are invited to Parents' Evenings, have daily chats with their children's key person, have easy access to children's learning journals and daily diaries. Parents' comments about the nursery are positive. Close partnership working with other professionals, including health visitors and the inclusion officer are successful in supporting children, particular those who have additional needs. Children who attend more than one setting are well supported so that they receive continuity in their learning and development. Good partnership working takes place between the nursery and the school that children transfer to. Transition arrangements are discussed with school staff and visits are arranged to help prepare children for the move to school.

The nursery has successfully addressed the recommendations raised at the last inspection. For example, resources to promote diversity and develop knowledge about other cultural groups are plentiful and lots of information is given to parents regarding the nursery, through interesting displays, informative leaflets and brochures as well as the nursery's website. The manager has a good understanding of the setting's strengths and areas to develop through constantly monitoring and evaluating practice to improve the outcomes for children. However, she has not yet fully involved parents, children and staff in this process.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are

		very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY368378
Local authority	Stockton on Tees
Inspection number	857894
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	57
Number of children on roll	80
Name of provider	Pre-School Learning Alliance

Date of previous inspection	02/06/2009
Telephone number	01642 556 378

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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