

Footsteps Day Nursery and Pre School

Footsteps Childcare Nursery, 73 Timothys Bridge Road, Stratford Enterprise Park, STRATFORD-UPON-AVON, Warwickshire, CV37 9BG

Inspection date	09/04/2013
Previous inspection date	23/03/2009

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		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Babies and children make excellent progress. Staff consistently and precisely observe and assess their development. They adeptly use this information to carefully plan activities and experiences which inspire children and really help them to consolidate and extend their skills and interests.
- Staff are highly effective in their care for babies and children and the way they promote their confidence and purposeful learning. Staff create a vibrant, rewarding atmosphere and interact really well with them. As a result, children settle quickly, they are keen to join in, and eagerly develop the skills and attitudes required for the next stage in their learning.
- Partnerships with parents and carers are exemplary. The information they provide about their children contributes significantly to the staff's success in accurately planning for and meeting each child's needs. Parents are fully informed about the educational programme and are actively involved in supporting their children's learning at home and in the nursery.
- Excellent support for staff and rigorous monitoring ensure that all aspects of the nursery are carefully scrutinised and maintained to a very high standard. Parents' and children's views are highly valued. They help to shape the organisation and management of activities, resources, routines and information sharing, and influence how the nursery develops further links within the wider community.

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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled 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 compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the six playrooms and the outside learning areas.
 - The inspector held meetings with the provider, operations manager and the nursery manager.
 - The inspector talked to staff and children.
 - The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation.
 - The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff.
 - The inspector looked at and discussed the provider's self-evaluation form and improvement plans.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents, carers and children spoken to on the day and from information included in the nursery's children's and parents' surveys.

Inspector

Rachel Wyatt

Full Report

Information about the setting

Footsteps Day Nursery and Pre School was registered in 2007 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It operates from purpose-built two-storey premises located on a business park in Stratford-upon-Avon. The nursery is one of five day care settings run by the provider's limited company. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There are fully enclosed areas available for outdoor play, including a new Forest School site. The children help to look after the nursery's rabbits.

The nursery employs 25 childcare staff. Of these, 24 hold appropriate early years qualifications at a minimum of level 3, including two staff with Early Years Professional Status and one with an Early Years degree. The manager is working towards Early Years Professional Status and an Early Years degree, and two other staff are working towards a Foundation degree in Early Years. The nursery also employs an administrator, cook, caretaker and cleaner.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round except for bank holidays. Sessions are from 7am until 7pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 178 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for 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.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance information sharing with local schools regarding key issues and trends in children's learning in order to consolidate pre-school staff's planning for those children preparing to start full time education.

Inspection judgements

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

Babies and children thrive and make excellent progress. Precise assessments and thorough information sharing with parents ensure key persons fully understand each child's starting points, interests, learning styles and next steps. They carefully plan and organise a most rewarding educational programme, expertly catering for each child's learning and development needs. They effectively combine aspects of High Scope, Forest

School and other activities to enhance children's learning experiences and to fully consolidate the skills, attitudes and knowledge they need for the next stage in their learning. Babies and children are inspired to be resourceful, imaginative and purposeful learners. They relish the exciting, well-resourced, most child-friendly surroundings and the staff's active but sensitive support and involvement in their learning. A key strength of the nursery's educational programme, is the way key persons plan and support a specific activity each day for their group of children. This helps staff to really focus on children's specific interests and to consolidate and extend their skills and understanding. Learning in small groups enhances children's confidence and relationships with others. Staff successfully focus on each child's communication skills and understanding, especially important for younger children and for those who speak English as an additional language or who find it difficult to relate to others.

Robust monitoring of babies' and children's progress enables staff to promptly and accurately identify any developmental delay. They work sensitively and positively with parents in these situations. This and their sound knowledge of different agencies and their professional, detailed referrals result in prompt tailored support and appropriate strategies for children, for instance with speech and language delay or behaviour difficulties. Staff successfully support these children in working towards clearly identified and achievable targets so they make significant progress in relation to their starting points.

Staff relate really well to babies and children. They capture children's interests and consistently support their involvement in activities. They organise most stimulating resources, taking full account of children's ideas. As a result, children are eager to take part in activities, readily initiate and extend their ideas, and concentrate very well. For instance, the current development of a Forest School site as part of the nursery's outdoor facilities has inspired children of all ages to make and build different structures. Younger pre-school children have been enthused to combine their construction play with concerted efforts to locate characters from a favourite story in the new Forest School surroundings. Children and staff have done paintings and made a display of these characters to help them in their search. Staff support children very well as they talk about and find tools and materials for making telescopes and binoculars which they use to check if there any signs of these characters outside. Meanwhile, in response to older children's requests to make 'sunshine' pictures after a spell of wintry weather, other pre-school staff plan a whole group painting activity. The children thoroughly enjoy painting a picture of daffodils. Staff encourage children's often astute observations and detailed conversations. They talk about the colours and techniques they are using, name and describe the features of their daffodils, and confidently explain what these flowers need in order to grow. Children are very proud of their finished paintings, eagerly showing and describing them to each other, staff and visitors.

Babies and children relish being outdoors and being active. All aspects of their learning are fostered outside. They enjoy drawing and mark making and investigating natural materials, such as sand, water and soil. The latter is a key feature of a 'mud' kitchen where children and staff make elaborate 'meals'. Children take an active role in looking after the nursery's four rabbits, changing their water and hay, and feeding them. Children's counting and practical problem solving are reinforced as they accurately count different features, such as stepping stones and work out how to make large scale

structures and obstacle courses. From an early age, children are helped to be physically confident and competent. Staff adeptly support and coach babies and children in using a wide range of physical apparatus. Babies and toddlers consolidate and extend their skills in moving and balancing in their special covered outside area. Older children safely and competently steer and pedal wheeled toys along designated pathways. They balance and negotiate stepping stones and their own made obstacle courses on level ground and on slopes. Regular Forest School activities enable older children to take part in more challenging physical activities and to investigate their natural surroundings in more detail.

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

A very effective key person system ensures consistency and continuity for children and families. Babies and children develop a strong sense of belonging and feel emotionally very secure. They form close relationships and have strong emotional attachments to their key person as well as other staff. During every session key persons are actively involved in promoting their group of children's learning. Wherever possible, they take the lead in supporting their key children's care, sleep and hygiene routines and mealtimes. Parents get to know their child's key person very well, and really appreciate the many opportunities to exchange information about their child's care, routines and development. Babies' and children's close relationships with key staff, together with a strong focus on fostering their choices, ideas and independence, really contributes to children being confident and well prepared for new situations. This helps them to make smooth transitions within the nursery, and to be emotionally ready for school.

Staff are highly successful in fostering babies' and children's independence. The organisation and layout of furniture, storage, activities and a wealth of exciting resources really stimulates babies' and children's ideas and choices. Staff's sensitive encouragement and the use of sturdy child-height equipment, contributes positively to young children's growing confidence in feeding themselves and managing their personal care and hygiene. Children behave very well. They enjoy each other's company and play cooperatively. Staff gently reinforce key behaviour expectations and children readily follow staff's requests and guidance. Tailored support and appropriate strategies are implemented to support those children who find it more difficult to relate to others or to manage their feelings.

Robust health and safety procedures ensure children are kept safe at all times. Staff carefully supervise children and are rigorous about completing safety checks and reviewing risk assessments in order to minimise hazards. Children show a sound understanding of how to behave safely and sensibly in the way they promptly follow staff's guidance and handle tools and equipment correctly. They also discuss and contribute to assessing risks for themselves, for instance during Forest School activities. Children are also very well cared for. Parents are encouraged to give as much information as possible about their children's individual health, dietary and medical needs, which staff understand and carefully meet.

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

Highly effective staff recruitment, development and supervision programmes ensure that everyone working with babies and children are confident and capable. Staff are well qualified and experienced. The provider and her managers ensure all staff attend core training, such as safeguarding, first aid and food safety, as well as other courses relating to their specific roles. Robust performance management ensures staff are fully supported to develop their knowledge and skills and so that any under performance is promptly addressed. This includes senior staff's regular positive monitoring of staff's practice through peer observations and feedback, as well as holding frequent group and individual meetings with staff. Very effective staff deployment means children are consistently looked after and taught by a key person and other adults whom they and their families know well.

Monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the educational programme and its impact on each child's learning, are precise and thorough. As a result, managers and staff clearly understand whether the curriculum is effective and appropriate for every child, and which key issues for individual or groups of children they need to focus on. For instance, recent adaptations were made to activities in the rising two's room in order to better cater for boys' learning. Supervisors and key persons in each room also routinely identify aspects to improve, develop and capably manage their action plan. Senior managers' monitoring and support for staff helps everyone to promptly recognise when an aspect of the educational programme or the layout and presentation of activities needs improving. For example, children's current passion for construction play has resulted in various changes around the nursery in order to accommodate a wider range of recycled and construction materials and equipment for them to use.

Other aspects of monitoring and evaluation are rigorous and very effective. The provider and senior managers are highly motivated to provide the very best for children and their families. Plans for improvement, such as the development of an on-site Forest School facility are based on accurate analysis of the nursery's effectiveness and of staff's, parents' and children's views. An enthusiastic and effective parents' forum, surveys and the manager's 'meet and greet' sessions are amongst the many meaningful ways families can have their say and influence the nursery's development. For example, parents' suggestions have resulted in further information about children's daily activities being displayed outside each room. A recent session for parents of pre-school age children about the Early Years Foundation Stage areas of learning, was planned by parents' forum representatives and the nursery manager. Children also routinely influence the day-to-day running of the nursery. Utilising the High Scope ethos of 'plan, do, review' has really helped them to express their views about their learning. Child-friendly questionnaires are also used successfully to capture their opinions about other aspects of the nursery and to make changes.

The nursery has also successfully maintained improvements made previously in response to past actions set by Ofsted regarding attendance records and notifications of significant events. For example, clear information is recorded each day about children and staff's proposed and actual attendance. The provider and senior staff are very aware and conscientious about notifying Ofsted of any incidents, such as cases of a notifiable illness or when a child has needed hospital treatment. Risk assessments and/or infection control procedures are reviewed and adapted regularly, for instance following any accidents or

incidents, and to ensure clear advice is given to parents about the symptoms and management of specific illnesses.

The nursery has robust and highly effective safeguarding procedures. Lead officers and staff are all confident about their role to protect children from harm. They carefully monitor children's physical well-being and appearance and do not hesitate to take action if they have concerns about a child's welfare. Nursery staff continue to maintain positive links with vulnerable families and have strong partnerships with other agencies to ensure outcomes improve for those children. Comprehensive record keeping and procedures underpin the staff's effectiveness in keeping children safe from harm and promoting their care, health and safety in partnership with their parents and others. A consistent clear audit trail is maintained of communications with families and of discussions with, and any referrals to, other agencies.

Partnerships with parents and carers are exemplary. From the time a child starts, staff do their very best to build trusting relationships with parents and carers. This helps to reassure parents and ensures a continued shared dialogue, including in more delicate situations, for instance when there are concerns about a child's welfare, development or behaviour. Parents' contributions are encouraged and valued. Their views about their child's skills and abilities strongly influence staff's accuracy in assessing and planning for each child. Parents appreciate receiving regular comprehensive feedback about their children's care, learning and development. This includes being given ideas for activities to follow up at home and being able to help in sessions. For example, parents read favourite stories to children, including those in their home languages. Parents and carers also attend sessions to talk to children about their work or hobbies. Parents make significant contributions to the shaping and improving of the nursery's services and extending its links with families and the local community.

The nursery manager, senior managers and key persons are proactive about building positive relationships with other agencies and other day care providers who work with children. For example, the nursery successfully initiates early support and intervention for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities because of staff's accurate assessments, open relationship with parents, and sound knowledge of the roles of relevant agencies. Children attending more than one setting have continuity. Their key person keeps in regular contact with other day care providers and childminders looking after them, so everyone works together to consistently promote children's health, care, interests and next steps in learning.

The nursery gives high priority to preparing children for the next stage in their learning. As part of internal transitions, children's background information and progress records are updated. This helps parents and the child's new key person to have an accurate view of the child's starting points and to review their learning priorities. Each year a large cohort of children move on to many different schools. These children wear a uniform and pre-school staff extend activities to include specific stories, discussions and role play relating to life at school. In addition, using the High Scope ethos of 'plan, do, review' really helps children to be confident, competent and resourceful learners. The nursery manager has prioritised making links with every school children go to. She, the provider and senior staff clearly recognise the practical difficulties of being able to achieve the same level of

engagement with every school in a wide catchment area. However, in 2012 she invited all reception class teachers to attend nursery sessions in order to meet the children. Four main feeder schools and three others attended, and the manager made sure she personally delivered the children's transition records to all 18 schools. The provider and senior managers recognise there is scope to further consolidate school transition arrangements. They are enthusiastic about enhancing their information sharing with schools to enable them to have a more accurate overview of local priorities for children's early learning in schools which they can follow up more rigorously in the pre-school's planning.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory 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 action. 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	EY340790
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	908174
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	100
Number of children on roll	178
Name of provider	Footsteps Day Nurseries Limited
Date of previous inspection	23/03/2009
Telephone number	01789 414004

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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, which are usually the childminder's 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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