

First Steps Early Years Centre

Cockayne Street, North Allenton, DERBY, Derbyshire, DE24 8JT

Inspection date	01/08/2013
Previous inspection date	02/07/2012

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	4
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		4
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		4
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		4

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is inadequate

- The planning and use of observation and assessment information and resources does not ensure that there is a balanced range of activities across the seven areas of learning or that children's next steps in learning are appropriately supported.
- Support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language is not suitably developed to fully support their progress towards the early learning goals.
- Children's individual needs are not suitably met, particularly as they move through the nursery and beyond with regards to the provision of food.
- Staff do not have a suitable understanding of the policies and procedures to ensure that children are safe, their behaviour is suitably supported, they understand what is safe, that routines are effectively organised to meet their needs, that key persons are effective and that concerns are appropriately addressed.
- Parents, carers and other settings are not always informed of factors that affect the care of children or kept up-to-date with children's learning and development.

It has the following strengths

- Appropriate checks are undertaken to establish the suitability of staff to promote children's safety.
- An action plan has recently been developed to improve the quality of care for children.

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 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 observed activities in two playrooms and completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector spoke with the staff about the daily routines, children's individual learning and self-evaluation.
- The inspector looked at a selection of policies and procedures, which included children's learning records and a range of other documentation.

Inspector

Justine Ellaway

Full Report

Information about the setting

First Steps Early Years Centre was registered in 2012 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in Allenton, Derby and is managed by 4Children. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from Osmaston/Allenton Sure Start Children's Centre and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 20 members of child care staff. Of these, the manager holds an appropriate early years qualification at level 4, 17 staff hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 3 and two staff hold an appropriate years qualification at level 2.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 100 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The setting supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

The provision is inadequate and Ofsted intends to take the following enforcement action:

We will issue a Welfare Requirements Notice with a completion date of 24 September 2013 requiring the provider to:

ensure that all staff are trained to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures and can identify signs of possible abuse and neglect and respond in an appropriate way

ensure that staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities so that children's welfare and learning and development is effectively supported

ensure that children are appropriately supervised at all times to promote their safety and that staffing arrangements during routines, such as mealtimes, are organised so that children are not waiting for unreasonable periods of time

ensure that the behaviour management policy is implemented effectively to support children's understanding of what is acceptable behaviour and the expectations during activities and routines.

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- ensure that assessment is accurate in reflecting children's level of achievement and is used to identify relevant next stages of learning
- ensure that planning consistently covers each area of learning, takes into account each child's next stage of development and that adult-led activities and resources effectively support children's learning and development
- ensure that the key person system is effective in identifying and supporting children's individual needs, particularly in supporting their move throughout the nursery and also in supporting their dietary requirements
- ensure that support for children with special educational needs or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language clearly identifies how their individual needs will be met to enable them to make progress in their learning and development
- ensure that there is a regular two-way flow of information with parents and carers and other settings that children attend, that information parents and carers share is used effectively to support children's needs and that parents and carers are kept up-to-date with their child's learning and development.

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

- support children's understanding of their own personal safety and the impact of unsafe practice.

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

Staff do not demonstrate a suitable understanding of how to implement the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result, children make inadequate progress towards the early learning goals. The planning of activities does not ensure that there is a broad range across the seven areas of learning, particularly for children aged two years and above. There are very limited opportunities for children to engage in activities that promote their understanding of the world and literacy skills. Furthermore, staff across the nursery do not always sufficiently plan for outdoor play to ensure this is fully promoted. Adult-led activities do not take into account what children might learn or what resources are needed to ensure that they are effective in supporting children's learning. As a result, children wait long periods of time for the activity to be set up. Their participation is often brief and they do not engage in purposeful play. Staff interaction during both adult-led activities and free play is mainly supervisory and, therefore, children's thinking and learning is not usually promoted by discussion, questioning, modelling or encouraging participation.

The use of observations and assessment is not sufficiently developed to support children's learning and development. On occasion, the information gathered through observations is not wholly reflective of what the child can do. Assessment of the child's progress does not always identify or prioritise the most relevant next stage of learning. Some staff in the room for children aged under two years have a better understanding of how to do this, although, this is variable across the staff team. Although, the setting is aware of the requirements for the 'progress check at age two', this is an area that is currently being developed to ensure that the information is relevant and useful.

Younger children move freely around the room and use furniture and equipment to pull themselves up as they develop their physical skills. They help themselves to some of the toys and resources, which supports their independence. On occasion, they are encouraged to babble as staff sing or talk to them, to promote their communication and language.

Children in the older age group show an interest in the activities and will willingly participate. However, their participation is usually short due to the ineffective practice, which means that their ability to sustain their attention is not suitably supported. Children sometimes wander as they try and find something to play with. Children occasionally count or say shape names during play, however, this is not effectively supported to develop a suitable understanding of counting and numbers. Children demonstrate an understanding of communication and language as they understand and follow instructions.

They sometimes join in with others and chat during play, however, on many occasions children play independently even if they are participating in a group activity. This means that support for children in preparation for school is not effective.

Opportunities for children to develop their creativity and imagination are not well-supported. For example, during an adult initiated painting activity, children are guided to use one colour of paint with a very large paintbrush. As a result, most children cover the paper with the paint and then quickly leave the activity. Some children enjoy the role play area and will pretend that they are making food. A child says they are going to put the bread in the oven to make it smell nice.

There are a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language. Although arrangements are made to work with relevant external professionals to support children with special educational need and/or disabilities, the support is not suitably developed to ensure children's progress. It is not always clear exactly what support needs the child has, how these are being supported and what progress has been made. There are a number of children who speak English as an additional language. A recent audit has identified the range of languages, however, coordinated support has not yet been implemented to fully ensure their needs are met.

The partnership with parents and carers is not effective in sharing information about children's learning and development to promote a consistent approach. Some opportunities are provided for parents and carers to attend a meeting to discuss their child's progress, however the quality of information provided is not always fully informative. Furthermore, staff complete a daily diary, which mainly focuses on food, sleep and toileting and, therefore, does not give parents useful information about their child's learning and development.

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

Children are not effectively supported to ensure that their needs are met. Some relevant information is gathered from parents and carers to support children settling-in. However, this is inconsistently gathered and when information is gathered, this is not always used effectively to meet children's needs. As a result, staff do not demonstrate a suitable knowledge of the children they are working with. For example, a child is prevented from eating one of the two snack items because a member of staff thinks this is a dietary requirement. After five minutes of the child being frustrated, the member of staff establishes that the child can have it. Although some children do have dietary needs, alternatives are not always provided to ensure that they feel included at mealtimes.

As children move from one age group to another they are not always allocated a key person to ensure a smooth transition. This impacts on their ability to settle appropriately and ensure any care needs are taken into account. For example, a lengthy discussion takes place about how to settle a child for their nap and a significant amount of time goes by before this is appropriately addressed. Children in the room for children aged under two years have reasonable bonds with staff. Children in the older age group are

comfortable in the room, although, they do not particularly have well-developed relationships with staff, due to the ineffective interaction.

Although staff are effectively deployed to ensure that there are a sufficient number working within each age group, the organisation of staff is not always effective. This is particularly apparent at mealtimes. For example, it takes a considerable amount of time to organise and serve a simple snack. Children wait unnecessarily long periods of time, often becoming frustrated, which impacts on their enjoyment.

Children are not appropriately supported to understand what is right or wrong or the expectations of the setting. Some children regularly display behaviour that is inappropriate and this is not managed by staff. For example, they snatch toys, push themselves in front of others during activities or have the majority of resources and equipment for themselves. This significantly impacts on other children's ability to participate and enjoy themselves. Staff rarely attempt to manage this behaviour and when they do they attempt to use distraction, which is inappropriate. Furthermore, staff do not explain the expectations during play or routines. For example, a child who refuses to sit at the table to eat lunch and takes themselves to the role play area, is asked if they want to finish their lunch there. During group activities staff do not explain the rules, for example, sharing and taking turns. Some children do recognise what is right and wrong and behave appropriately, reminding other children at times. For example, a child reminds another child who is trying to take a toy off them that they should not snatch.

The learning environment is not always well-resourced or organised to support children's learning and development. Resources are not always organised so that they are available at the beginning of planned activities or sufficient in number to support children's learning and development. The outdoor play area is a safe and attractive space that leads off the rooms. However, at times, even when it is a warm day, children are not given full opportunities to play outdoors. This impacts on their understanding of physical exercise and a healthy lifestyle. Staff in the room for children aged under two years lay out a suitable selection of toys and resources, which encourages children to crawl about and select, promoting their independence. Staff in the older age group do not give sufficient consideration to the range of toys and resources and children's interests. Although children show considerable interest in a toy phone that a child has brought from home, which causes conflict as most of the children want to play with it, staff make no attempt to provide similar resources for children to use.

Children's understanding of safety is not effectively promoted. If children do something that is unsafe, for example, swinging on a chair, staff do not speak to them. Furthermore, staff give unclear messages to children about what is safe. For example, after children have begun to play on a small slide they are then told they are too big and they should play on the other slide. The setting does periodically plan activities to support children's understanding in areas, such as road safety. Children's understanding of being healthy is not

well-supported. There are no discussions at snack or mealtimes about the healthiness of the food. Children are encouraged to toilet independently and given support if needed, however, staff do not talk to children about why hand washing is important.

Suitable consideration is given to support children in their move to school. Children participate in a re-enactment of the school day and play with school uniforms in the role play area. They also look at pictures of the school and participate in visits to the school. The setting is establishing useful links with the children's centre where they are based so that they can provide coordinated support for families and children.

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

The nursery is not effectively implementing many of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Not all staff demonstrate a suitable understanding of signs and indicators of abuse or neglect or the appropriate procedures to follow in the event of any concerns about a child. This means that children are not suitably safeguarded. However, the designated safeguarding officer demonstrates a suitable understanding of the procedures to follow in the event of any concerns or an allegation against a member of staff. The supervision of children does not always ensure their safety. Although there are procedures in place for the supervision of relief staff, they are not always followed and, therefore, on occasion, staff are not always in sight. Also, staff do not always ensure visitors can be seen at all times to ensure children's safety.

Although the nursery has suitable induction procedures and a suitable programme of ongoing training, these are not effective in ensuring that staff understand their roles and responsibilities. As well as an ineffective understanding of issues, such as supervision, safeguarding procedures and behaviour management, staff do not demonstrate that they effectively understand other aspects of children's care, such as the provision of food and drink. There is confusion around which meal is for which child. Also, the main meal at lunchtime is sometimes too hot to serve and, therefore, children have their vegetables first and then the other element, such as fish pie, approximately ten minutes later. Drinks are then served at a later stage. Where previous incidents of supervision and safeguarding have necessitated a discussion with staff to remind them of the policies and procedures, they still do not demonstrate a suitable understanding to promote children's safety.

Suitable checks are undertaken on all adults at the time they are appointed to establish their suitability to work with children. The manager demonstrates a suitable understanding of the things that should be notified to Ofsted to promote children's safety and welfare. Hygiene procedures in relation to nappy changing effectively minimise the risk of cross infection, as well as procedures to manage and share information about infectious diseases. Complaints are appropriately managed in line with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Self-evaluation is in the early stages of development and has, therefore, not had sufficient time to be effective in improving the quality of care provided for children. Although the organisation has a range of monitoring systems, these were ineffective in ensuring that the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage were being appropriately implemented. As a result, the monitoring of the educational programmes and children's progress are also ineffective. A very detailed and relevant action plan is now in place,

which appropriately identifies and prioritises the weaknesses within the nursery. In addition, intensive support is being provided to ensure that the action plan is suitably implemented. The management team demonstrate a sound understanding of the issues, how they will be addressed and a commitment to ensure this happens. For example, thorough and frequent performance management of staff to enable appropriate support so that staff have the required skills necessary to support children's care and learning and development.

The partnerships with parents and carers are not fully established so that information is consistently shared to inform them of factors that affect the care of their child. Relevant information is provided for parents and carers at the time their child starts at the nursery. However, on an ongoing basis, information is not consistently shared, or varies in usefulness. The partnership with other settings that children attend is not fully established. Some contact is made with some of the settings but not all, and is, therefore, ineffective in promoting consistency of care in supporting children's learning and development. Some relevant links are made with other organisations to support children's needs, for example, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, however, this is not appropriately coordinated or monitored to ensure that it is effective in all circumstances.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

To meet the requirements of the Childcare Register the provider must:

- ensure that children's behaviour is managed in a suitable manner. (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- ensure that children's behaviour is managed in a suitable manner. (voluntary part of the Childcare Register)

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
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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	EY440848
Local authority	Derby, City of
Inspection number	926362
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	64
Number of children on roll	100
Name of provider	4 Children
Date of previous inspection	02/07/2012
Telephone number	01132 709006

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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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