

# First Steps Day Nursery

31 Church Street, Great Wilbraham, CAMBRIDGE, Cambridgeshire, CB21 5JQ

<b>Inspection date</b>	19/08/2013
Previous inspection date	16/02/2009

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	2
	Previous inspection:	2
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

- Children play and learn in a rich and imaginative outdoor environment where they experience risky play, use their imaginations and effectively develop their physical confidence.
- Staff plan an effective programme of activities that promote children's communication and language skills very well. As a result, children are confident and articulate communicators.
- The partnerships with parents are warm and positive. Parents indicate they are very pleased with the nursery and feel well-informed about their children's progress and wellbeing.
- Children joining the nursery quickly develop secure emotional bonds due to the effective settling in procedures and a well-embedded key person system. This means children feel safe and secure and enjoy their learning experiences.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- The use of multicultural resources to enhance children's understanding of the wider world and their own and other people's differences and similarities is not fully explored.
- Younger children are not always fully encouraged to develop their practical skills and learn more about healthy foods because staff do not always involve them in food preparation.

## 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 the children at play indoors and out.
- The inspector spoke with a number of parents during the inspection to discover their views on the quality of the provision.
- The inspector spoke with managers and staff at convenient times during the inspection.
- A range of documentation was examined, including children's learning records, policies and procedures, risk assessments and the self-evaluation form.

## Inspector

Veronica Sharpe

## Full Report

### Information about the setting

First Steps Day Nursery is privately owned and opened in 2001. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery operates from converted domestic premises in Great Wilbraham, Cambridgeshire. Children are housed over two floors according to age and there is an enclosed outdoor play area. Opening times are from 7.30am until 6pm all year round with the exception of bank holidays and one week at Christmas. The nursery has two guinea pigs as pets.

There are currently 59 children on roll who are within the early years age range. The nursery provides funded early years education for eligible three and four-year-old children. It supports a small number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and some who are learning English as an additional language. There are 16 staff employed to work directly with the children. Of these, one member of staff holds Early Years Professional status and one holds a Foundation Degree, nine have childcare qualifications at level 3 and two at level 2. Two members of staff are working towards childcare qualifications. The nursery is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the range of resources that reflect the world's diversity to help children learn more about themselves and each other, for example, books, pictures and role play equipment
- develop further younger children's practical skills and their understanding of healthy diets, for example by giving them daily opportunities to help with preparing their own meals and snacks.

### Inspection judgements

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

Staff demonstrate a good understanding of effective teaching and provide children with a broad range of challenging and enjoyable activities. As a consequence, children make good progress towards the early learning goals. The staff know the children well, and this

helps them to tailor activities and motivate children to become eager, active learners. Parents are consulted about their children's interests at home and add their contributions to their children's learning journals. This enhances the key person's ability to understand and plan effectively to meet children's learning needs. Staff make regular assessments of children's learning to ensure they are developing according to their individual abilities. The 'progress check at age two' is completed before children transfer into the pre-school room so that parents and their new key person gain a good insight into children's development so far.

Children benefit from a well-organised environment that effectively promotes their independence. Resources are plentiful and arranged so children can make their own choices and develop their independence. Most of the children's time is spent in creating their own play opportunities. Staff support them well and understand when it is appropriate to intervene and when it is best to observe. For instance, a child lays on the floor and plays undisturbed with toy train engines, totally engrossed in the moment. Adult led activities, such as arts and crafts, enable children to extend their creative skills and learn to use scissors, tape and glue. Children's communication and language skills are developing particularly well. Staff working with babies and younger children engage well with them and use clear language to develop their vocabulary. Lively story times and daily singing sessions develop children's enthusiasm for literature and music. Older children participate in regular circle times, where they listen avidly to stories and talk about the day's activities. Staff skilfully use a child centred approach to phonics to develop children's understanding of sounds and letters through enjoyable activities. As a result, children easily identify initial sounds and confidently pick out their name cards. This prepares them well for the next steps in their learning, including school.

Children in all areas of the nursery use a broad range of puzzles, games and construction toys that help them to develop their mathematical skills. Staff involve children in counting games and talk to them about shape, size and quantity. Writing materials are easily accessible indoors and out, enabling children to draw and develop their early writing skills. Staff sit with the children to write up their observations or record accidents, so children learn that writing has practical uses. Imaginative use of media and materials helps children effectively develop their understanding of the world, for example, younger children explore coloured gloop with their fingers. Older children develop caring attitudes as they feed the nursery guinea pigs and put them out onto the grass to 'play'. Staff talk to children about their interests and ideas and encourage children to talk to each other about their home experiences. Labels and some multi-lingual books display children's home languages and, therefore, promotes their self-esteem. However, resources that help children learn about differences and similarities and share their faiths and cultures, such as family books, pictures and role play equipment, are not fully exploited.

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

Children are happy and settled in this small and friendly nursery. They build strong emotional links with their key person and, as a result, are confident and outgoing. Staff work closely with parents to settle children and ensure a smooth transition from home into the setting. Home visits are offered to enable staff to have first-hand knowledge of

children's home and the people and pets who are special to them. Parents speak well of the initial settling-in visits and say staff are warm and welcoming. Staff follow babies' individual routines for naps and feeding, which gives them a good sense of security. When it is time for children to transfer to another room, this is well-planned in partnership with parents so children look forward to the next stage of their learning. Staff help children develop practical life skills so they are well-prepared for school. For example, they teach children to dress themselves, wash their hands and put on their shoes independently.

Children behave well and play cooperatively with their friends. They demonstrate a good understanding of sharing and respond well when staff intervene in minor disputes. For example, staff help children find a sand timer to agree when it is another child's turn on the computer. Staff have high expectations of the children and positively encourage the use of social niceties, such as 'please' and 'thank you', which sets up good habits for the future. Children learn about safety as they participate in the six-weekly fire drills and help to check the safety of the equipment in the garden.

Children learn about the benefits of a healthy lifestyle through practical activities. For example, staff tell them that sun cream protects them from harm as they apply it regularly during outdoor play. Older children wash their hands without reminders before their meals, and staff conscientiously promote good hygiene with the younger children. Nutritious and healthy meals are freshly prepared each day by the nursery cook. Menus are interesting and varied, enabling children to explore a good range of tastes and textures. The nursery has a thriving kitchen garden where children follow the cycle of planting, tending and growing. They eat their own tomatoes and strawberries for snacks, and help to dig up new potatoes for lunch. As a result, they gain a good understanding of where their foods come from. Older children help with snack preparation and serve themselves at lunch, which develops their independence well. Staff talk to them about which foods are good for them to extend their understanding of the benefits of healthy eating. Younger children sometimes have their snacks prepared for them in the kitchen. Therefore, they do not have the same everyday opportunities as the older children to develop practical skills and learn the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle through a varied diet.

Children enjoy continuous access to the outdoor areas throughout the year. They are enormously enthusiastic about their outdoor play experiences and demonstrate very positive attitudes towards active, healthy play in the fresh air. They have excellent opportunities to participate in active games and extend their physical skills by climbing, balancing and running. Staff supervise the children well as they play but allow them space to learn about risk and promote physical challenge. They actively encourage children to think about and take acceptable risks. For example, staff help children to build obstacle courses from tyres and planks and talk to them about how to make the construction safer. Children access natural materials outdoors, such as sand and water and have a thoroughly good time making mud pies. All this develops their confidence and enables them to approach new experiences with enthusiasm.

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

Children are safeguarded well because staff have a good understanding of the reporting procedures that help to keep children safe. Staff regularly attend refresher courses in child protection and discuss any new information at team meetings. This promotes children's welfare well and ensures child protection remains a high priority. The provider has secure recruitment processes in place, including the checking of references and qualifications. A rigorous induction helps to ensure all staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities. Staff training is given a good priority and this has led to a mostly qualified team who work together well to benefit children's learning. Staff deployment is robust, helping to ensure children receive appropriate and sensitive support as they play. Regular appraisals and supervision meetings enable staff to identify their own skills and any training they need. As a result, they work confidently with the children and effectively promote their learning and development.

Staff carry out daily checks of the premises to minimise risks to the children. They supervise the children conscientiously and monitor the resources and equipment to ensure their safety. Children's arrival and departure is always supervised by staff to keep them safe. As an additional precaution the nursery has a secure gate before the entrance hall so that no child can leave the setting unaccompanied by their carer. Most staff hold first aid qualifications, which means children receive appropriate treatment in the event of an accident. The manager and her team have a secure understanding of the learning requirements. Each key person monitors individual children's progress and this feeds into the wider assessments to ensure all children are working to their expectations. Any areas for concern receive prompt attention through individual learning plans and focused support. All this helps to ensure all children make good progress. Staff are involved in evaluating the nursery and opinions are sought from parents frequently. Areas for development are identified and actioned promptly. For example, as a result of staff discussion, a new parent questionnaire was issued to strengthen staff's understanding of children's interests at home.

The partnerships with parents are extremely successful. Parents say the staff are welcoming and friendly and take time to update them on their children's activities and routines. New parents are positive about settling-in and say staff are flexible and accommodating. The entrance hall displays lots of useful information for parents, such as descriptions of the areas of learning and suggestions to support children's learning at home. A well-equipped library enables parents to take home books to share with their children. Parents are offered frequent meetings with staff to discuss their children's progress and have easy access to the individual learning journals. As a result, they feel well informed about their children's progress and development. Good links are made with the schools children will attend. Staff arrange visits where necessary and provide parents with a written final summary of progress so the school has the opportunity to ensure continuity of care and learning. Staff work closely with other agencies to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, which has a positive effect on children's wellbeing.

### **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 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY216277
<b>Local authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	915093
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 17
<b>Total number of places</b>	35
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	59
<b>Name of provider</b>	Valerie Wells
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	16/02/2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01223 881285

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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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