

Footsteps Nursery

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

Inspection date	14/10/2013
Previous inspection date	19/11/2012

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	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

- Babies and children are relaxed and confident to explore the well-resourced environment. They show high levels of independence, curiosity and imagination and consistently make good progress in relation to their starting points.
- The well-embedded key person system helps children to form secure emotional attachments as staff skilfully support them in their play. Consequently, children are well-prepared for their transitions, both across the setting and into school.
- Arrangements for safeguarding children are well-established, and clear policies and procedures are implemented consistently to ensure children are kept safe at all times.
- Partnerships with parents, external agencies and other early years providers are very strong and make a significant contribution to meeting all children's needs.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff's skills in asking open-ended questions are variable. This means children are not consistently encouraged to build on their rapidly developing critical and creative thinking skills.
- The views of parents and all staff have not yet been introduced into the systems for self-evaluation to identify areas for improvement.

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 viewed all areas of the premises and equipment and observed activities in all of the playrooms and the outside play areas.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation, evidence of suitability of staff working within the setting, the provider's self-evaluation form and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager, and spoke with staff and children throughout the inspection.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Eileen Grimes

Full Report

Information about the setting

Footsteps Nursery was registered in 2008 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in purpose-built premises in the Footsteps Children's Centre in the area of Billingham. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from four rooms and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 16 members of childcare staff. All hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above, including one with a degree in Early Years Childhood Studies. The group is run by the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

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 in the early years 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 educational 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 staff's understanding of consistent and effective open-ended questioning, so children learn to think more creatively and critically

- extend self-evaluation by extending how the views of parents, staff and children are incorporated, to identify areas for further improvement.

Inspection judgements

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

Good procedures to gather information about children means that staff know them well, ensuring that children are always appropriately supported and their individual needs are met. Children are, therefore, secure, enthusiastic and approach their play and learning with positive attitudes. Staff have a thorough understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and are well-supported in their work. This means that teaching techniques are mostly good and staff encourage children to develop their own play, offering support

whenever needed. For example, a child initiated play in the role area with dolls, brushing hair which was extended to creating bands with paper and sticky tape staff provided the resources and encouraged children to explore and experiment how they would achieve this. Children thoroughly enjoy this challenge and continue the activity independently.

Staff use their knowledge and experience to support children in developing the skills to learn effectively, achieve well and develop the necessary skills in readiness for school. They model inquisitive behaviour, thereby, encouraging children to think further and develop their own ideas and knowledge. For example, children enjoy painting pictures as staff talk with them about what they are doing. However, not all staff are confident using open questioning techniques to encourage children to think critically. Good organisation means that children have time and space to explore and concentrate on their chosen activities. Younger children enjoy sitting in small groups with practitioners reading books with them. This encourages their understanding of print and enhances their enjoyment of books and reading.

Children are well-supported in developing their language and communication skills. For example, babies learn new vocabulary as they giggle when exploring with balls in the water. Older children participate in discussions through group activities and are encouraged to listen to each other's contributions. This means that children become confident in expressing themselves but also learn to respect the views of others. Children who have English as an additional language are supported in building and understanding new vocabulary. They, therefore, make good progress in using English confidently and in their overall development. For example, staff learn key words in the children's home language and display these words around the rooms. This supports children's early communication and builds their confidence to extend this.

Children's starting points are clearly assessed. Staff work in partnership with parents to obtain this initial information, which is then used to inform planning. Good communication procedures mean that parents have opportunities to share daily news about their children and regularly view their child's assessment files. Parents are also supported in playing an active part in their child's learning. For example, regular newsletters explain the Early Years Foundation Stage and the current activity planning so that parents can extend their child's learning at home. The assessment procedures take full account of all updates from parents about how their child has been learning and developing at home. Consequently, staff can include this full range of information in their planning and so promote children's development to the optimum. Thorough assessment procedures mean that staff have a good understanding of each child's current developmental stages. They also carefully note children's interests and frequently update this record. This information is fed into the planning, which is regularly reviewed to ensure that children are offered balanced activities and play opportunities that promote all areas of learning. Comprehensive tracking procedures enable practitioners to check that all children are making good progress. They seek additional help whenever needed so that they can promote the progress of all children towards the early learning goals. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities have individual plans in place and targets are agreed with parents, to ensure they make progress in their learning and development.

Activity planning is flexible so that staff can respond to children's current interests and

utilise these to promote their learning. For example, when younger children show an interest in playing with the dough staff introduce different tools to promote dexterity and extend learning opportunities. Staff and the manager also review the planning to ensure that children are offered well-balanced opportunities to play independently and to participate in structured activities. Children, therefore, play an active role in their learning and learn to work cooperatively with others.

Children are offered a wide range of opportunities that promote their physical development. For example, they manipulate construction pieces and use small writing tools, such as pencils and chalks. They also develop skills in balance, control and coordination as they use large play equipment and participate in music and movement sessions. Children are offered a variety of meaningful opportunities to learn about their community and the wider diversities of society. For example, children have access to a wealth of dressing-up clothes from around the world and learn about a variety of festivals.

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

The well-implemented key person system, and good procedures for working with families, help to ensure that all children are secure and form strong relationships with staff. Children are observed and monitored by staff, ensuring that they are happy at the setting and are making good progress. They are supported in exploring their environment and in expressing their views. This helps children develop essential skills and a positive approach to future learning, thus, preparing them well for the transition to school.

Children are sensitively supported and are praised for both effort and achievement, therefore, promoting their self-esteem. They work well together, sharing the resources and happily including others in their play. They enjoy taking on responsibility. For example, they help tidy up before sitting down for lunch. New children quickly settle because staff work with parents to find out about their interests, needs and routines. These then inform the daily activities and routines. For example, babies sleep and feed according to the patterns established at home. Staff act as good role models, showing care and concern for all. Children reflect this positive approach and learn to appreciate and respect the needs of others.

Children are well-supported in developing their self-care skills. For example, they put on their own coats and waterproofs before going outside. There are thorough hygiene procedures relating to the changing of nappies and to keeping the setting in a clean condition, therefore, promoting children's health at all times. Procedures at meal and snack times are good. Older children help serve their snacks and meals and tidy away afterwards, supporting the promotion of their independence.

Children are encouraged to understand the importance of healthy lifestyles. For example, they learn about the effects of exercise as they note that they feel warmer and their heart beats are raised after exercise. Ongoing discussions and specific activities also support children in gaining a good understanding of safety issues. For example, they learn about

safety as they walk to and from school, holding hands and developing an understanding of risk.

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

The manager is experienced and conscientious, setting high standards for the setting. Her self-evaluation procedures provide clear realistic and challenging targets. However, at present they do not take into account the views of parents. She implements practical action plans that prioritise areas for improvement. Staff work well together to promote children's welfare and development. Parents are made fully aware of all operational procedures and comment they are confident any issues raised with the manager would be dealt with in an efficient and professional manner. There are systems for monitoring staff's performance and promoting professional development through annual appraisals and supervision sessions as well as informally through daily observations.

There are thorough procedures to monitor each child's progress and ensure that this is promoted throughout their time at the setting. Staff work well with other professionals in order to support children and their families. They have procedures to support partnership working with other providers caring for the children.

This inspection was prioritised by Ofsted following notification that a child was not collected from school as previously arranged. The nursery has reviewed its processes for collection of children from school since the incident. There are clear and detailed procedures in place for the collection of children from school. These are understood by all staff and the setting has liaised with the school to ensure they are effectively implemented. Each day a new list is drawn up of children to be taken and/or collected from school. There is space to amend these during the day if required and the list is checked with the manager before staff leave for school. Children's welfare is prioritised and this is supported by comprehensive safeguarding procedures. The manager and staff are clear about their role and work well in partnership with families and external agencies. They have attended relevant training and have a good understanding of safeguarding issues and the correct procedure to follow should they have any concerns about a child. The suitability of all practitioners is well-considered and rigorously checked through robust recruitment and induction procedures. The manager ensures that staff ratios are adhered to at all times and that staff are appropriately deployed. Staff have a good awareness of safety issues, regularly reviewing the risk assessments, including those for outings and carrying out daily safety checks. This ensures that the environment is safe and welcoming. This contributes to children's enjoyment of their time at the setting and means that they have a positive childcare experience that forms a good base for their future learning.

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

Unique reference number	EY368378
Local authority	Stockton on Tees
Inspection number	938924
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	57
Number of children on roll	86
Name of provider	Pre-School Learning Alliance
Date of previous inspection	19/11/2012
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, 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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