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First Steps Early Years Centre
Cockayne Street North
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Our Reference EY440848

Dear Mrs Julie Williams

Monitoring for provision judged as inadequate

An Ofsted inspector, Diane Stone, monitored your provision on 28/01/2014 following your inspection where the provision was judged to be inadequate.

Outcome of monitoring

As a result of our inspection on 01/08/2013, we sent you a welfare requirements notice.

The welfare requirement notices required you 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 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 staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities so that children's welfare and learning and development is effectively supported; 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.

At a monitoring visit on 25 September 2013 the timescale for the notice of actions to improve had not been reached, however the setting had taken action to ensure the keyworker system was effective. The welfare requirement notice relating to ensuring staff understand the safeguarding policy and procedures had also been met. However insufficient progress had been made to meet the remaining welfare requirement notices.

A further monitoring visit was undertaken on 5 November 2013. The inspector concluded that all the welfare requirement notices and notice of actions to improve had been met, although further improvement was needed in some areas to ensure progress was sustained. The management of the setting need to continue to ensure staff's understanding of how children learn and develop is given high priority in order

to ensure outcomes for children are good.

A monitoring visit was undertaken on 28 January 2014. Through documentation used at the setting and through discussion and observation at the monitoring visit the inspector concludes that the setting has taken prompt and effective action in making improvements in the areas identified in the welfare requirement notice and notice of actions to improve as needing development. However there are areas requiring further development in order to ensure that outcomes for children are good.

Changes to the management and staffing within the setting have impacted on the progress that has been made. The setting continues to receive support from the local authority and from the National childcare team within the organisation. Previous improvements to staff supervision, behaviour management and the toddler environment have been sustained and further improvements made. For example, changes made in the toddler room layout have continued to have a positive impact on children's engagement in activities, the atmosphere in the room and on children's behaviour. Babies attending the setting now have their own outside play area. This ensures that babies can play safely while accessing the outdoor environment.

Children's keyworkers have been changed to take on board new members of staff joining the staff team. This process has been very effective in the pre-school and baby room. Staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and have quickly understood the planning and assessment systems used at the setting to monitoring children's learning and development. Planning takes into account children's next steps and children's development is assessed appropriately. In the toddler room, the planning and assessment system is not clearly understood by some staff. There are links from observations of what children can do to the planning which takes into account children's next steps. Staff have received additional training to develop their knowledge and understanding about how children's learning can be fully supported through effective planning and assessment. However, children's development is not assessed appropriately by some staff. Some areas of learning have not been considered and as a result some staff cannot clearly identify if individual children are developing at expected levels in all areas. The management team were aware this needed to be monitored in order to ensure that all children's development was assessed in all areas of learning. However due to changes in the management structure this has not been followed up in an effective manner. This needs to be addressed to ensure children's learning and development is consistently assessed across the setting.

The next visit will be a further monitoring visit to ensure all improvements made since inspection have been sustained and to assess if all staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities with regard to learning and development, do all staff accurately assess children's development level and to check that planning consistently covers each area of learning.

Having considered all the evidence, the inspector is of the opinion that the setting has taken prompt and effective action to address the points for improvement.

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Next steps

The next step will be further monitoring.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your setting. If you have any further queries please contact us on the number at the top of this letter.

Yours sincerely

Lorna Fitzjohn
National Director

Actions

Action	Due date	Closed date
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	01/11/2013	
ensure that assessment is accurate in reflecting children's level of achievement and is used to identify relevant next stages of learning	01/11/2013	
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	17/09/2013	25/09/2013
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	17/09/2013	05/11/2013
ensure that staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities so that children's welfare and learning and development is effectively supported	17/09/2013	
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	17/09/2013	05/11/2013