

Footsteps Nursery

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

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| Inspection date | 12/03/2014 |
| Previous inspection date | 14/10/2013 |

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| 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

- Teaching is generally strong and there is ongoing training to support staff to promote children's learning and achievements so they make good progress.
- Children's personal, social and emotional development is promoted very well by staff. Children are confident, happy, settled and secure and strong relationships have been formed with staff.
- Children's behaviour is excellent. This is because children are treated with respect and every child is treated as an individual.
- Arrangements for safeguarding children are robust. Secure systems are in place to ensure the suitability of staff who work in the nursery. Most staff have attended safeguarding training and have an appropriate first-aid qualification.
- The manager and supporting team have a very good vision for the nursery's development and the knowledge, skills and focused commitment towards promoting the best learning outcomes for children.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Resources that promote information and communication technology are not always available for the youngest children to further develop their understanding in this area.
- There is scope to enhance the play area for the youngest children, through the use of more natural resources, to provide further support for learning opportunities for babies.

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 checked all relevant documentation, and looked at policies and procedures, including those for safeguarding and recruitment of staff.
- The inspector looked at children's learning journals and observation, assessment and planning documentation.
- The inspector spoke with the nursery manager, individual staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector observed various activities in the nursery and in the outdoor play area.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day of the inspection and from written comments.

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 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 17 members of childcare staff. Most hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above, including two with a degree in Early Years Childhood Studies. The nursery 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 99 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 the range of resources and activities to support children within the two-year-olds room to support their understanding of technology
- extend the play area for the youngest children further, through the use of more natural resources, to enhance sensory opportunities for babies.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall teaching is good. Children make good progress because staff have a thorough understanding of how children learn and develop and promote their learning effectively. Parents are actively encouraged to contribute to the initial assessment of children's starting points to provide a baseline from which to monitor their progress. For instance, the key person spends quality time talking to parents when they register children and during the settling-in period. Information gained from quality spontaneous observations of children engaged in play is used to inform planning for individual children. Staff plan for a balance of adult-guided opportunities and enhancements to the environment. For instance, staff plan to develop various simple experiments for children who show an interest in mixing materials. Children enjoy uninterrupted time to play and engage in activities of their choice. Each child's development and progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage is tracked and monitored regularly to ensure that they make good progress in their development and it is in line with expectations for their age. The nursery

completes the progress check at age two in a timely manner. Staff discuss it with parents and use their comments to prepare the summary and any next steps for development. Comments concentrate on the prime areas of learning, specifically for those children aged under three. Children enter the nursery enthusiastically and settle quickly into activities. They locate their own names on their coat hook. As a result, they are developing an understanding that print carries meaning. Throughout the nursery, staff members model positive communication with children, developing their language skills well. Staff play alongside toddlers in the sand, they demonstrate sand drizzling through the holes. Toddlers copy, holding it in the air, 'look, it's up high', staff reinforce the language, 'it is high'. Older children enjoy a relaxing singing time before lunch. Their participation is enhanced through the use of props. They talk confidently in the group, choose a song to sing and are able to take turns and listen to others. As a result, children are developing confidence and self-esteem.

Activities for babies support their interests and staff encourage their natural curiosity. For example, toddlers delight in painting the path with water and brushes, exploring how to make marks. Young babies are guided by a member of staff who does not discourage them when they take pleasure in pouring sand onto the tiled floor. However, there is scope to enhance the learning environment for the youngest children by making more natural resources available. Materials to support children's early writing are well presented and widely available across the areas of learning. Children choose a book and then share it one-to-one with staff. Children ask questions about the story, pointing to the pictures. Staff use an animated voice to keep the children interested. Children anticipate and repeat the regular phrases. Consequently, children are developing reading skills along with fostering a love of books. Older children develop confidence when using technology, such as the computer, moving the mouse with good control to manoeuvre through various games. Children wait patiently to take their turn on the computer. However, resources available for younger children, do not consistently develop their understanding of information and communication technology. The nursery supports children's understanding of the world well. In the outdoor area there are areas for planting and growing seasonal vegetables, which are harvested by the children and eaten for snack.

Children make independent choices of what they would like to play with and access additional resources to take their play further. For example, a small group of children gather bricks, figures and boats to make space ships to develop their imaginative play as they talk about going from planet to planet. Children have ample opportunities to be creative and explore different media. Children confidently move around the ample spaces available in each room. They are motivated and remain interested and continually challenged by the wide variety of activities and resources available to them. This promotes their learning well. Consequently, children are well supported as they prepare for their next stage of learning, such as school. The nursery works with external professionals to develop strategies and targets for children who may have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This ensures that all children make good progress given their starting points. Children with English as an additional language are well supported. Staff take time to recognise key words in children's home language. This helps children to feel totally included and ensures that they settle well. Consequently, these children are rapidly making progress in their English speaking skills. Communication books are completed and shared with parents of babies and toddlers each day their child attends. A quality

handover at the end of a session ensures that information is shared with parents and carers of pre-school children. Parents have daily access to their children's learning journals and are encouraged to make contributions and comments. Parents are invited to attend parents' meetings with their child's key person. This provides opportunities for staff and parents to share more detailed information on what children have achieved at the nursery and at home. As a result, there is continuity of care and learning.

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

Children's personal, social and emotional needs are addressed very well by staff, taking account of their individual needs. Strong relationships have formed between staff and children who readily seek help. As a result, children are happy, confident and feel secure. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive close and supportive attention as the nursery has two trained members of staff in special educational needs awareness. Flexible settling-in procedures ensure that children gradually become familiar with key persons, routines and their new environment, which supports them well in the transition from home to nursery. Settling-in is a gradual process that meets the needs of the children and their families. There are delightful displays of children's work on the walls. This gives children a sense of belonging and pride. Children demonstrate excellent behaviour throughout the nursery. Staff are good role models and support children to understand appropriate behaviour and respect for their friends. For example, children understand about sharing and waiting their turn. They are helpful as they eagerly wash their pots after snack. The nursery encourages children's independence in self-care routines that helps to promote their good health. For example, children know to wash their hands before they eat and older children serve themselves at snack and meal times.

Children throughout the nursery sleep and rest according to their individual needs and parental wishes. Sleeping babies are regularly checked in the designated sleep area. Toddlers helpfully fetch a tissue for their friend and wipe their nose. They are praised for being kind. All food is freshly prepared each day in the nursery. The cook ensures that children enjoy healthy, nutritionally balanced meals at the nursery. For instance, every week there is a vegetarian meal on offer. Children benefit from plenty of fresh air each day as they spend time outdoors using a variety of equipment. They confidently play football, developing their physical skills. Children are reminded to keep themselves safe by not using the large trucks and dumpers outside of the marked area, in case they cause children to trip. Staff also remind children to walk inside and children spontaneously shout out, 'we can run outside'. This demonstrates an understanding of safe practices. The nursery implements a fire evacuation procedure, which is carried out regularly and records are kept. The nursery has recently updated safety procedures and fitted additional handles to the doors to ensure that children are not able to leave the room without staffs' knowledge. This further supports children to learn about their own safety.

All rooms have a broad range of resources. The children can access these independently from low-level shelving that is clearly labelled with pictures and words. The manager and staff team work tirelessly to create an imaginative and creative environment that stimulates children of all ages. Trips and outings to the local town and the local school enable children to wholeheartedly experience the neighbourhood. Children's transitions in

the nursery are supported well. Movement between the rooms is supported with transition visits and information is shared between key persons and parents about the moves. Summative reports are helpful in supporting the key person to get to know the child as they move to the new room. Children are prepared very well for their transition into other early years settings and school as they meet with teachers. Summary reports are shared between the key person and the reception teacher. Information shared with teachers encourages consistency of learning.

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

Safeguarding children is given high priority at the nursery as the manager and staff have a secure understanding of their responsibilities in meeting the requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. They advise parents of their responsibilities through discussion and the sharing of a broad range of robust policies and procedures which are available to parents on a daily basis. Staff are clear about the procedures to follow if they have a concern about a child in their care and who the designated safeguarding officer for the nursery is. The manager and staff ensure the educational programmes are continually monitored effectively through tracking of the planning. This enables them to provide appropriate challenge to children in order for them to make good progress across all areas of learning. Secure vetting and recruitment procedures help to ensure that adults working with children are safe and suitable to do so. Induction procedures are effective and ensure that staff know and understand their roles and responsibilities, in order to support and maintain children's well-being. The manager and her deputy managers assist with the recruitment process for new staff, although the turnover of staff in this nursery is low. Staff are well deployed throughout the nursery to ensure that children's individual needs are met. Following a recent incident regarding the supervision of children, they appropriately notified Ofsted and a full investigation took place. The manager has implemented rigorous procedures to ensure that children are supervised, and that staff are fully aware of children's whereabouts, at all times.

Frequent meetings between the staff ensure that everyone is kept informed of changes and have opportunities to share any concerns, ideas or good practice. For instance, the manager tests staffs' knowledge and understanding of safeguarding procedures, by using scenarios and then she analyses their answers. Annual performance appraisals ensure that training needs are identified. Formal supervisions are taking place every six weeks to discuss staff issues on a one-to-one basis. The current systems for managing staff performance through supervisions have been recently enhanced to include observations of staff practice. The manager works closely with the local authority to provide a programme of training which supports staff in their continual professional development. Staff give feedback on training and create an action plan to ensure that changes can be implemented and put into practice, so children benefit from the training. All policies and procedures underpin good practice within the nursery. Written risk assessments ensure all areas accessed by children are safe and suitable and staff-to-child ratios consistently meet or exceed the requirements. All staff remain vigilant to children's safety and undertake daily visual checks on each area the children use.

The manager and staff are committed to providing a high quality service to children and their families. They have taken on board and successfully addressed recommendations from the previous inspection. For example, they have accessed and delivered training on how to develop staffs' skills in asking open questions to encourage children to think. Effective arrangements to ensure the ongoing evaluation of the nursery are in place. This allows the manager and staff to continue to identify and work on areas for improvement. Parents are invited to contribute to this process, for example, by using questionnaires, comments and general discussion. This demonstrates a clear understanding of the strengths of the nursery and areas where there is scope for development. This supports the ongoing development of the nursery and in turn, the provision for children. Staff build very good relationships with parents and chat to them on a daily basis about their child's achievements and well-being. A good range of information on display boards in rooms and foyers ensures that parents are fully informed about the Early Years Foundation Stage and the organisation of the nursery. Information about the nursery is also shared through regular newsletters, social networking and a website. Staff have formed good relationships with other local provisions and schools to ensure consistency of care and learning. They work effectively with other professionals involved in children's lives to ensure early intervention and that the child gets the support they need.

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 | Requires improvement | The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection. |
| 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 monitored and inspected again within six 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

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| Unique reference number | EY368378 |
| Local authority | Stockton on Tees |
| Inspection number | 960603 |
| Type of provision | |
| Registration category | Childcare - Non-Domestic |
| Age range of children | 0 - 17 |
| Total number of places | 57 |
| Number of children on roll | 104 |
| Name of provider | Pre-School Learning Alliance |
| Date of previous inspection | 14/10/2013 |
| 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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