

First Steps Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Sharon Greener

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

First Steps Kindergarten opened in 1997. It operates from four play rooms and associated facilities within a two storey self contained premises, located in the Hylton Riverside area of Sunderland. The Kindergarten serves the local and wider area. The Kindergarten is opened each weekday from 7.30am until 6pm for 51 weeks a year. Out of school hours care is available during school holiday periods from 7.30 am until 6pm as requested.

They are registered on the Early Years Register, compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Registers for a maximum of 49 children at any one time. There are currently 68 children on roll in the early years age range. Of these 15 children receive funding for early years education. There are no children currently on roll aged between five and under eight years. The nursery employs 15 staff. All staff hold an appropriate early years qualification. Early year's professional status/qualified teacher status is held by one staff member.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

All children and their families are welcomed into an inclusive environment. Staff work effectively with parents and very well with others to meet children's individual needs, and children make very good progress. The service, care and education provided is evaluated very well and areas for further development are identified and tasked effectively. All of the required documentation is in place and the vast majority is very well organised and maintained. Overall, staff show a very good understanding of policies and procedures.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- ensure that staff consistently complete daily risk assessment sheets, and that records of bi-annual risk assessments conducted are consistently signed by the person completing them
- ensure nappy changing procedures help minimise the risk of cross infection
- ensure that all staff are fully familiar with all aspects of the uncollected child procedure, and the procedure to be followed regarding a written complaint
- develop further opportunities for children to take part in regular outings to places of interest to support their learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a clear understanding of the action to be taken to safeguard children and have all completed training. The recommended child protection literature and

relevant contact details are in place. They have a very good knowledge of the procedure to be followed regarding a lost child, However, not all staff are fully conversant with all aspects of the uncollected child procedure. A good complaints policy is in place. Staff understand clearly how to manage a concern raised verbally by a parent. However, not all staff are aware of the procedure to be followed regarding a written complaint. Recruitment and induction procedures are robust. Systems to ensure the ongoing suitability of staff are very good. Criminal Records Bureau Checks are renewed every three years. Staff are very well supported through annual appraisals, team meetings, the open-door style of management and access to pertinent training. Procedures for the collection of children are strict. Regular fire drills are carried out and recorded. Staff are vigilant regarding security matters. All visitors are screened and fully supervised. Staff are very well deployed. Children are very closely supervised.

The required documentation is in place. The vast majority is very well organised. Risk assessment procedures are good. However, bi-annual risk assessment records are not consistently signed, and staff in one playroom had not completed the daily risk assessment sheets. Procedures to assess the service, care and education provided are very good. Feedback obtained from staff and parents is used effectively to shape further development. The recommendations from the last inspection have been addressed. Space is used effectively. Playrooms are very well laid out and resourced. Child-friendly storage facilities give children easy access to a broad range of resources. They are able to make choices and self-select resources. This helps nurture their decision making and independence skills. Staff understand the importance of promoting equality and eliminating discrimination. They present as positive role models. Children have access to a good selection of resources to help raise their awareness of diversity and the wider world. Very good procedures are in place to support children who speak English as an additional language. Staff obtain key words and phrases in a child's home language, which are used along with facial expressions and gestures. Labels and books in dual texts are displayed. Procedures to support children with special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND) are good. Staff work closely with parents and liaise effectively with others to ensure children's needs are met accordingly. In the past they have facilitated visits from a speech therapist and implemented suggested activities.

Effective relationships are established with parents. Induction processes ensure that relevant information about children's initial needs and capabilities is recorded. Staff work in harmony with parents to introduce children gradually into the Kindergarten and children settle very well. Parents are kept very well informed of their child's progress and daily events. This is achieved through the very good use of regular verbal feedback, daily kindergarten-to-home record sheets, informative displays, newsletters and respective parents access to their children's records. Parents are encouraged to support their children's learning at home by mirroring activities. Staff keep them very well informed of their child's preferred activities and current interests so as to enable them to support their child's learning. Feedback from parents is most positive. For instance, one parent said 'You get clear information about policies and the service is flexible', another said 'I am very happy about the education my child receives' and that 'The Early Years Foundation

Stage (EYFS) was explained to me'. Good links are made with others delivering the EYFS to support individual children's continuity of learning.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Staff show a very good knowledge of the EYFS and how to support children's learning. Children are provided with a very good range of learning experiences, including a good balance of adult led activities. They go on regular outings to local green areas, shops and a pet store, although outings to places beyond the local community are less frequent. Effective procedures enable staff to establish a very sound understanding of children's initial starting points. Information acquired through ongoing observation and assessment methods allow them to efficiently identify the next step to support each child's progress. Staff plan a very good variety of activities and plans are flexible in response to children's interests. Staff are highly motivated and very enthusiastic. Children benefit from the high quality interaction by staff. For example, they make very effective use of open-ended questions and discussion to support and enhance children's learning. Children thoroughly enjoy taking part in activities and are extremely eager to learn, which they are able to do at their own level and pace and their progress is very good. Children receive ample praise from staff for their efforts and abilities. For instance, praise was given most readily with regards to the ability of a small group of toddlers to make marks on paper using crayons. This helps foster children's self-esteem most effectively and they are extremely confident.

Staff manage children's behaviour very well through the calm, consistent use of age appropriate tactics. Children respond positively and their behaviour is excellent. Very close, warm relationships are forged between staff and children. Children show a strong sense of belonging, they talk very fondly to their carers and interact in an extremely confident manner with them. They approach staff willingly for comfort and reassurance. For example, a young child recently admitted to the kindergarten, stayed close to their key person as they played, and every now and again went to her for a cuddle. Children are exceedingly confident communicators, they ask questions and initiate conversations most readily. For instance, an older child pointed to the hearts on their T-shirt and explained that one heart was big and the other small heart was inside the big one. A Spanish coach visits the kindergarten on a weekly basis to work with the older children. Children are extremely eager to demonstrate their ability to count from one to five and say hello and goodbye in Spanish. They are most keen to describe their favourite activities and to proudly point out their creative work from displays. They interact very well with their peers, as demonstrated through their willingness to take turns, share resources and play cooperatively. For example, when playing with cars and a large wooden garage, younger children took it in turn to push their cars down the ramp. Staff help children to develop an awareness of the need to preserve their own safety. This is done through discussions about road safety, 'stranger danger', the correct use of resources and gentle reminder of boundaries. Children take part in regular fire drills.

Staff have a very good understanding regarding the management of an accident,

care of a sick child and the administration of medication. Overall, hygiene standards are high. Staff present as positive role models and use familiar routines very well to promote and reinforce good practices. Children hand wash and clean their teeth at appropriate times. Staff ensure that tables and high-chairs are cleaned thoroughly in preparation for meals. However, appropriate nappy changing procedures are not always adhered to. The benefits of an active lifestyle are very well promoted. Children have daily opportunities to play outdoors. A very good variety of resources are provided to support their physical development. For instance, they use a range of construction toys and mark-making materials with dexterity. Parents are consulted closely about children's medical or dietary needs and details are recorded. Healthy eating is very well promoted and menus displayed. Water dispensers provide children with access to fresh drinking water, and other suitable drinks are provided. Babies are fed in keeping with their individual routines. All children are able to rest and sleep in accordance to their own needs.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:

Met