

First Step Pre-School Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY345348
Inspection date 01/12/2008
Inspector Hilary Elizabeth Tierney

Setting address Crossways Infants, Knapp Road, Thornbury, BRISTOL,
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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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 report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

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).

Description of the setting

The pre-school first registered in 2001 and was re-registered as a limited company in 2006. The provider is on the Early Years Register. It operates from a prefabricated building with an enclosed, outside play area in the grounds of Crossways Infant School, Thornbury. Children have access to the school hall, field and playground. The pre-school is one of two settings operated by the committee and serves the local area.

The group opens for five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.15 to 11.45 for children aged three and four years on Monday to Thursday; from 13.00 to 15.00 on Mondays and Wednesdays for children aged two and a half years and from 12.30 to 15.00 on Tuesdays and Thursdays for children aged three years. There are currently 39 children on roll. Of these, 25 children receive funding for early education. The staff have experience of supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and who have English as an additional language.

Six staff work with the children. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications and four are working towards National Vocational Qualification at level 2 and 3. The staff are supported by parents on rota duty. Partnership arrangements with other early years settings are being developed.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Staff recognise the uniqueness of children and are developing links with other providers in other early years settings to enable them to meet each child's needs. Staff promote many aspects of children's welfare with success, which helps ensure they are safe and secure as they play. Close links with parents ensure good communication, sharing of information and involvement in the setting. Staff have completed evaluations of the group's strengths and areas for improvement and are starting to implement these.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to build links with other early years settings children attend to ensure that all adults who interact with the child contributes to their assessment
- develop and review policies and procedures with particular reference to the complaints procedure

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff work well as a team and the group is well organised. The key person system works well and enables staff to get to know their children and families well.

Although, all policies and procedures are in place and shared effectively with parents and carers, some are not up to date. Children are safeguarded efficiently because staff have a good understanding and knowledge of the issues and required procedures. Detailed risk assessments are in place and regularly reviewed to ensure children's safety. Children are taught about how to keep themselves safe through clear explanations from staff about consequences of actions. Emergency evacuation procedures are regularly carried out with children to ensure they understand what to do in an emergency situation. Visitors are also informed about this procedure on their arrival to the group, so they are aware of the meeting areas in the event of an emergency evacuation.

The management complete regular staff appraisals to ensure their strengths and areas for development are identified. This enables training needs and other opportunities to be offered as they arise. There is a clear and detailed process for recruitment, induction and checking of new staff which ensures that only cleared staff work with the children. The process of evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the group has begun. Staff are aware this is an on-going process.

Partnership with parents and carers is strong. Parents receive good quality information about the group and activities provided in the sessions. This consists of both verbal and written information, with daily books for two-way information from both parents and staff. Children's learning diaries are shared termly with parents during arranged meetings with the child's key person. Regular newsletters and information on the notice board keep parents up to date with changes and events. Parents speak highly of the quality of care, the activities and information provided and the approachability of both staff and committee. Some children attend other early years settings and links with these providers are being developed to help staff meet the individual needs of the children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children enjoy a good range of activities and experiences which help them to learn and develop. Staff have a good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and areas of learning. They observe, assess and make detailed notes of achievements and the interests of children. These details are used to inform planning and help staff move children to the next steps of their learning. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities through the session, with children able to select some resources independently. Children enjoy regular access to fresh air and exercise. Regular walks around the school grounds to collect leaves and explore, and free flow to the enclosed outside play area, is encouraged throughout the session.

Children are confident and happy as they play, they seek out one another to share experiences. For example, a child asks his friends to play in the home corner with him. Children enjoy developing their imagination and creativity. They are able to express themselves through free painting, for example, children were observed mixing paints, talking about what colours they have and were making as they mixed them together. They paint their hands and make patterns on the paper, taking great delight in showing others what they have done. Children develop an

understanding of the world around them as they explore the garden area in the frost and find out how slippery the ground is. Children who go for a walk wrap up warmly and collect leaves, when they return they talk about how cold it was outside, how warm it is inside and how the leaves were cold and frozen. Children are active learners and are encouraged to make decisions and choices for themselves. They enjoy looking at books, having stories read to them and taking part in the story. Children are encouraged to recall what they have been doing at the end of the session. Staff have small groups to enable all children to speak and recall their play.

Children are beginning to learn about a healthy lifestyle. Snack time is organised so children may come to the table when they choose. Children are able to choose from a selection of nutritious food, they sit together and eat well. Fresh drinking water is easily accessible from a water cooler. Children are aware of positive hygiene routines and willingly wash their hands independently before their snack and after messy play. Staff are good role models for the children, treating them with respect and offering praise and encouragement for their efforts and achievements. Children follow this lead and behave well.

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.