

Inspection of Footsteps Stafford

Newport Road, Stafford ST16 1BA

Inspection date: 9 May 2025

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Relationships within the setting are positive. Staff are good role models for children. They communicate well with each other and demonstrate kindness and respect to all. Babies enjoy cuddles from staff when they need comfort, and staff are attentive to their needs. Pre-school children introduce themselves to visitors, showing confidence in their environment.

Established routines help children to know what is coming next. As a result, children generally respond well to directions from staff. For example, pre-school children know to line up for outdoor play and wait for their headcount before proceeding outside. This contributes to a calm and positive learning environment.

Children thoroughly enjoy outdoor play. Children of all ages learn about the natural world around them as they go on a bug hunt. Younger children enjoy digging in the soil during a planned activity. They practise their fine motor skills as they use pens to tick off the bugs they see. They squeal with excitement when they find real life insects and watch with wonder as they crawl up their arm. Older children confidently explore their outdoor environment, leading their own play. They work together as a team to lift logs and tree stumps, asking for help when required. They dig for worms and study bugs with magnifying glasses. Children are confident and inquisitive learners.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The setting has developed a sequenced curriculum that aims to build on what children already know and can do. Children's development is promoted across all areas of learning. Staff plan experiences which help to prepare children for their next stage of learning as they transition through the setting, and eventually on to school.
- Staff know children well. They teach children through carefully planned activities that focus on what they need to learn next. Staff take into account children's individual needs, interests and stages of development. That said, staff do not consistently support children to achieve their identified targets. For example, staff planned activities at table height to encourage older babies to stand for longer periods of time. Staff proceed to sit with children on their knee as they play and do not encourage them to stand.
- Staff support children's communication and language skills well. Babies hear single words and are encouraged to repeat them. Toddlers, in particular, benefit from a language rich environment, practising their spoken language as they engage in conversations with staff. Pre-school children are supported to develop their critical thinking skills. For example, staff ask questions that encourage children to explore and explain their ideas and thoughts.

- The relatively new management team are passionate and strive for continual improvement. They have a clear progression plan to enhance support and guidance for staff, fostering a sense of responsibility and mutual respect within the team. Staff are provided with supervisions and opportunities to engage in a wide range of training to support their personal development. However, supervisions are not yet fully embedded or highly focused on supporting staff to raise the quality of teaching to the highest possible level.
- Staff put detailed support plans in place for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They work in partnership with parents and external professionals, such as speech and language therapists, to ensure children receive the support they need to make good progress. Staff deliver an inclusive provision for all children.
- Early literacy skills are promoted well. Young children enjoy cuddling up on the knees of staff and exploring books together. Staff are creative in their story telling with older children. Children enjoy a 'Jack and the Beanstalk' puppet. They recall parts of the story and share what happens next. This demonstrates high levels of engagement, interest and understanding.
- Staff incorporate opportunities for children to develop their independence through daily routines. For example, toddlers serve their own meals at lunchtime, with support from staff, and learn to eat using a knife and fork. This supports children to develop confidence in their own abilities.
- Parents are valued as partners in their child's education. Parents speak highly of the setting and value the regular updates regarding their child's learning and development. They describe the staff as friendly and comment that their children are very happy in the setting.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- provide children with more consistent support to work towards their development targets and promote their learning to the highest possible level
- embed a more highly focused supervision process to further support staff development and continue to raise the quality of teaching.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY542647
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10401756
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	81
Number of children on roll	100
Name of registered person	Footsteps Day Nurseries Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP520741
Telephone number	01785 215347
Date of previous inspection	1 November 2023

Information about this early years setting

Footsteps Stafford registered in 2017. The nursery employs 21 members of childcare staff. Of these, 16 are qualified at level 2 and above, with the manager holding qualified teacher status. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am to 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for eligible children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Roxanne Mason

Inspection activities

- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The managers and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- Staff spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The managers and the inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The managers provided the inspector with a sample of key documentation on request.

We carried out this inspection 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025