

Inspection of Baby Steps Daycare

Baby Steps Daycare, Former Neighbourhood Office, Reginald Road, Smethwick B67 5QT

Inspection date: 29 January 2025

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

There are breaches to the safeguarding and welfare requirements that affect children's safety and well-being. Leaders do not ensure the premises are clean and suitable for children. Some staff do not always follow suitable hygiene procedures, which negatively impacts on children's health and well-being. Supervision of children is not effective. Young children eat meals without being adequately supervised by staff, which leaves them at risk of choking. Additionally, staff are not deployed effectively across the nursery to ensure children's needs are met at all times. Leaders do not ensure that all staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities. Some staff are unsure of what tasks they should be completing. Consequently, they do not complete frequent checks of sleeping children to ensure they are safe.

Leaders do not ensure the curriculum in place supports children to be ready for their eventual move to school. Staff do not ensure that the environment provides a motivating space for children to participate in learning opportunities. Furthermore, some activities are not suitable for all children. Children aged two years, as well as older, more capable children, have access to the same activities, which do not meet their learning needs. This means that children become disengaged and do not benefit from the learning opportunities on offer. Despite weaknesses, most children appear confident and happy at the nursery.

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

- Children are not adequately supervised at mealtimes. This is a breach of requirements. Staff do not stay close to children when they are eating. At times, they complete tasks in other areas of the room and have their backs to children. Leaders have failed to consider this supervision weakness as a risk to children, should they experience difficulties or begin choking.
- Leaders do not ensure that the premises are clean and suitable for children. General cleaning tasks are not completed regularly, which means the carpets across the nursery are left dirty from the previous day. Children, particularly babies, spend a significant amount of time playing on the dirty floor. This does not promote their good health.
- Some staff do not implement appropriate hygiene routines. For example, staff do not ensure babies have washed their hands before eating. Babies pick food up to eat with their unwashed fingers, which increases the risk of illness and cross-contamination.
- Leaders and staff do not ensure that the environment is set up as a suitable learning space. Children have access to limited resources outside and struggle to find something to keep them engaged. Inside, resources are thrown around and scattered across the floor. Therefore, children do not experience a learning

environment that is inviting or motivates them to learn.

- Leaders do not ensure staff follow safer sleeping procedures. Although staff understand how to place children down to sleep safely and ensure they have suitable clean bedding, they do not frequently check on sleeping children. This does not ensure children remain safe while they sleep.
- Leaders do not ensure staff are deployed effectively. Although the nursery has an open-plan layout, staff, who are new to the nursery and do not have required qualifications, are left alone with babies. Older children enter bathroom areas alone, which goes unnoticed by staff. This means that children's needs are not always met.
- Staff plan a range of activities throughout the day for children. They spend time in small groups, focusing on specific learning intentions, and also set up learning opportunities which children can choose freely. However, these activities do not meet the learning needs of all children. Children of mixed ages and abilities are located in the same area and the activities do not meet the learning needs of all of them. As a result, some children are not challenged in their learning and others find some activities too difficult.
- Staff interactions with children are inconsistent. Some staff do not extend children's learning through high-quality interactions. They often watch children play, or provide basic descriptions of what children are doing as they complete activities. As a result, children do not make the best possible progress.
- Leaders do not ensure staff understand or carry out their roles effectively. Some staff are confused about what tasks they should be completing. For example, they do not complete records of risk assessments, which are part of the nursery's procedures, and are unsure about who should be supervising children during mealtimes and when they sleep. This means that important tasks are not completed and compromises children's safety.
- Leaders work with other agencies to provide extra support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They also liaise with local schools when children are ready to move on to this next stage in their education. Teachers attend the nursery to meet children prior to them starting school. This helps children become emotionally prepared for this transition.
- Parents and carers comment positively about the nursery. They say staff are friendly and they receive information daily about what their children have been doing.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

There is not an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due date
ensure children are adequately supervised at all times, including when eating	28/02/2025
improve the cleanliness of the environment so that it is suitable for children	28/02/2025
ensure all staff follow suitable hygiene routines with children	28/02/2025
develop children's learning environment so that it is inviting and motivates them to learn	28/03/2025
ensure safe sleeping procedures are followed, including checking children frequently	28/02/2025
improve the deployment of staff so that children's needs are met at all times	28/02/2025
support staff to provide high-quality teaching interactions with children	28/03/2025
support staff to plan activities which meet the needs of children of all abilities	28/03/2025
support staff to understand and carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively.	28/03/2025

Setting details

Unique reference number	2716206
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10381209
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	43
Name of registered person	BabyStepsChildcare Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	2716205
Telephone number	01215170323
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Baby Steps Daycare registered in 2023 and is located in Smethwick. The nursery employs eight members of childcare staff. Six of these hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above. The nursery operates all year round. Sessions are available Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 6pm. The nursery offers government funded places for childcare and receives specific funding for disadvantaged children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Christine Ward

Inspection activities

- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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 manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity.
- Parents and carers shared their views of the nursery with the inspector.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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.

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