

Inspection of First Steps Opportunity Pre School

Broadlands Academy, St Francis Road, Keynsham BS31 2DY

Inspection date:

16 September 2025

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Staff provide a very inclusive and supportive service. They conscientiously get to know each child's complex needs in considerable detail. They adapt every aspect of their interactions to ensure children are supported in just the right way. Staff make the most of shared experiences and opportunities for interactions to build relationships with the children. They copy children's investigation as they tap items such as wood panels and pots. They role model drizzling 'gloop', skilfully picking up on children's interests and successfully engaging them. They build children's confidence very sensitively and skilfully. For example, children previously struggling to interact then take a member of staff's hand for the first time. Staff show genuine pleasure at this small but very significant interaction, grinning broadly and praising children.

Staff form a highly child-centred curriculum, led by children's learning needs, their preferred ways to explore and current fascinations. Highly qualified staff offer skilful support for children with complex social and communication needs. They offer exceptionally targeted teaching, focused on children's current level of communication and social interaction. Staff use highly effective strategies, such as choice boards, symbols, objects of reference and clear speech, to capture children's attention and aid their understanding superbly. Staff offer targeted small-group activities, adeptly developing children's attention and engagement. Staff offer simple signing to children that are able to maintain eye contact and use clear words to reinforce their message. This individual approach very successfully challenges and extends children's skills as high as possible, helping them to fulfil their potential.

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

- Management is highly reflective and leads the staff team exceptionally well. They have worked hard to set up a strong provision since their move to new premises. They strive to provide families with the best they can, developing practice in the most suitable ways. For example, they listen to parents' views and have adapted their settling-in procedures. They now share information with new parents gradually so as not to overwhelm and overload them.
- Children and families receive an exceptionally high level of support. Staff have very high aspirations for children and inspire this in all those that work with them. Parents feel very grateful and relieved to have found a place that supports them and their children so amazingly. Staff form close, strong links with parents very early on to build a full picture of all aspects of children's needs. Staff offer essential family support, convenient links to paediatricians, signposting to other professionals and advice and help navigating many essential and beneficial services.

- Partnerships are an integral part of this setting's practice and a key factor in its high level of success. Management lead exceptionally effective and commendable work to instigate and maintain a concerted approach from the team working around children. They work tirelessly with other settings children attend, undertaking visits and inviting practitioners in to share the strategies that work for each individual child. They promote a highly effective and consistent approach to practitioners, as well as thoughtfully offering key new knowledge and training.
- Staff patiently support children's behaviour. They skilfully encourage children to seek suitable ways to meet their sensory needs and regulate their emotions. For example, children switch from showing some frustration to immensely calm and regulated behaviour as staff push them in the spinning chair, surrounded by their favourite toy dinosaurs. Children explore other movements in focused sensory sessions and start to seek suitable experiences themselves, developing their independence and the ability to regulate their own needs.
- Staff adapt activities seamlessly to ensure all children can be included. They are very careful not to overwhelm children. For example, staff pull up a small table and chairs for children that are unsure about joining the group for snack. They move instruments outside the summer house if children are unsure about entering. This is highly effective in providing children with small steps towards bigger skills, building their confidence and engagement very sensitively and beneficially.
- Staff work very closely with professionals to ensure children's welfare. They methodically support children's complex health needs, keeping children safe and maintaining their well-being. They deal with many sensitive situations with compassion and consideration.
- Staff working with children with complex physical and medical needs form a 'provision map' for each child. They liaise closely with advisory professionals, such as sight loss professionals, physiotherapists, nurses and feeding specialists, to carefully meet children's needs. They ensure that children can move around suitably using their specialist equipment and that lighting, furniture, toys and resources are precisely arranged. Each child is provided with the best possible support to help them progress and reach their potential.
- Management provides clear, strong, targeted support for the development of staff practice. They observe the effectiveness of staff's teaching and interactions regularly, supporting this with clear direction and targeted training to build staff's skills and practice continually higher.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

Setting details

Unique reference number	2744542
Local authority	Bath and North East Somerset Council
Inspection number	10408115
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	14
Number of children on roll	33
Name of registered person	First Steps (Bath)
Registered person unique reference number	RP902756
Telephone number	01225444791
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

First Steps Opportunity Pre School registered in 2023 and is located in Keynsham, near Bath. This is a specialist provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. It operates from 8.15am to 2.15pm, Monday to Friday. There are 16 members of staff. Of these, one holds qualified teacher status, one an early years qualification at level 7, one at level 6, and 10 hold appropriate qualifications at level 3. The setting provides government funded places.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Rachel Howell

Inspection activities

- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator (SENDCo) and the inspector evaluated the effectiveness of an activity together.
- The inspector observed the children and staff and spoke with them at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector discussed the leadership and management of the nursery with the manager and SENDCo.
- Parents shared their views of the provision with the inspector.
- Relevant documentation was reviewed by the inspector, including suitability checks and paediatric first-aid qualifications.
- The manager discussed the safety and child protection procedures, and safeguarding discussions were undertaken with members of the staff team.

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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