



First Steps @ Brinsbury

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY308040
Inspection date	15 March 2006
Inspector	Maureen Croxford
Setting Address	Chichester College, Brinsbury Campus, North Heath, Pulborough, West Sussex, RH20 1DL
Telephone number	01243 786321
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Registered person	First Steps Childcare
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

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

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

First Steps @ Brinsbury is one of two nurseries run by Chichester College. It opened in 2005 and operates from three rooms in newly converted premises. It is situated on the college campus at Pulborough, West Sussex. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 38 children on roll including two 4 year olds who are educationally funded. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:30 to 18:00 for 51 weeks of the

year. Children attend from a wide catchment area. The nursery has procedures in place to support children with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language. Staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. The provision receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn to follow very good health and hygiene routines and recognise the importance of this. For example, they discuss with staff the fact that they cannot see the germs on their hands. Their good health is promoted as staff implement the provision's health and safety policies and reinforce the children's understanding about why these are necessary.

Children enjoy physical exercise and benefit from planned outside play in the garden and the sports hall at regular intervals throughout the day. Older children are developing good spatial awareness as they move around the nursery with confidence. They are able to manoeuvre their sit-and-ride toys freely around the play equipment and each other, in a garden area. Staff have a good understanding of how babies and young children develop, which contributes to their good health and physical development.

Children are encouraged to eat healthy foods, particularly at snack times, and learn about the importance of a healthy diet through well-planned topics. They benefit from a varied menu including a nutritious range of hot and cold meals. However, resources are not organised to ensure that children receive opportunities to develop their independence when choosing or pouring their own foods or drinks at snack and meal times. Both children and staff enjoy mealtimes as a social occasion.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The nursery offers a very safe environment for children and staff. Very good security systems are in place, which contribute to the children's safety in the nursery, for example, the front door has a security code and visitors sign in and out of the provision. Staff greet children and parents and make time to ensure they are comfortable and discuss any issues with them. A password system is in place if an adult other than parents or carers collects a child.

Staff clean and check all equipment regularly. They keep children safe as they minimise hazards and risks by adhering to the health and safety policies and carrying out regular risks assessments. Regular evacuation procedures are carried out and management have identified a place of optimum safety. Staff evaluate these procedures and carry out any recommendations.

Children are learning how to keep themselves safe in the nursery. Staff regularly

remind them of the nursery's rules and help them to understand why they are necessary. For example, staff encourage and offer clear explanations of why it is dangerous when a child climbs on a chair. Older children talk about riding their toys safely in the garden to ensure they do not crash into each other and keeping safe.

Children are well protected as staff have attended child protection training and have a good knowledge of procedures to be followed and issues concerning confidentiality.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy an exciting and stimulating range of resources and experiences provided by staff who plan for the younger children and the curriculum for the funded children. Staff make good use of the Birth to three matters framework, enhancing the quality of experiences offered to all children.

Children build warm relationships with all staff who know them well and offer them praise and encouragement when appropriate. Babies and young children interact well with staff, including good eye contact and many cuddles. Staff provide many opportunities for all children to use their senses to explore a wide range of textures, media, such as sand, water and dough. Activities are adapted to ensure all children enjoy the full range offered by staff. Children benefit from consistent routines between home and nursery, which helps to secure children's sense of belonging and emotional well-being. However, some activities are not always well organised to meet the children's needs effectively and allow them to further develop their independence, for example, pouring their own drinks.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and children's learning is good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals and engage in a wide range of experiences and activities covering all areas of learning. The nursery staff are well qualified and experienced, and use their sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage to plan a stimulating curriculum. As a result, children are well motivated and make many good links in their learning.

Staff monitor children's progress to ensure they will be sufficiently challenged. Staff extend the children naturally during activities, for example during story telling. Procedures are in place to ensure that children with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well supported; and experiences and activities are adapted enabling them to make good progress towards individual targets.

Children play well together, develop very good relationships with staff and their peers, and are sensitive to their needs. They co-operate during play, taking turns and negotiating which equipment they wish to use. Children are interested in their activities and show good levels of perseverance and concentration. Most activities are easily accessible to children, which enables them to make choices about their play.

Children practise some early reading and writing skills. They have good access to a range of books and listen avidly to stories read by staff, who extend their vocabulary, which results in children exploring the meaning and sound of words. Children that are more able are encouraged to use recognisable letters when writing their own name, for example, when labelling their work.

Children are extremely confident when counting during everyday activities or daily routines, for example, counting the days of the week and the month. They easily match similar shapes and colours. Staff help children to solve problems and make comparisons. Children receive some opportunities for measuring and weighing.

Children learn about their local environment and the world around them through well-planned and stimulating topics, such as visits around the campus. When examining vegetables they show curiosity and observe differences in shape and colour. They discuss with staff where and how vegetables and fruit grow. Children are comfortable when using the computer and simple programmable toys.

Children move freely with pleasure and confidence when playing in the gym. They are learning to catch and throw balls and beanbags. Children enjoy using sit-and-ride toys in the garden area. They receive some opportunities to climb and balance. Children's manipulative skills are well developed and they successfully use a wide range of tools and materials in the many creative activities offered. They have access to an extensive range of equipment such as pencils, scissors, paintbrushes and glue sticks.

Children make constructions, paintings and collages, which are displayed around the nursery. They enjoy singing simple songs and join in with dancing, and circle games. They show a keen interest in the musical instruments and the sounds made by them. Children enjoy imaginative and role-play in the home corner.

Overall, children make good progress in all areas of learning. This is recorded in photographs, children's work and written observations, which link well into the stepping-stones.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are valued and respected as individuals by staff. The good range of resources reflects diversity in different cultures and genders. Staff are proactive in supporting children with individual needs and ensure that all children are included in the activities, which develops their self-esteem. Good procedures are in place to support children with English as an additional language.

Children are aware that the nursery has rules and understand right from wrong because staff encourage and promote positive behaviour. Their good manners are valued. When a child says thank you for her drink the member of staff commends her for her politeness. Staff help children understand why some behaviour is not appropriate and talk to them about how it makes them feel.

Children benefit from a very strong partnership between staff and parents. They are happy and settle well because staff have a comprehensive knowledge of their home circumstances and routines. Parents and staff share information about their children's day, ensuring a two-way communication between home and the nursery. Parents are able to increase their understanding of the achievement records and the early learning goals through well presented, written information. Regular parents' evenings are held at which parents and staff discuss the children's progress, using the children's assessment records. Parents are encouraged to fully contribute to and extend their child's learning in the home, for example by supplying information for their records.

This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Staff deployment and knowledge of child development is good. Staff have a very clear understanding of what is expected of them on a daily basis, which helps to promote positive outcomes for children. The setting meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Children benefit from consistent staff working with them who understand their home circumstances well. This enables them feel safe and secure, and develop strong relationships. The implementation of the nursery's policies and procedures, staff rotas and deployment, ongoing training and induction programme, contributes to children's health, safety and well-being.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. Management provide extensive support, with systems in place to monitor teaching and learning across the nursery. Staff are appropriately qualified and all have experience of working with young children. Children benefit and make good progress in their learning due to the good knowledge of the staff who extend activities naturally.

Management has ensured that all those working with children in receipt of funding for nursery education have sufficient knowledge of the curriculum guidance. Systems are being developed to evaluate the curriculum and the impact this has on children's individual progress. Staff ensure planning is tailored to children's individual needs.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last visit, the provider was asked to ensure that the complaints record contains details of the complaint and the action that was taken. The complaints record was to be made available to parents on request.

A complaints record has been put in place and a complaint has been fully recorded, including action taken.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, Ofsted has received one complaint relating to Standard 2: Organisation, Standard 6: Safety and Standard 12: Partnership with Parents. The complaint related to staff ratios, safety within the nursery and the response from the management after making a complaint.

Ofsted carried out an investigation on 7th December 2005. We found evidence of staff ratios not being met on the date of the complaint due to sickness and the late arrival of an agency replacement staff member. Also the nursery had kept no record of complaints. The provider has since put in place a complaints record, which is available to parents. The provider has made a full record of the complaint and action taken. With regard to safety within the nursery, we found no cause for concern. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that resources are well organised to meet the children's needs effectively and allow them to further develop their independence.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- further develop the range of activities offered to children to enhance their mathematical and physical experiences.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk