



## First Steps Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120034
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 September 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Hazel Stuart-Buddery
<b>Setting Address</b>	Ashford Hospital, London Road, Ashford, Middlesex, TW15 3AA
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<b>Registered person</b>	Ashford & St Peters NHS Trust
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care, Out of School 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](http://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 satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

First Steps Nursery is a work place nursery. It is run by Ashford and St. Peter's National Health Service Trust (NHS). It is a single storey, self contained unit in the grounds of Ashford Hospital on the London Road in Ashford, Middlesex. It has an enclosed outside play area.

The nursery are registered to care for a maximum of 76 and currently have 73 on the register. The general times of operation are 08:00 hours to 18:00 hours Mondays to

Fridays throughout the year. There are 6 spaces available for children to be cared for from 07:00 hours. A holiday playscheme is available during school holidays. Ashford and St. Peter's Hospital NHS employees have priority over other users. Members of staff have suitable qualifications and are committed to updating skills and knowledge by making use of available training. The nursery is in receipt of funded 3 and 4 year olds and currently has 17 on the register. There are several children on roll who have special educational needs. A small number of funded and non funded children have English as an additional language or hear other languages spoken at home.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of personal hygiene through good daily routines. Staff have good procedures in place and use gloves and wear an apron for all nappy changes. The environment is clean and tidy and children receive good support to develop good hygiene practices. Parents give prior written consent to administer medication which ensures children receive the correct dosage according to their needs. Most staff hold a current first aid certificate, this means appropriate care can be given if needed. Children have a good choice of nutritious meals and snacks. This helps them develop good eating habits and learn about healthy lifestyles. Staff gather all relevant information regarding diet and medical history. This ensures children's individual dietary needs are met.

Children benefit from daily use of the outside play area. They enjoy playing bat and ball and riding on the bikes. Toddlers are beginning to negotiate the climbing equipment and clap with excitement when they successfully walk the wobbly bridge. Children's fine motor skills are developing well. They use glue sticks, pencils, scissors and begin to join construction pieces. Babies receive lots of warmth and affection. This supports their emotional well-being and gives them the confidence to explore new experiences.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children benefit from playing in a spacious well-organised environment. This allows them to move around and play safely. Children keep safe within the nursery owing to the care given by staff who are vetted and who demonstrate a good awareness of safety policy and procedures. Children take part in regular fire drills and learn about safety as staff explain the appropriate handling of resources. Children are safe and secure inside the nursery and in the garden area as staff make regular checks in all areas, which are recorded. They wear hats and staff apply sun cream in hot weather. Children carefully negotiate steps and use the slide safely following clear staff encouragement.

Children are able to explore a range of resources in the nursery. They access toys

and equipment which are clean, safe and suitable for their ages. They move safely around the rooms which are warm and welcoming with good displays of their creative work.

Staff have a good understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and know what action to take if they have concerns about a child in their care. This ensures the welfare of the children is promoted.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are happy and occupied throughout the nursery. Babies and young children gain much from being together. They learn to communicate and develop good relationships. Children under 3 explore and experiment through a range of well-planned activities that are appropriate for their stage of development. Staff encourage the children to make their own choices and express their feelings. Good questioning and repeating children's responses encourages use of language. Toddlers enjoy playing with the sand, they explore how it feels and try to fill moulds with spoons. Young children are beginning to join in action rhymes that help develop their co-ordination. Staff plan a good range of activities for under 3's. They use the Birth to three framework effectively to give children opportunities to progress in all skill areas. Children receive good levels of support to practise and develop new skills. Staff are on hand to offer support to babies who are beginning to walk. Children adapt well to changes in routines as they switch from indoor to outdoor, get ready for meal times and settle for naps. They have good relationships with staff who are kind, caring and attentive to their needs.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make good progress in personal, social and emotional development, they are friendly, confident and play well alongside each other. They have good relationships with staff and one another. They share the limited resources well and use good negotiating skills when playing with toy figures. Children behave well and respond to requests for good behaviour.

Children speak confidently to peers and adults. They talk openly during activities about themselves and their families. Children lack spontaneity with reading and writing. They do not use the writing or reading areas as these are not organised well and are not inviting to them. Children are verbally confident with numbers and ably count to 10 in circle time. They have a good understanding of the passage of time and develop an awareness of the natural world as they plant and water seeds to make them grow. Children enjoy exploring the sand, they squeal with delight when the mould is turned over to reveal a turtle. They make patterns with their fingers in the wet sand. Children learn about different cultures and beliefs through planned topic work. Parents and staff share information with the group about their own cultural differences. Children enjoy singing rhymes and join in with actions while they wait for their lunch. Children enjoy physical play and have good opportunities to develop skills inside and out.

Children do not have daily opportunities to reinforce and further develop their skills in the use of information, communication and technology. Staff do not always use resources effectively to further children's development. In some areas the lack of resources impacted on the children's enjoyment.

Most staff use an adequate range of teaching strategies. Weekly and daily plans are in place, although the activities offered to the children do not always reflect this. Staff complete observations on children regularly but this information is not used to inform future individual learning targets for the children. Staff are on hand to offer help and support. They encourage children to complete tasks independently and offer praise when they have done well.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children feel good about themselves and learn to show respect and consideration for others as they share resources and work in teams. Staff appropriately foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children learn about diversity through well-planned topics and input from parents, however, resources, pictures and posters around some areas of the nursery are limited. Children talk happily about their home life and staff question to extend and show interest. Children make choices about what they want to do and older children successfully negotiate when they share toy figures. They are aware of their own needs and attend to personal hygiene, drink when thirsty and wash hands after messy play.

Staff are aware of children's individual needs and work in partnership with parents and outside agencies, as appropriate, to ensure children can access all aspects of nursery life. Children are well behaved and know what is expected of them. Children learn about acceptable behaviour and are encouraged to say 'sorry' if they have done wrong.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the information gathered from parents. A fact file for all children informs staff of the child's routines at home and how continuity of care can be offered. Parents receive regular newsletters and information on current learning topics. Notice boards that are easily accessible to parents keep them informed of all relevant information. There are opportunities for parents to make suggestions on how the nursery can improve. An annual parents' evening provides an opportunity for parents to develop their knowledge of their child's education. These measures ensure the nursery promotes good partnerships with parents.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children settle well and are happy within the nursery where they are familiar with the routines and have trusting relationships with the staff. Staff work well as a team in most rooms. Staff organise the space well to ensure children can move freely and

comfortably. Staff plan activities so children have opportunities to progress in all areas of development, however, in the 3-5 room activities provided do not reflect the planning. The manager has identified training needs for all staff and incorporates external and in-house training to further develop their knowledge and understanding of childcare and education. For example, all staff have received training in Birth to three to support children in their earliest years. It is planned that all staff will receive Foundation Stage training to support older children.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals, with good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Observations and assessment are completed regularly, but this information is not used to inform future planning for individual children to ensure their learning needs are met. Staff do not always organise resources well and in some areas there are insufficient resources to allow all children to join in the activity.

Policies and procedures work in practise to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment and ability to make a positive contribution. Documentation and written records contain all necessary detail. The management quickly attend to issues and are committed to ensuring they maintain good standards and continually work to further improve on the provision. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the group were asked to: develop staff awareness of special needs and diversity; ensure an appropriate room temperature is maintained; ensure effective use of supernumerary staff; ensure incident book details all relevant information; ensure all new staff have a full induction; ensure staff have a consistent approach to behaviour management; review practise for administration of medication; and review the recording of children development.

The management have identified all staff training needs and implemented an action plan detailing how the needs will be met. Records and procedures have been reviewed to ensure all recommendations have been addressed. Procedures have been put into place to ensure that an appropriate temperature is maintained throughout the nursery. All the improvements help to ensure that the welfare, care and learning needs of the children are promoted.

### **Nursery Education.**

At the last inspection the group were asked to: place greater emphasis in the programme on early addition and subtraction; provide better opportunities for children to use information and communication technology to support their learning; ensure that information gained from parents of children who hear other languages spoken at home is shared with staff; and ensure that cultural customs and languages is acknowledged in the programme of activities.

The manager has identified staff training needs and offered numeracy training to staff

within the 3 and 4 year old unit. Detailed information is gathered from parents about their cultures and backgrounds so that planning identifies festivals and topics are covered to help children learn about diversity. Children do have use of information and communication technology, although not accessible daily, a further recommendation has been made to improve further.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There are no complaints to report.

## **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 satisfactory.

### **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 positive images of diversity are visible to promote children's awareness

#### **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):

- develop better use of assessment to show future short term learning targets for individuals; include on planning how activities will be adapted or extended to meet individual needs; ensure learning opportunities reflect planning
- increase variety and availability of resources to allow children to self-select and build on their natural curiosity as learners with particular reference to the daily use of information and communication technology to support their learning

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:

