

# First Steps Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	120034
<b>Inspection date</b>	23/09/2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Elizabeth Juon / Joanne Graham
<b>Setting address</b>	Ashford Hospital, London Road, Ashford, Middlesex, TW15 3AA
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<b>Type of setting</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

## Description of the setting

First Steps Nursery is a work place nursery opened in 2001. It is run by Ashford and St. Peter's National Health Service Trust and operates from a single storey, purpose built unit in the grounds of Ashford Hospital on the A30 London Road in Ashford, Middlesex. The building has a ramp access and wide internal doors provide ease of movement throughout the building. There is a large car park. A maximum of 76 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 throughout the year, with the exception of public holidays. A few spaces are available for children from 07.00, by arrangement. A maximum of 24 school aged children under eight may attend the holiday club which runs during school holidays in an adjacent building to the nursery. This provision is registered on the Early Years Register, compulsory and voluntary part of the Childcare Register. All children have access to a secure outdoor play area. Ashford and St Peter's Hospital NHS employees have priority over other users but the nursery is open to the public within the wider community.

There are currently 86 children aged from three months, in the early years age group. The nursery is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 25 staff, including the manager, general manager and bank staff. The majority of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications and two staff are working towards a qualification. The nursery is supported by a housekeeper and cleaning staff.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

First Steps Nursery provides a bright, cheerful environment and staff promote some aspects of the children's welfare, education and safety with success. A strength of the setting is to provide individual support to children with learning difficulties and disabilities and staff liaise with parents and other professionals effectively. The manager and staff have a positive attitude to improve the setting; however the present assessment and evaluation process is not successful in identifying all areas for improvement.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop the current assessment and evaluation system to effectively monitor quality and identify targets for further improvement within the nursery
- improve health and safety procedures to fully identify and action, potential risks and hazards to children inside and outdoors with particular regard to fungi in the garden, hygiene procedures for children accessing drinks and monitoring room temperatures
- review and update the safeguarding procedure and equal opportunities statement to reflect current information, guidelines and legislation

- increase staff knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to effectively respond and support children's individual developmental needs and interests
- ensure children aged under two years have regular access to an outdoor learning environment
- develop further the observational assessments and update learning record more frequently to provide a clear record of children's progress and inform planning.

## **The leadership and management of the early years provision**

Robust recruitment and vetting procedures are in place to ensure all practitioners working with the children are suitable to do so. Staff deployment successfully ensures children have adequate support in each room. The majority of practitioners hold childcare qualifications and their skills and experience compliment each other. Practitioners undergo an induction to ensure the policies and procedures are understood and annually practitioners receive training in the core areas of health and safety and child protection. The manager has a commitment to improve the provision. There are plans in place to ensure practitioners have introductory training to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), to complete annual appraisals to identify their professional development needs and a plan to improve the outdoor learning environment to benefit the children. The current self-evaluation method to assess and monitor the quality of the provision overall does not encourage reflective practice to identify the nursery's strengths and weaknesses.

The relationship with parents and carers contributes to their children's well-being. Parents have easy access to their child's daily diary and exchange verbal information with the key person to maintain continuity of care. The setting has recently introduced a parents' forum and newsletter to encourage involvement in their children's time at nursery. For example, by providing items for the harvest festival they help children to consider the needs of those less fortunate than themselves. Parents and practitioners are now updating information on children's achievements at home demonstrating the continuing partnership with the child's primary carer. Practitioners work with other professionals to ensure children with learning difficulties and disabilities make a smooth transition into other settings. Although, this practice is not consistently applied to all children moving on, for example, into another setting, such as, school. Visits to the nursery and settling-in periods are encouraged and well supported for new children and those children already attending moving up into another playroom.

The premises are secure and consistent arrival and departure procedures, such as, the intercom system and checking visitors' identification, safeguard children's welfare. Practitioners demonstrate a secure understanding of how to protect children in their care and where to seek help, advice and support should concern arise. However, the procedure to follow should allegations be made against a member of staff are the hospital trust's procedure and not specific to the nursery. All children are welcome to attend the setting and practitioners value and respect

children's families, background and diversity. This is reflected in the activities and resources on offer. An equal opportunities policy is in place however, this does not reflect recent legislative changes to fully ensure good quality inclusive practice for all.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

Children are happy and generally well occupied throughout the day. Their behaviour is good and they respond positively to staff's effective praise and encouragement of effort as well as achievement, raising children's self esteem. Although there is a daily safety check system in place this is not monitored effectively to ensure room temperatures are accurate and a safe environment is available for all the children. For example, there are fungi growing in the garden that may be harmful if eaten and there is no contingency plan to ensure temperatures remain at a comfortable level until the boiler is repaired. This does not fully promote children's safety and welfare. The purpose built nursery provides ample space for children to move freely and most resources and equipment available are in good condition and some are accessible for children to self select. Children are keen to participate in adult led activities and partake with enthusiasm. They self initiate some of their own play successfully, but at times this is hindered as staff are not pro-active in ensuring that resources meet the children's learning needs and this inhibits enjoyment and spontaneity. Examples of this in the room for children aged two to three years are the lack of quality sand in the sand pit and opportunities for imaginative development in the role play area. The older pre-school children are busily occupied and are making progress in all areas of learning. Practitioners respond positively to the children's interests and extend their language during circle time. Children are confident communicators and share their feelings and news with the staff and their friends. Children improve their emergent writing through easy access to good quality resources such as a white board, paint brushes, pens and paper; they are beginning to recognise their names. Children use the computer on a daily basis and demonstrate independence in their self care skills and when choosing activities. Children have daily opportunities to count and do simple calculations. There is a range of activities and resources that provide children with a positive outlook on the wider world. This enables children to learn about and accept differences.

The quality and standards of the early year's provision varies across the nursery. The provision indoors for the children under two is vibrant with visual stimuli and choice, although this age group have limited access to the outdoors. The older children have access to the garden frequently from their play rooms, providing various opportunities for the children's physical development and play in fresh air. For example, children can run freely, pedal bikes, bounce on the trampoline and paint. The outdoor environment is a valuable asset that the children enjoy immensely but practitioners do not successfully prepare and utilise this area to its full potential and some hazards remain. Practitioners have some knowledge of the EYFS and observe the children's progress and achievements frequently. However, this information is not transferred regularly to the children's progress records and learning journeys to inform next steps of learning to provide sufficient challenge for all the children. Children are well nourished at the nursery and are developing healthy eating practices. Drinks are provided regularly, however, the system for

children to help themselves to a drink is not effective and does not prevent cross contamination. Children's specific dietary requirements are well catered for to ensure their individual needs are met. Children are encouraged and supported to develop good personal hygiene practices, such as hand washing before meals. Effective daily routines and the staff's own good practice aim to prevent cross infection, for example, wearing aprons when serving food and using a sterile gel on hands before entering a room. Babies receive warmth and affection from staff. This supports their emotional well-being and gives them the confidence to explore new experiences. They rest and sleep according to their needs in a comfortable cot room. Children confidently approach staff for support indicating good trusting relationships are built.

## Annex A: record of inspection judgements

### 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*

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	Satisfactory
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	Satisfactory
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	Satisfactory

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	Satisfactory
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	Satisfactory
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	Good
How well are children safeguarded?	Satisfactory

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	Satisfactory
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	Satisfactory
How well are children helped to stay safe?	Satisfactory
How well are children helped to be healthy?	Good
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	Satisfactory
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	Satisfactory
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	Satisfactory

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met



## **Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted**

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

### **Detail of the complaint/s**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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.