



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 113485

DfES Number: 513350

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 17/02/2004
Inspector Name Barbara Christie

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name First Steps Day Nursery
Setting Address Chichester College
Westgate Fields
Chichester
West Sussex
PO19 1SB

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of First Steps Day Nursery

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name First Steps Day Nursery
Address Chichester College
Westgate Fields
Chichester
West Sussex
PO19 1SB

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

First Steps Day Nursery has been registered since 1990 and now operates in purpose built premises on the campus of Chichester College, to the west of the city. The registration is for 142 children aged 0 - 5 years. There are 59 funded 3 year olds and 19 funded 4 year olds. Specific areas of the nursery are dedicated to different aged children. Enclosed outside play areas are also available and these have also been designed to meet the specific age groups.

The nursery is open from Monday to Friday, 07:30 - 18:00, for 51 weeks of the year.

A broad range of the community is served, children with special needs and those whose first language is not English attend.

The nursery offer outings to local sites and closely liaise with First Steps Crèche and the Child Care Centre offering after school and holiday care.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at First Steps Day Nursery is generally good.

Children are making very good progress in personal, social and emotional development and generally good progress in all other areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff working with the funded children are well qualified, and experienced in working with pre-school children. Staff plan well to provide a range of activities to promote the children's learning; enabling them to build on what they already know and understand. The outcomes of some creative and mathematical activities are at times over supported by staff. Missing opportunities for children to use their own ideas and to ensure sufficient challenge, particularly for older children in the group. Books are used to support the topic, whilst effective overall this limits choice. Systems are in place to support children with special educational needs.

Staff carry out regular assessment of children's progress and attainment. Records are well maintained and shared with parents. The recording of observations are detailed and effective in the identification of overall progress. Evidence to identify what needs to be learned next is insufficient, and this limits opportunity to plan for different learning needs.

Leadership and management of the group is very good. Regular meetings are held to monitor provision and these are effective in sharing information and good practice. Staff appraisals are in place and all staff have very good access to staff development and training.

The partnership with parents and carers is very good. Parents and carers are well informed of activities in the group, and outcomes of assessment are shared, this increases opportunity to take part in their child's learning. Newsletters identify changes and events, and an information file is easy to access. Outcomes of meetings and action taken from points raised at the parent liaison committee meetings are included.

What is being done well?

- Children are making generally good progress towards achievement of the early learning goals through purposeful play activities.
- Children are interested in what they do and show respect for each other and adults alike.
- All children are valued and treated with respect. Staff set clear goals and boundaries and behaviour is good

- Children have good opportunities to develop vocabulary and to become aware of alphabet letters. They have good access to a range of tools and materials to develop writing skills.
- Mathematical language is promoted well through discussion and the use of everyday items. Children are able to recognise numbers, and number operations are performed through practical activities.
- Resources are of good educational value and used effectively to promote learning across the six areas of learning.
- Very good leadership and management with good opportunities for staff training and development.
- Good links with parents and carers who are well informed of provision, and there is a good method of sharing information and outcomes of children's learning.

What needs to be improved?

- use of assessment to inform planning for individual children so that sufficient challenge can be assured.
- some aspects of teaching so that children have more opportunity to use their own ideas to extend their learning.
- better opportunities for children to choose from a wider range of books.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Two points for consideration were made relating to assessment and planning. The Day Nursery had made generally good progress since the last inspection.

The implementation of an action plan to address these points has had a positive impact on the children's learning and the importance of continued review is recognised.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children work well in both large and small groups. They are interested in what they do, confident to join in and accept the need to take turns and to share fairly. Staff manage the groups well and behaviour is good. Independence is encouraged and developing well; children are confident in attending to their own needs when preparing for outdoor play. At snack time they willingly take part in clearing away cups and plates.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children demonstrate a good clear vocabulary. Staff explain carefully and invite children to ask questions about what they do. Children enjoy the opportunities given to share ideas and experiences. They express themselves well. Both three and four year olds can identify alphabet letters. They know the sounds that letters make and link the sounds to words and names. Generally good access to books but some are set out to support the topic and this limits opportunity for children to self select.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

There are some good activities to support counting, identification of numbers and sequencing. At circle time and snack time the children talk about sizes and shapes, and staff provide good support to extend knowledge and understanding of how shapes form and change. Good use of displays to support number recognition. Some planned activities directed by staff miss opportunities for children to become more actively involved, and some activities do not provide sufficient challenge.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Good access to a range of tools and materials. Planned visits provide good opportunities for children to explore their environment. Good use made of displays to identify outcomes of visits and activities. All rooms are equipped with a computer, a printer and a range of educational software. Circle time and other group gatherings provide sufficient time for children to discuss families and other past and present activities. Books are used well to explore features of wider communities.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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All children have access to a wide range of both large and small equipment. Large equipment is used well to promote movement and children show a sense of space when using wheeled toys and climbing apparatus. Good support from staff to promote bodily awareness. The children discuss and identify the benefits of warm clothes, food and drink and personal hygiene. Pencils, brushes, and other painting and cutting tools are used effectively to develop skills of manual dexterity and manipulation.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Creative activities are included throughout the sessions and all children take an active part. Many materials are pre-cut by staff; this restricts opportunities for children to develop their own ideas. Some creations are limited by time restrictions and over direction by staff, and some activities lack challenge for older children in the group. Circle time and other group gatherings are used well for singing and performing actions to rhymes. There is good evidence to support sensory development.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- Key issue
- make better use of assessment to inform the way in which activities can be developed to ensure sufficient challenge for individual children.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.