



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 116702

DfES Number: 522555

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 21/10/2004  
Inspector Name Dorcas Elizabeth Forgan

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care  
Setting Name First Steps Pre-School  
Setting Address Scout and Guide Centre  
Longwick Road  
Princes Risborough  
Buckinghamshire  
HP27 9RT

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of First Steps Pre-School 1035692

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name First Steps Pre-School  
Address Scout and Guide Centre  
Longwick Road  
Princes Risborough  
Buckinghamshire  
HP27 9RT

## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and 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 Pre-School opened in this premises in 1995. It operates from a hall in the Scout and Guide centre in the town of Princes Risborough. The pre-school serves the local area.

A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 31 children from two to five years on roll. This includes 28 three-year-olds and one four-year-old who are in receipt of nursery education funding. Children attend a variety of sessions. The group supports children who have special needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.30 until 12.00 Monday to Friday and 12.15 until 14.45 on Monday and Thursday. A lunch club is held on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 12.00 until 13.25.

There are seven staff who work with the children of whom five have early years qualifications and two are currently on training programmes.

### How good is the Day Care?

First Steps Pre-School provides good quality care for children. The staff work very well together as a team and provide a stable environment where children are able to feel at ease. A key worker system is used so that each child has a special adult who knows them well. Training is considered a priority to ensure good quality care for the children. The policies and procedures are in place. The space is used effectively so that the children are able to move freely and access all areas.

The staff have an understanding of the safety issues, but have not received any additional training. Risk assessments are carried out regularly. The fire equipment is in place and children are confident when taking part in the regular fire drills. Accidents are not always recorded with all necessary details. The children are becoming independent in their own personal care and are encouraged to have good hygienic practices. The staff understand their responsibilities to protect children.

The pre-school has a happy, vibrant atmosphere where children are able to socialise and are becoming independent. There is a clear routine for both morning and afternoon sessions; the afternoon sessions for the older children are more structured. The children are able to make choices about the activities they want to take part in and receive appropriate support and guidance. Staff use the resources well to provide interesting and stimulating activities. The staff know each child well and plan for their individual needs. They are skilful in managing the children's behaviour; the children are well behaved.

The partnership with parents works well. Parents are welcomed into the group and are encouraged to take part in the sessions. The staff have an open door policy in which parents are able to exchange information about their child as they wish. Parents are given clear information about the group; all documentation is in place.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

Not applicable.

#### **What is being done well?**

- The setting is made to look attractive and welcoming. The activities are laid out in an inviting way. The display boards are used to good effect to inform and to display the children's work, promoting self-esteem. The theme is illustrated well through the use of the interest table. Children have easy access to the books and objects that are connected to the theme. They are encouraged to be inquisitive.
- The children and parents are made to feel welcome; they are greeted individually. There is a happy, relaxed atmosphere. The children are helped to choose an activity as they enter and are given support as necessary by their parent or a member of staff. The children are well settled and are beginning to be independent.
- Snack time is a social occasion that all enjoy with several learning experiences incorporated, such as practising good hygiene by washing their hands and choosing and pouring their own drinks. The children chat amongst themselves and are gaining confidence to speak in front of friends. Daily helpers are chosen each day to carry out small tasks, endorsing self-esteem.
- The staff have realistic expectations of the children's behaviour. They are good role models, act in a calm way and treat the children with respect. The children are learning to interact with others and to be polite. The children are well behaved.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- records of accidents, to ensure that children's full names are recorded
- a clear understanding by the health and safety officer of their responsibilities.

**Outcome of the inspection**

Good

**CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION**

*All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.*

*As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.*

**WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?**

**The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection**

Std	Recommendation
6	Ensure that children's full names are recorded in the accident book.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

First Steps Pre-School provides high-quality nursery education, which enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage, which ensures the children's learning is promoted well. The plans are comprehensive and effective; they guarantee that all areas of learning are included and that activities are adapted to the individual children's abilities. Activities are interesting and stimulating so that the children are well occupied and challenged. Each individual child is known well and receives suitable support and guidance. All children are motivated and their learning is extended through effective questioning, demonstration, discussion and practise. Children with special needs are supported well and are included in all activities.

Leadership and management are very good. The new committee of parents are dedicated and supportive of the staff; all work collaboratively. The staff work well as a team. The playleader ensures that staff and volunteers know what is expected of them and how children are to be cared for. The group monitor their practices effectively through regular meetings and discussions. They are committed to continued improvement.

Partnership with parents is very good and contributes to the children's learning. Parents are given clear information about the group and the curriculum through newsletters and notice boards. This enables them to contribute ideas and help their child choose objects for show and tell. Parents are invited to participate in sessions. There is no formal system to share information about the children's achievements and progress.

### What is being done well?

- The children talk very confidently, both in large group situations and independently. This is encouraged through discussion times at registration when all are involved and included and at show and tell. The staff are relaxed and listen attentively; they are respectful. The children are gaining confidence and self-esteem.
- Staff introduce themes that are interesting and exciting and which hold the children's attention; they are suitable for the group of children. The children learn about the world around them through reference books, discussions and practical activities, such as making hedgehogs out of clay and straws.
- The children are offered various opportunities to develop their creative skills. They are allowed time to complete tasks to their satisfaction. Most of the children delight in exploring the corn flour mix, experimenting with its runny consistency that became firm and dried on the hands. They develop feelings

of wonder and interest.

- The team of staff work very well together. They are dedicated to ensuring that the children are happy, settled and given the opportunities to become independent. They interact very well with the children and their parents, good relations are made. Staff are good role models.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- a formal system to enable parents and staff to share information about the children's achievements and progress.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. The staff have introduced a number of effective measures to improve the activities offered to extend the children's understanding of history, improve their pedalling skills, promote writing and develop use of familiar words. These were raised as key issues in the previous report.

Themes have been introduced that encourage the children to think and talk about things that have happened in the past and they look at and talk about photographs. New items of equipment have been purchased so that children are able to practise pedalling and riding wheeled toys.

Children are offered a variety of opportunities to write. The mark-making table is always available, writing activities are provided in the different role-play areas and painting, chalking and other media to practise mark making are made available daily. The children join in discussions at registration time and at show and tell in large group situations. They are also encouraged to talk individually with the adults when carrying out activities.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children enter the group very confidently; they are inquisitive about the activities and are able to make choices. They move between activities freely deciding what they would like to do, often with a friend. They play cooperatively and are becoming aware of the needs of others. Children are expected to behave well and are given support and guidance to do so. They enjoy doing simple tasks that they can achieve, building their self-esteem. Children talk confidently about their homes and families.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children happily join in discussions; they are gaining confidence to talk in front of whole group and to give their news. They listen very well to adults and follow instructions competently. Children are learning to handle books well and to enjoy their contents. They are given opportunities to practise making a mark and writing in different situations, for example in the pet shop role-play area and with trays of corn flour. Children are beginning to recognise letters and to say their sounds.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children count up to 10 confidently. Most are able to count further and have many opportunities to practise, for example when using the computer. They are learning to recognise numerals. Each day, with adult guidance, they write the number of children present. Staff introduce calculation during everyday activities. For example, at snack time children work out how many cups they will need for the number of children present at their table. Children recognise everyday shapes and make patterns.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

The staff introduce themes that the children are interested in and are able to identify with, such as native animals. Information and communication technology is well planned, opportunities are made for the children to operate electronic tools and toys and to gain new skills. Children are gaining a sense of time and place. They talk of events that have happened in the past and also recall them in pictures. They are becoming aware of other cultures, customs and traditions.

**PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children are provided with daily opportunities to use equipment for larger physical activities. They move confidently and safely with good co-ordination and spatial awareness. They are encouraged to take small risks, with adult supervision, such as walking along the balancing beam and jumping off safely. They are given many opportunities to develop fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination and are able to use a wide variety of tools such as paintbrushes, chinks, scissors and glue sticks.

**CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children explore a wide range of materials and textures such as clay and corn flour. Children join in action rhymes enthusiastically. They are encouraged to express their feelings, for example there is a great deal of giggles and laughter when children find that the straws shoot off when being cut. A child tells the story of his picture about the beach and the heat of the sun. Adults listen to him and encourage him to communicate his own ideas. Children initiate their own games in the pet shop.

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



## **OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION**

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very 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**

*There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:*

- There are no significant weaknesses to report but consideration should be given to improving the following;
- a formal system to enable parents and staff to formally share information about children's achievements and progress.

*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.*

## **SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS**

### **STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON**

*Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.*

### **STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION**

*The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.*

### **STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY**

*The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.*

### **STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

*The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.*

### **STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT**

*Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.*

### **STANDARD 6 - SAFETY**

*The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.*

### **STANDARD 7 - HEALTH**

*The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.*

### **STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK**

*Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.*

### **STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

*The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.*

### **STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)**

*The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is*

*proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.*

#### **STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR**

*Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.*

#### **STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS**

*The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.*

#### **STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION**

*The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.*

#### **STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION**

*Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.*