



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 205542

DfES Number: 510641

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	21/03/2005
Inspector Name	Kathryn Margaret Clayton

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	First Steps Nursery
Setting Address	Ice House Victor Street Grimsby North East Lincolnshire DN32 7QN

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	First Steps Grimsby Ltd 4689692
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	First Steps Grimsby Ltd
Address	Ice House Victor Street Grimsby North East Lincolnshire DN32 7QN

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 Nursery is a privately owned facility in central Grimsby that was established in 1988. The Pre-school Learning Alliance accredited setting operates from a large ground floor room in a building that was formerly an Ice House. The nursery also has the use of a kitchen, toilets, and a small soft surfaced outdoor play area.

A maximum of twenty-six children aged from two to five years may attend the nursery at any one time. The owner also has another nursery nearby that cares for babies and children under three years of age. There are currently thirty-five children who attend throughout the week, mainly from the local area. These include children who are in receipt of nursery education funding. The nursery also cares for children who have special educational needs. Opening hours are from 08:00 to 18:00 on Monday to Friday all year apart from public holidays and Christmas week.

In April 2004 the nursery formed a partnership with the local Surestart programme and is now a satellite of the East Marsh Children's Centre. Six full and part time staff are employed including a qualified teacher. All other staff hold, or are working towards a relevant childcare qualification.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

First Steps Nursery provide good quality nursery education overall that enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Progress in all areas of learning is very good, except for in communication language and literacy and physical development where generally good progress is made.

The quality of teaching is generally good. There is a good knowledge of the foundation stage curriculum over the staff group. Staff are friendly and enthusiastic, they build trusting relationships with children and manage their behaviour very well. They use effective questioning to challenge children to think and extend their learning and have created a bright and attractive learning environment. Although there are many interesting mark making opportunities available, staff do not always encourage children to ascribe meanings to marks, and they do not effectively monitor the learning experiences children have.

The leadership and management is generally good. Management give good support to staff and a chance to review their own practice through regular meetings and development opportunities. Staff work well as a team. Management have addressed the key issues raised at the last inspection and work with outside agencies to evaluate and improve the nursery education provision. Management have identified most of the areas where improvement can be made.

The partnership with parents is very good. Parents are given good quality information about the foundation stage curriculum and are encouraged to be involved, and to support their child's learning. Parents are kept very well informed about the progress their child is making through a six monthly written report and are very happy with all aspects of the nursery including the learning opportunities.

What is being done well?

- Very good relationships are built with parents. Parents and relatives are invited to share children's experiences, for example, at sports day, grandparent's day, Christmas lunch, and on trips to local attractions.
- Staff use effective, positive behaviour management techniques and children behave very well.
- The friendly and enthusiastic staff build trusting relationships with children and use effective questioning to extend their learning.
- Staff have created an excellent bright and attractive learning environment where children's work is valued.
- Staff use meaningful situations to encourage children to count individually and as a group, for example, the number of spoonfuls of oil and cups of flour needed when making play dough.

What needs to be improved?

- the monitoring of activities undertaken by children, to make sure that over time they experience all aspects of the curriculum and the appropriate stepping stones
- the opportunities for children to develop skills when climbing, sliding, scrambling and swinging
- the encouragement for children to ascribe meanings to marks.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. Children are now given opportunities to question why things happen, for example, as they notice the changing mixture when making play dough. Children's progress is now assessed and recorded in individual play plans and over time is used to plan the next step in their learning.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children come confidently into the nursery, they join together with friends and are interested in the activities available. Staff give a high priority to promoting children's understanding of themselves as part of the nursery and encourage children as they talk freely about their own families. Children respond well to staff and behave very well. They are becoming increasingly independent as they sweep up the sand, help themselves to drinks, and put on their own coats.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Many children speak confidently and clearly, and staff make sure they are introduced to new vocabulary. They listen attentively to stories and respond well to simple instructions. Children enjoy books and handle them correctly in the attractive book corner. There are many interesting mark making opportunities available that are used by children, however, they are not always sufficiently encouraged to ascribe meanings to marks.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Many children count to five and beyond in meaningful practical situations, for example, as they make play dough, the number of cups of water needed, or the number of their friends sat around a table. They can follow a simple sequence of events correctly. There are planned opportunities and good resources to promote problem solving, for example, through the use of props when singing number rhymes, and for children to learn about shape and pattern when constructing and completing puzzles.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children enjoy constructing with a wide range of equipment, and show increasing skill with the use of information, communication and technology equipment. Children are made aware of themselves, their families and other cultures and beliefs in a meaningful way, through appropriate themes and seeing positive images displayed within the nursery. Children show curiosity and notice changes when, for example, they mix play dough.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children move confidently indoors. They enjoy dancing and use a range of movements as they dance to music. They learn about the effects of exercise on their bodies as they feel their hearts beating, and they show increasing control of tools, equipment and malleable materials. Children do not have opportunities to develop skills such as climbing, sliding, scrambling and swinging as part of the planned curriculum.	

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children have many opportunities to explore colour and texture through, for example, painting, paint mixing, collage and modelling work. Children enjoy playing imaginatively across many different activities as they set up their own workshop and 'go to work'. Staff make sure they have access to a variety of stimulating role play situations, for example, a flower shop, baby clinic and a vet's practice. Children respond enthusiastically using their senses, for example, when moving to music.	

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 Issues.
- monitor the activities undertaken by children to make sure they experience all aspects of the curriculum and appropriate stepping stones over time
- make sure children have opportunities to develop skills when climbing, scrambling, sliding and swinging.

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.