



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 109821

DfES Number: 511555

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	30/11/2004
Inspector Name	Elly Bik-Kuen Wong

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	First Steps Montessori Nursery
Setting Address	Hawkley Village Hall Hawkley Liss Hampshire GU33 6NE

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Mrs Jane Fisher
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## 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 Montessori Nursery has been registered since 1996. It is a private nursery owned and managed by Jane Fisher, and offers sessional and full day care to children from two to under five years. It operates from the village hall in Hawkley, which is a small rural village between Selbourne and Liss. The nursery serves the local areas. Children have access to one large hall and room, adjacent toilet and kitchen facilities, an enclosed play area and the adjacent field.

There are currently 34 children from 2 to under 5 years on roll. This includes 15 funded 3 year olds. A maximum of 26 children may attend the nursery at any one time.

Usually four staff work with the children each session. Out of a total of eight staff, six of them have level three early years qualifications (four with NVQ's; one with NNEB; and one with DPP). The proprietor is a qualified Montessori practitioner. The nursery opens during term time from Monday to Friday. Sessions run from 09.00 to 15.00 on Monday, and from 09.15 to 12.15 during the rest of the week. Children attend a variety of sessions, and those who stay for the whole day bring a packed lunch. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

The nursery uses Montessori teaching methods for part of the sessions.

### How good is the Day Care?

The nursery provides good quality sessional and full day care for children.

The nursery is well led and has a suitably qualified and experienced staff team. They work well together, and provide a warm, welcoming and interesting environment for children to thrive in. The premises are spacious, well maintained, and comfortable for them. There is a calm and orderly atmosphere conducive to children's learning. The staff facilitate a good range of resources for children to learn and develop through play. A good operational plan with all required paper work is in place, and

only minor improvements are required.

The staff are safety conscious and care for children in a safe and secure manner. They work closely with parents to encourage healthy eating during snack time. The staff provide inclusive activities to meet a wide range of needs; and are pro-active in supporting parents to satisfy special dietary, health and other requirements. They respect differences and treat all children with equal concern. The staff interact and engage well with children; they talk to children and help them learn. Children can access easily a suitable range of play resources and activities each day, and a wider range through rotation over time. The staff follow sound hygiene practices generally, though the hand washing procedure for children requires reviewing. The staff praise and value children, and are good role models of behaviour. They handle a range of behaviour in a positive and sensitive manner.

The staff team have warm positive relationships with parents. Key workers and other staff liaise closely about children's care and progress.

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

Not applicable.

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

- The staff are committed and work well as a team. Most of them are well qualified with early years training and experience. Good leadership and management is provided by the proprietor/manager. There is comprehensive documentation, including required policies, plans and records for daily operations. The staff make suitable curriculum plans, and regularly observe/assess children's progress in learning.
- The premises are welcoming to children/parents through various displays and images. There is a good selection of accessible toys/activities through rotation over the weeks and months. The staff talk to and engage well with children, who show interest and motivation to learn. They respond well to the calm yet quietly active atmosphere, and display self-learning strategies such as accessing Montessori and other toys/equipment independently.
- The staff work very closely with parents to meet dietary and health requirements, including food and other allergies. Children in pull-ups/nappies can attend. The staff respect differences, and adapt their resources/activities to include children with a wide range of needs/abilities.
- The staff care for children in a safe and secure manner. There is a good adult-child ratio and they supervise children closely. The staff promote children's good health, and serve up healthy fruits donated by parents on a daily basis.
- The staff give children consistent boundaries. They encourage good manners and social skills, like sharing toys and taking turns. They use behaviour strategies suited to children's maturity, eg, praise; changing activity; removing from situation; and explanation. The staff liaise closely with parents to resolve

any behaviour issues.

- The staff have good warm relationships with parents, who feel welcome to discuss their children's progress with key workers and other staff. They communicate well through verbal means, daily diary, newsletters, notices, and written policies placed at the setting.

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

- hand washing procedure for children, in accordance with guidance from the Environmental Health Department
- procedure for recording children's and staff's attendance.

**PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)**

There are no complaints to report.

#### **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
7	Review hand washing procedure for children in accordance with guidance from the Environmental Health Department.
14	Improve procedure for recording children's and staff's attendance.

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

### How effective is the nursery education?

First Steps Montessori Nursery provides high quality nursery education, which enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is very good. The planned programme of activities covers all areas of learning and includes opportunities for self-selection as well as flexibility to respond to children's interests. Staff have a good knowledge of individual children, which they use to ensure activities are presented at the right level. There is an efficient system in place for assessing children's progress although it is not so effective in recording incidental learning. Staff value children's achievements and manage their behaviour well. They are involved in children's activities and form easy and trusting relationships with them. Good support is offered for children with special educational needs. Resources are rotated to provide children with different experiences although this is not always clearly recorded.

Leadership and management is very good. Strong leadership provides effective support for staff. They work well as a team and have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The nursery is keen to develop its practice and responds positively to feedback from parents and staff. The planned programme is evaluated informally and changes made to ensure children's individual needs are met.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are provided with a good range of information about the nursery and the early learning goals. They are kept up-to-date with current issues and weekly topics. Parents have opportunities to be involved and encourage children's learning at home. Formal and informal arrangements are made to discuss children's progress and share their records.

### What is being done well?

- Effective leadership supports an enthusiastic and committed staff team in providing an environment where children enjoy learning.
- Partnership with parents is given a high priority. Parents are well informed, involved in their child's learning and are confident with the care and learning their child receives.
- Children's personal, social and emotional development is given a strong emphasis. Children are keen, enthusiastic and demonstrate increasing independence in completing tasks for themselves.
- Staff have a good understanding of behaviour management and use effective strategies to promote positive behaviour.
- Activities are carefully structured to support children's individual needs and build on what they already know and can do.

<b>What needs to be improved?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● recording of children's learning when choosing activities for themselves</li><li>● written records showing the rotation of resources.</li></ul>



<b>What has improved since the last inspection?</b>
<p>Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. The nursery was asked to make more regular use of musical instruments. Musical instruments are used twice weekly. Children enjoy music sessions and play enthusiastically. Additional instruments are borrowed termly to further extend children's opportunities to play different instruments and explore sounds.</p> <p>The nursery was also asked to give more consideration through the planned programme to the use of role-play to encourage children to develop their own stories. A role-play area is set up daily, for example a doctor's surgery. Children dress up, pretend to be doctors and make notes on a clipboard. Twice a week more emphasis is given to role-play and a larger area is set up with more resources and greater adult involvement to extend and develop children's stories further.</p>

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are interested in the activities available. They arrive confidently and select resources for themselves. They are self-motivated and able to work independently, seeking help when needed. Many concentrate for extended periods and form positive relationships with staff and each other. They show care and consideration for others. They learn to play co-operatively when taking turns during games and sharing resources. They are becoming aware of behaviour expectations and most behave well.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are developing confidence in communicating with others. They initiate conversations with adults and each other and contribute at circle time. Children talk about what they are doing and recall past events. Children listen attentively to stories. They choose books for pleasure and handle them well. Many recognise their name as well as some letters and letter sounds. Children engage in a variety of activities to develop their pre-writing skills and some attempt to write their name.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children enjoy mathematical activities. Many count accurately, recognising numerals and groups of objects. Some confidently explain activities to others. Children learn about mathematical concepts during self-chosen and planned activities presented at their level. They count, sequence and sort. They recognise big and small. They explore size and shape when making puzzles, constructing with bricks or completing Montessori tasks. Children enjoy acting-out number rhymes.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

A variety of activities are planned to extend children's knowledge of the world for example growing and making a wormery. Children investigate floating and sinking and use magnifying glasses. They show an interest in technology, for example they turn the cassette player on and off and seek help to change the cassette. Children are introduced to other cultures and beliefs through topics and craft. Children enthusiastically create their own models and designs from construction kits and boxes.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children use a range of small and large equipment with increasing confidence and control. They climb, slide and balance. They develop spatial awareness when negotiating a pathway for cars and bikes outside and playing with small world toys inside. They experiment with 3D shapes to find out where they will fit. Children are encouraged to use equipment safely and many demonstrate increasing competence in using tools and materials.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children enjoy craft activities and freely choose to make a collage, draw using templates and paint. They concentrate on creating 3D models from boxes, try different paint effects and manipulate dough. They enthusiastically join in with familiar songs and rhymes. They explore sounds and speed when playing musical instruments. The role-play area is regularly changed to stimulate children's interest. Children dress-up and create their own storyline using the props available.

**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:
- consider ways to ensure the system for planning and assessment includes children's incidental learning and rotation of resources.

*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.*