

First Steps Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Sheila Harrison

Setting address Victory Hall, Long Marston, Tring, Hertfordshire, HP23 4QS

Telephone number 07925 185311

Email

Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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 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.

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Description of the setting

First Steps Pre-School opened in 1997 and is managed by a voluntary parent and carer committee. It operates from Long Marston Village Hall and parking is available close by. The pre-school serves the village of Long Marston and other surrounding villages.

The setting opens Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 9am until 12 noon. A lunch club operates on Tuesday and Thursday from 12 noon until 1.30pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. A maximum of 24 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 20 children attending who are within the early years age range. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The setting provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds. The group supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds an appropriate early years qualification at Level 2, one holds a Level 3 and one holds qualified teacher status. The setting receives support from the local authority and is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are settled and are making good progress in their learning and development. Strong links with parents and carers ensure that they are kept well informed of their children's progress. This ensures that the uniqueness of each child is fully recognised. The setting promotes a generally safe and healthy environment where staff are well aware of, and respond to, the individual needs and interests of the children. The leadership and team work closely in partnership with other professionals to gain an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and take effective steps to improve it.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- ensure written parental permission must be requested at the time of the child's admission to the provision to the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment in the future (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare). 12/04/2011

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

- reappraise the environment to which children are being exposed and make necessary adjustments to secure their safety at all times, with reference to the wasp nest and the storage cupboard.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Arrangements for safeguarding children are carefully managed. Effective procedures are in place for liaising with the appropriate child protection agencies and staff have a secure understanding of the child protection processes. Records required for the efficient management of the early years provision and to meet children's needs are mostly maintained and effective, although permission for emergency medical treatment is not always collected before a child starts and this potentially limits the care of the children in an emergency.

The surroundings are conducive to learning and are secure. There are basic risk assessments of the premises informing the daily checklist. However, the system to assess and minimise hazards in relation to the maintenance of the premises in a timely manner is not securely in place. This potentially risks the smooth running of the setting. A well-ordered environment ensures that resources to cover six areas of learning are suitable and available for the children to freely choose from. Children are taught to be safety conscious and they show a strong understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They use the stage for their concerts and are reminded not to run indoors.

Staff have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and they are well deployed to support the children's learning. They are skilled at differentiating the activities to ensure all children are involved and gain the most from what is on offer. Children are making good progress relative to their starting points and capabilities. Their progress is carefully monitored to ensure that there is no underachievement. Staff are well aware of children's likes, dislikes and current stage of development through the sensitive settling procedure, including the information parents provide. This information helps the setting to provide an individualised service and have realistic expectations of the children.

Children are encouraged to feel valued and free from discrimination as the play materials reflect diversity. They use a useful range of multicultural resources to learn about other cultures and positive images of ethnicity are displayed around the pre-school. Staff promptly identify a child's need for additional support, sharing information and records with colleagues, parents and, where appropriate, with interagency teams to ensure that each child gets the help he or she needs.

The setting has effective processes in place to monitor the quality of the provision. The strengths of the setting are recognised and the committee, staff and parents contribute to the setting's self-evaluation process. Staff strive for improvement and to provide high quality care and education. They are enthusiastic and knowledgeable. They make good use of the local authority advice agencies and

attend short courses to update their expertise. They regularly discuss and evaluate the routine and activities.

The setting has effective and well-established relationships with parents and carers, ensuring each child's needs are met. There is a well-developed, two-way flow of information about their own child's achievement, well-being and development. Parents know their child's key worker and talk daily to the staff about their development at home. They can see their child's learning journey on request and are encouraged to add comments from home. The newly formed website and e-mail address will give further ways for parents and staff to communicate efficiently. Parents are encouraged to take part in the committee and bring their skills and interests into the setting. Children greatly enjoy the music sessions run by a parent.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are developing very positive attitudes to learning. They are enjoying their time at the setting and display high levels of involvement in the activities. They are making good progress in their learning and development as the staff ensure each child is sufficiently stimulated through a wide range of planned and child-initiated play activities. Staff used the expertise from the local school to ensure the older, more able children have valuable opportunities to practice their handwriting skills in an appropriate style. They listen to and expand the ideas given by the children. For example, children observing ladybirds on a walk through the village considered and painted large stones to represent the creatures.

Children play well independently and can choose from the wide range of pre-determined resources to cover all the areas of learning, and older children confidently ask for other equipment from the store cupboard. Children play alongside their peers successfully and they develop a strong sense of belonging. They use favourite action rhymes with puppets to count and recognise numbers. Children enjoy choosing the songs from a range of picture cards devised by a member of staff. There are many photographs on display of them enjoying their play. They have very many valuable opportunities to see and use their names. Inspiring examples of children's individual work are displayed following a project on 'things we are good at'. Children have exciting opportunities to play imaginatively. They greatly enjoy small world play with the new model pirate ship that lights up and make a noise. Following a course, staff increased resources to usefully extend children's interest in superheroes.

Children are encouraged to be safe and develop a good understanding of the wider world. They discuss safety as they use the challenging play apparatus in the local park. The local vicar regularly visits the setting and children visit the church as part of their walks around the village. They discuss road safety on the walk to a local small holding to visit the animals and see the farm machinery. They learn to help others by raising money for charities and acknowledge the festivals of others.

The setting takes effective steps to promote children's good health and well-being.

Children are well nourished and are learning about a healthy diet with the organisation of a rolling snack time. Their independence is encouraged as they cut the fruit and pour their own drinks. This gives children time to have their healthy snack at a time of their choosing so they can concentrate and continue in their play and learning.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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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