

# One Step Ahead

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY236469
<b>Inspection date</b>	21/10/2011
<b>Inspector</b>	June Oliver

<b>Setting address</b>	Nevendon Playcentre, Nevendon Road, WICKFORD, Essex, SS12 0NL
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<b>Type of setting</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
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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

One Step Ahead is owned by a formal business partnership. The pre-school opened in 2002 and operates from two rooms in a play centre located within walking distance of the main shopping area in Wickford, Essex. All children share access to a secure, enclosed, outdoor play area.

A maximum of 34 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions times are from 9.15am until 12.15pm and 12.45pm until 3.45pm. There are currently 60 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these, 39 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The pre-school serves the local community and surrounding areas. The setting supports a small number of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school employs 10 staff, of whom seven of the staff, including both managers hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's learning and development is mostly well supported during their time at the pre-school and they make good progress towards the early learning goals. Children are happy and settled in their environment and enjoy participating in a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities which mostly cover all areas of learning consistently. The staff team are led by experienced managers who are responsible for day-to-day practice. Effective partnerships with parents and other professionals have been established to generally enable children's individual needs to be met. Efficient procedures to monitor and evaluate the setting are in place, including valued input from children, parents, and staff. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures are in place to support practice.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- work in partnership with parents, sharing information and involving them in their child's continuous learning and development
- develop further opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in their play and learning
- ensure children have regular opportunity to use information and communication technology and programmable toys to support their learning.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Children's well-being is safeguarded as good procedures are in place to ensure children are cared for by staff who have completed all required suitability checks and training. A safeguarding policy is in place and staff have a clear understanding of how to follow and support any concerns with regard to the children's welfare. Risk assessments are completed daily to ensure children play in a safe environment. Good staff ratios and vigilant staff ensure children are supervised well. A comprehensive set of written policies and procedures support practice.

Staff, parents and children contribute to the effective self-evaluation process and ensure that all ideas are considered. Improvements are identified to raise outcomes for children. For example, the implementation of progress wheels enables children's learning to be easily documented and shared with parents. Practice is regularly reviewed at staff meetings to ensure the needs of children and families are being met. For example, changing snack to a rolling snack time so children can access this when they are ready. All staff contribute to planning meetings to ensure the individual goals of their key children are provided for in the activities and resources offered on a day-to-day basis.

The managers lead the staff team, which are mostly well established in their roles, and efficient rotas ensure the smooth running of the setting. The setting is welcoming and has posters, displays and artwork, such as a display with children's faces and words saying what they like, to create a sense of belonging. Good quality resources and equipment that are appropriate for the children attending are easily accessible, well presented and support children's learning well. Children are able to self-select activities and resources to encourage independent learning. Staff interact well with children ensuring good supervision and support. The setting promotes equality and diversity well and staff easily adapt activities to enable all children to participate. For example, supporting some children to climb the steps of the slide and supervising others using it independently. This ensures children's individual needs are being met most effectively.

Good opportunities are available for parents and carers to contribute to their child's time at the setting, for example, using regular questionnaires to seek opinions. Regular opportunities to share children's learning journals enable parents to be fully informed about their child's progress towards the early learning goals. However, parents' comments are not always asked for or recorded so learning is not as effectively supported. Parents verbal references suggest they are very happy with every aspect of care and learning opportunities offered to their children. The pre-school has good relationships with the local schools that children transfer on to. Good use has been made of the local authority for support with practice.

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

Children enjoy their time at the setting as good relationships have been built between themselves and the staff. Well-planned activities ensure children's individual goals are provided for. Children are learning how to handle tools safely as they use play knives with the play dough. Children are able to move around the setting safely because the environment is safe and children know their boundaries. For example, they can select from the selection of good quality resources and toys and know how to use them correctly. This encourages children to become independent learners.

Children's good health is effectively promoted as children choose to play outside regularly. For example, children use bikes and run around outside. This effectively promotes physical development and means that children are aware of the effect of exercise on their bodies. Children know about healthy food as they choose fruit, vegetables and crackers for snack. Children are aware of foods that are healthy and those that are not so as they talk with staff at snack time. They learn to be independent as they are encouraged to find their own coats from their lockers before going outside. Children know about effective care routines, such as handwashing before snack and after using the toilet, and perform these tasks independently.

Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals because activities are planned around children's interests and needs. Regular observations are linked to areas of learning and stepping stones and are used for assessment. These are used to identify next steps and to ensure all areas of learning are provided for. Children are developing their language skills as staff ask relevant questions and allow time for response. For example, children are asked whether they would like to use large or small leaves for their pictures. Children have good opportunities to practice writing as resources are available inside and outside. Listening skills are encouraged as children sit and wait for their name to be called at registration. Mathematical skills are promoted as children count the number of children sitting having snack. Children learn about information and communication technology using a limited range of resources, such as a laptop and some electronic toys. This means that this area of learning is not fully supported. Children are developing good skills for the future.

Children behave well in the setting. This is because of the clear and consistent boundaries with explanations for the rules. This ensures children feel settled and confident to explore the setting. Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported in the setting. This is because the pre-school works appropriately with parents. However, children have little opportunity to see their home language valued in the setting through posters, books or songs. This means that children's understanding of their own language is less supported. Children are learning about their own and other cultures and beliefs because they celebrate festivals and birthdays together, and parents are invited in to talk about their culture.

## 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

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

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	2
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

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
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