

First Steps

5 Cheshunt Park Farm, Cheshunt Park, Cheshunt, WALTHAM CROSS, Hertfordshire, EN7 6PZ



Inspection date

2 June 2015

Previous inspection date

2 September 2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Good	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Good	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Good	2
The setting meets legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- The nursery's educational programmes provide children with stimulating experiences across all seven areas of learning, which match their individual needs. This successfully ensures that all children are developing the key skills needed for the next steps in their learning, including school.
- Staff have undertaken safeguarding training and are able to confidently recognise signs of child abuse. They also have a good awareness of what to do if they have a concern about a child in their care. Children show that they feel safe and secure in the nursery.
- Systems for managing staff performance are effective. This ensures that the manager is able to quickly identify and tackle any underperformance. This, along with staff's training and qualifications, supports children's good progress towards the learning goals.
- Staff give children practical challenges. For example, when using large play equipment in the garden, children are supported to work out how to climb the steps safely. This promotes their problem-solving skills in fun, purposeful ways.
- The nursery promotes a warm family atmosphere, which all of the children respond very well to. Children form extremely strong attachments with their individual key person and other members of staff. As a result, they share concerns with their individual key person and look to them for comfort should they feel tired or upset.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Partnership working with parents is not fully effective in promoting shared home learning, in order to extend individual children's development even further.
- Children are not always provided with sufficient time to make decisions and be independent because staff are sometimes over eager to support them as they play.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- give parents more information and ideas about how they can support children's learning at home, in order to build securely on what they know and can do
- promote children's independence further by giving them more time to organise themselves, think through solutions and use their emerging skills and knowledge.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed general play and the snack time and lunchtime routines in the nursery.
- The inspector talked with the manager, members of staff and the children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector looked at evidence of the suitability checks for all of the staff and a range of other documentation. Safeguarding and first-aid training certificates were viewed.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager in relation to observations of the children's play, learning and progress.
- The inspector discussed the self-evaluation undertaken by the manager and staff.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents through feedback forms completed by them.

Inspector

Ann Cozzi

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is good

Staff complete regular assessments of children's progress and use these to effectively plan challenging learning experiences. All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are becoming effective learners. Partnerships with parents are good. However, staff do not consistently provide parents with specific information about children's next steps in learning. This means that the partnership aspect of supporting children's learning at home is not fully promoted. Staff support children's physical development well. For example, children are keen to participate in an exciting parachute game, which helps them to gain control of movements and improve their balance. In addition, children learn how to cooperate with their peers. Overall, children's confidence and independence are fostered well by staff. For example, very young children are encouraged to move around the inside and outside areas of the nursery at their own pace, according to their individual levels of mobility. On occasions, some staff do not fully promote older children's independence. For instance, during a craft activity, they do not always provide children with enough time to think through and complete their creations independently.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children is good

The manager ensures that all staff are organised well across the nursery and children's needs are consistently met. Staff are good role models to children. They promote and implement clear guidance about what is acceptable behaviour. They achieve this by providing children with clear and consistent explanations. Staff also teach children about how to keep themselves safe, for example, while waiting for their turn on the swing. As a result, children stand out of the way as they wait to use the large play equipment. Staff help children to develop an understanding about the importance of physical exercise and a healthy diet. As a result, children are encouraged to manage their own hygiene and personal needs. Consistent praise and encouragement mean that children develop high levels of self-esteem and confidence.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision is good

The manager's accurate monitoring of staff's practice means that planning and assessments are consistent and precise. This ensures that all children, including those in need of additional support, are successfully targeted. As a result, any gaps in learning are effectively addressed. The nursery has also established good partnerships with external agencies and these make a strong contribution to meeting children's needs. As a result, appropriate interventions are secured to ensure that all children receive the support they need. The nursery's strengths and weaknesses are effectively identified. This is achieved through thorough reflective practice, which takes account of the views of staff, children and their parents. This information is used by the management team to inform future strategies. This effectively drives the manager and her staff to consistently make improvements over time.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY255445
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	855951
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	33
Name of provider	First Steps Partnership
Date of previous inspection	2 September 2009
Telephone number	01992 635416

First Steps was registered in 2003. The nursery employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or 3. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday for 50 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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