

# First Steps Pre-School

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



<b>Inspection date</b>	2 December 2016
Previous inspection date	12 December 2013

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents

### This provision is good

- Staff are extremely well qualified and highly motivated in their work. They undertake detailed self-evaluation to help review the quality of the pre-school. Staff demonstrate a strong capacity to maintain good quality care and education for children.
- The pre-school staff work closely with other settings that children attend. They prepare children well for starting school and develop effective partnerships with teachers. This helps children to experience a smooth move into their next stage of learning.
- Children learn through a wide range of activities. They enjoy going on trips outside of the pre-school to enhance their experiences. Children go for walks in local woodland where they encounter wooden carvings of familiar characters from books they have read. This helps to engage children's interest in stories.
- Key-person arrangements are effective. Children enjoy warm and close relationships with their special person and settle well. Staff keep parents informed of how well their children settle during the session so they feel reassured.

### It is not yet outstanding because:

- The assessments that staff make of children's starting points in learning are not always specific. As their exact individual abilities are not clear, staff's plans for children's learning are not highly effective from the very beginning.
- The tracking sheets that staff use to review children's progress only cover expected patterns of development. On occasion, this affects staff's confidence in planning next steps in learning that provide as much challenge as possible for more-able children.

## What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- identify more sharply focused starting points in learning to plan more effectively from the very beginning and to more accurately measure the progress that children make
- develop more specific tracking of children's development to plan activities and support that provides children with highest levels of challenge.

### Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and chairperson of the committee. She looked at relevant documentation, such as the self-evaluation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school and the committee members.
- The inspector spoke to a small number of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke to children and sat with them during a singing session.

### Inspector

Hayley Marshall-Gowen

## Inspection findings

### Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

Committee members are motivated and knowledgeable. Together with the manager, they lead the pre-school with a strong sense of direction and commitment. The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff and committee members are all clear about what their responsibilities are in terms of child protection, safe recruitment of staff and carrying out risk assessments. Staff and committee members undertake training on a regular basis to make sure that they have an up-to-date knowledge of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. Staff experience supportive supervision meetings that motivate them and help them to develop professionally. Staff attend training to enhance their knowledge and to build on their already good understanding of how children learn. Parents' suggestions are used effectively by staff to make improvements to the pre-school. For example, staff have acted on their suggestions by extending opening hours to provide families with the care that they require for their children.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Children have multiple opportunities to develop their writing skills. They make marks in sand and salt, using their fingers to trace out the shape of letters. Staff adapt their teaching and trial new approaches to enhance the learning experiences for children. After reviewing the way that they plan for children, a more fluid and responsive method was introduced. This enables staff to focus in on children's changing interests and to adapt activities to more effectively build on their emerging ideas. Children are imaginative in their play. They talk openly about their ideas and staff support their language skills well. Staff teach children songs with actions and children are eager to volunteer to join in. During the songs and rhymes, children learn simple addition and subtraction; this helps them to understand mathematical problems.

### Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children learn to be fit and active. Staff teach them about healthy eating and take them to the local outdoor areas to help them to develop their physical skills. Children learn about keeping themselves safe. For example, when using the climbing frame children understand they must hold on and go up the rope ladder one at a time. Children show high levels of self-esteem. They are independent and confident in dressing themselves to get ready to play outdoors. Staff provide opportunities for children to talk to the group and to share their ideas. Children help staff to tidy up the toys and are able to dress themselves to get ready for playing outside.

### Outcomes for children are good

Children behave well and display kind and caring attitudes towards each other and staff. They are developing essential skills in readiness for starting school and display high levels of confidence. Children take delight in looking at books. They tell the story by using the pictures on each page as clues to what the text might say. They also become skilful storytellers and staff write down their ideas to share with them later.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	129340
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	1063604
<b>Type of provision</b>	Sessional provision
<b>Day care type</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Age range of children</b>	2 - 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	24
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	19
<b>Name of registered person</b>	First Steps Pre-School (Long Marston)
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP519066
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12 December 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	07925 185311

First Steps Pre-School was registered in 1997. The pre-school employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including the manager with early years professional status and the deputy manager who holds qualified teacher status. The pre-school opens on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, term time only. Sessions are from 9am until midday. There is an optional lunch club between midday and 1.30pm on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. On Tuesday, the pre-school opens in the afternoon, from 1.30pm until 3pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120354](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120354).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our website for news, information and updates at [www.ofsted.gov.uk/user](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/user).

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2016

