

First Steps Pre-School

21 Biscot Road, LUTON, LU3 1AH



Inspection date

8 May 2017

Previous inspection date

8 January 2014

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Inadequate	4
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Inadequate	4
Outcomes for children		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is inadequate

- Children's safety is compromised. Assessments of risks are not sufficiently robust. The action taken is not always effective to protect children from risk of harm, such as access to hazardous substances or use of higher risk areas.
- Staff do not consistently follow the pre-school's behaviour management procedures. Children's behaviour is not managed appropriately and staff do not support children in learning how to manage this themselves.
- Staff do not consistently make good use of their assessments of children to plan challenging and stimulating play experiences for them. As a result, children do not make sufficient progress.
- The manager's monitoring of children's progress is not always sufficiently robust to provide detailed information to further inform the activity planning.
- Staff do not always support children well at times of transition during the daily routine, such as when waiting for lunch or waiting to go home.

It has the following strengths

- Children learn about healthy practices. For example, they understand why they need to wash their hands after they have wiped their nose.
- Staff work in partnership with parents and gather clear initial information about their children. The key-person system is effective in helping children to settle and they build warm relationships with their key person and other staff.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and the Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due Date
■ ensure that risk assessments include the measures to be taken to minimise or remove risks and make sure that staff are aware of these assessments and know the action they need to take	22/05/2017
■ ensure that staff consistently implement the setting's behaviour management procedures so that children's behaviour is always managed in an appropriate way	05/06/2017
■ improve the use of assessments of children to inform the planning of challenging opportunities and activities that support children in making progress in their learning and development.	10/07/2017

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

- enhance the procedures at times of transition during the day so that children understand what is happening and can more fully participate
- build on the procedures for monitoring children so that these more clearly indicate the progress of individuals and groups of children and use this information further to inform the activity planning.

Inspection activities

- This inspection was prioritised as a result of a risk assessment process, following a notification to Ofsted from the provider.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector talked with staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection. She completed a joint observation with the pre-school's deputy manager.
- The inspector held meetings with the pre-school manager and the deputy manager. She looked at relevant documentation, discussed the pre-school's self-evaluation and saw evidence of the suitability of staff.
- The inspector spoke to a number of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Kelly-Anne Eyre

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is inadequate

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective. The manager and staff do not fully assess all risks to children and have not put appropriate measures in place to protect them. On the day of the inspection, children were able to access cleaning fluids stored in a room with a broken door lock. A risk assessment of a defective gate in an area of a playroom failed to note that children could not be easily seen by staff at all times when they accessed this gated area. The manager has taken steps to develop staff's awareness of child protection. Staff now regularly refresh their knowledge of this area. They know how to recognise possible signs of abuse and understand the procedures for reporting any concerns about children's welfare. There are secure procedures for fire safety, recording children's attendance and for handing children to their parents at the end of the session so that children are unable to leave the building unsupervised. The manager uses some of her knowledge from her higher level qualification. She is currently supporting the deputy manager to implement improved supervision for staff, to support them in accessing training and developing their practice. However, despite this qualification and ongoing evaluation, the manager has failed to note the serious lapses in risk assessing and the inconsistencies in behaviour management and activity planning.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate

Children do not make sufficient progress as the quality of teaching is variable with regard to the use of assessments. Staff observe children and assess their progress but do not use this information appropriately to inform the planning of play opportunities that stimulate and challenge children. For example, staff plan a drawing activity to help prepare children for making pizzas. They have not made links between this activity and children's capabilities and next developmental steps. Children access the activity for short periods of time but soon lose interest as it does not offer any challenge. Children do enjoy some basic activities. Younger children play with a tray of jelly and a staff member uses some questions to encourage them to explore the jelly. The manager does have some procedures in place to monitor children's progress. These do not fully highlight the ineffective progress made by some children. However, she has introduced some measures to support children's progress in communication. For example, children develop their language skills as they use a microphone and sing along to songs.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are inadequate

The failure of managers to consistently implement measures to keep children safe has a negative impact on children's well-being. The pre-school has an appropriate behaviour management policy in place but staff do not consistently implement this. They do not always address children's behaviour as soon as they notice it and do not support children in understanding this. Children do not develop an awareness of the effect their behaviour has on others and are not gaining an understanding of sharing and working together. Staff sometimes forget to inform children about what is happening at certain times so that they can fully participate. Staff build appropriate partnerships with parents. They talk with them about children's assessment records and offer some practical help. They inform parents of the local support available for children who have speech delay. Children have daily

opportunities to play outside. They use ride-on toys and climbing equipment that support their physical development.

Outcomes for children are inadequate

Children, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language, are not supported well enough to make sufficient progress. However, children do gain some skills that support their learning and help to prepare them for school. For example, children enjoy using chalks, pencils and paints. They make marks on paper and easels and older children start to write the letters of the alphabet.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY440284
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	1097558
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	76
Number of children on roll	138
Name of registered person	First Steps Learning Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP531281
Date of previous inspection	8 January 2014
Telephone number	01582733030

First Steps Pre-School registered in 2011. The pre-school employs 17 members of childcare staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and 11 hold qualifications at level 3 or above, including one with early years professional status. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 9am until midday and from 12.45pm to 3.45pm, with the option of a lunch club from midday to 12.30pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. They provide care for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

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