

First Steps

5 Cheshunt Park Farm, Cheshunt Park, Cheshunt, Waltham Cross, Hertfordshire, EN7 6PZ



Inspection date

8 May 2018

Previous inspection date

2 June 2015

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

- The provider does not ensure that the lead member of staff responsible for safeguarding undertakes relevant training. Also, staff do not have a secure knowledge and understanding of safeguarding issues. This has a significant impact on the safety and welfare of children.
- The provider does not ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to promote the safety of children at mealtimes, when food served may lead to children burning their mouths.
- The provider does not ensure that recruitment procedures are effective. Checks are not carried out to establish staff's suitability and their ongoing suitability is not monitored.
- The provider does not ensure effective supervision of the manager and staff team to support their professional development. Therefore, underperformance is not identified and tackled to raise the standard of practice and promote good outcomes for children.
- Parents are not provided with details of their children's development or how they can support their children's learning at home. They are not encouraged to contribute their knowledge of what their children know and can do.
- Staff do not accurately assess children's ongoing development to inform planning and meet their learning needs. Children are not supported to consistently engage in challenging activities and do not make sufficient progress in their learning.

It has the following strengths

- Children enjoy spending time playing outside in the well-resourced garden. They take part in physical play and have fun making creations using paint.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

The provision is inadequate and Ofsted intends to take enforcement action

We will issue a Welfare Requirements Notice requiring the provider to:

	Due Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ensure that all staff, including the safeguarding lead person undertakes effective professional development relevant to raising knowledge and understanding of legal requirements, including disqualification and the 'Prevent' duty 	04/06/2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to identify and minimise hazards so that children are not exposed to unnecessary risks 	04/06/2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ put in place robust recruitment procedures and ongoing suitability checks that ensure staff and any other person who is likely to have regular contact with children are suitable to do so 	04/06/2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ensure appropriate arrangements are put in place for the supervision of the manager and staff to monitor their personal effectiveness and identify their ongoing training needs 	04/06/2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ work in partnership with parents to exchange information about children's learning needs and to provide continuous support 	04/06/2018

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

	Due Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ensure that assessments of children's development are precise so that staff have an accurate understanding of children's skills and abilities and can plan and teach learning experiences that progress their next steps in learning 	04/06/2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ provide a programme of suitably challenging activities and experiences that captures children's interests and supports their learning across all areas. 	04/06/2018

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector completed a joint evaluation of an activity with the manager.
- The inspector held a number of discussions with the manager, staff and children.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation, including evidence of the suitability of persons working with children.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents through discussion at inspection.

Inspector

Ann Cozzi

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is inadequate

Arrangements for safeguarding are ineffective. The provider has failed to ensure that her manager, who is the lead practitioner for safeguarding, has a secure knowledge of how to keep children safe. The manager and staff are not aware of the indicators that a child may be at risk of being exposed to extreme ideas about right and wrong. The manager also demonstrates a weak understanding with regard to things which may disqualify staff from working with children. As a consequence, the manager cannot determine her own or the staff's ongoing suitability. Risk assessments do not ensure children's safety. The temperature of children's food is not checked by staff. As a result, children burn their fingers and mouths as they try to eat meals that are too hot for them. Recruitment is not robust. The provider does not use safe recruitment procedures to help her rigorously determine the suitability of staff, although all staff have Disclosure and Barring Service checks in place. The ongoing supervision of staff is weak. The provider has failed to recognise gaps in the manager's understanding of her role and responsibilities and weaknesses in staff's practice. As a result, no action has been taken to tackle underperformance. For example, staff are not aware of any gaps in children's ongoing learning or action that needs to be taken to help them catch up. This is because the manager's monitoring system is based on information provided by staff that is inaccurate. The provider does not identify and address weaknesses in practice. This has an adverse impact on children's learning experiences and a negative impact on their safety.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate

Staff do not regularly assess children's progress to accurately establish what they know and can do. As a consequence, planning does not provide activities that offer all children sufficient challenge and enable them to make their individual next steps in learning. Some activities organised by staff are beyond young children's level of understanding. Regardless of their age or ability, all children are required to take part in lengthy group activities. Young children quickly lose interest, disrupting older children's learning and wandering around with little purpose. This does not support children to develop attention skills and fully participate in learning. During outdoor play, staff do not consistently recognise opportunities to engage and extend children's learning further. Information sharing with parents does not ensure that children's learning and development are constantly supported. Parents comment that staff chat to them about their children's day at collection time and regular newsletters also provide parents with information about what is going on within the nursery. However, parents are not encouraged to share information about their children's achievements and are not supported to extend learning at home.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are inadequate

The provider's failure to meet safeguarding and welfare requirements compromises children's well-being. However, information about children's personal needs is gathered from parents when children start. This helps staff to provide some effective individual care. Children form firm relationships with their key person and other staff. This helps to ensure that some of their emotional needs are met. Staff provide children with gentle

reminders about acceptable behaviour in line with their level of understanding. Children are provided with a balanced range of food which is prepared by staff.

Outcomes for children are inadequate

Children are not supported well enough to help them make sufficient progress. As a consequence, they do not develop the important skills they need for their next stage of development or in preparation for starting school. Children are not consistently supported to increase their level of concentration to help them explore, discover and problem solve.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY255445
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	1091650
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	1 - 4
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	33
Name of registered person	First Steps Partnership
Registered person unique reference number	RP523445
Date of previous inspection	2 June 2015
Telephone number	01992 635416

First Steps registered in 2003. The nursery employs six members of childcare staff, all of whom 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.

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.

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