

First Steps

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



Inspection date	11 October 2018
Previous inspection date	8 May 2018

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement	3
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Requires improvement	3
Outcomes for children		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents

The provision requires improvement. It is not yet good because:

- The manager, who also acts as the nominated individual, does not ensure that there are always sufficient staff to supervise children's play and meet their care needs at the start of the day.
- The manager does not have a sufficiently good understanding of the progress check for children aged between two and three years. This means that the required summary reports are not shared with parents to identify and address any concerns about the younger children's learning and development.
- Staff do not consistently use effective teaching strategies to help younger children, including those who speak English as an additional language, to develop their communication skills.
- The manager has not yet established a highly successful system to monitor and review the progress of different groups of children.

It has the following strengths

- Staff are warm and caring. They immediately give children praise for any achievements which helps to raise their confidence and self-esteem.
- Staff now have a stronger focus on safeguarding. They have all completed training and are able to implement procedures to ensure children are protected from harm.
- Children benefit from an interesting outdoor environment which keeps children motivated and engaged in a wider variety of activities in the fresh air.
- Children learn about good health and enjoy a range of nutritious meals and snacks.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

	Due date
ensure that sufficient staff are deployed to ensure children are adequately supervised at all times	31/10/2018
develop knowledge of the progress check for children aged between two and three years and ensure that parents are provided with a written summary of their child's development, to better support children's progress and learning.	11/11/2018

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

- explore more ways to help develop the communication and language skills of the younger children, including children who speak English as an additional language
- review and monitor the progress of specific groups of children and use this information to assess whether the provision for different groups can be enhanced further.

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 carried out a joint observation with the manager and viewed a sample of the children's development records.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager, staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector reviewed evidence of the suitability and qualifications of the staff, risk assessment and policies and procedures.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day and from their responses to surveys organised by the nursery.

Inspector
Pat Champion

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

There are weaknesses in the organisation of the nursery. The manager has not implemented effective contingency arrangements to ensure that there are always enough staff to support children at the start of the day. Nevertheless, the manager and staff are committed to continued improvement and have made positive changes since the last inspection. They have worked closely with local authority advisers and have acted on ideas from other early years professionals. The previous actions have been addressed successfully. The manager now supports staff with their practice through supervision, appraisals and staff meetings. Safeguarding is effective. Staff know who to contact to report concerns to. Routine risk assessments help to ensure the nursery is a safe place for children to play and learn in.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

Overall, staff generally know individual children well. They complete assessments of children's learning and broadly plan for the next steps in their learning. However, progress checks are not completed on time and younger children are not supported as effectively as possible to develop and catch up in their learning. In addition, the manager is not yet closely monitoring the progress made by different groups of children, such as boys and girls, to focus on helping all children make the best possible progress. Staff do join in children's play and interactions are lively and friendly. However, staff often speak very rapidly to younger children and do not always provide enough support to extend the communication skills of children who speak English as an additional language. Staff help older children to develop their mathematical skills. They talk to them about spiders, asking them how many eyes and legs they have. Children confidently count to eight and beyond.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare require improvement

Weaknesses in the deployment of staff sometimes have a negative impact on the quality of care and learning provided at the start of the day. Staff are fully stretched dealing with children's care needs and they are unable to prioritise preparing activities until more staff arrive in the setting. Despite this, children are happy and show that they feel secure. When children join the nursery, staff obtain key information from parents and form a good understanding of children's individual personalities and family backgrounds. Children behave well. They share and take turns with toys. They show respect and kindness towards each other and find out about diversity in the wider world.

Outcomes for children require improvement

Not all children make good enough progress. However, despite the weaknesses identified, the older children achieve well. They are becoming confident learners who enjoy gaining new skills to help prepare them for starting school. Older children communicate confidently and are achieving high levels of personal independence. They think about their play carefully and explore numbers and counting. Children practise pencil control and they learn about letters and the sounds they represent. This helps to develop their early reading and writing skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY255445
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10061086
Type of provision	Full day care
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Age range of children	1 - 4
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	16
Name of registered person	First Steps Partnership
Registered person unique reference number	RP523445
Date of previous inspection	8 May 2018
Telephone number	01992 635416

First Steps registered in 2003. The nursery employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, two staff hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 3 and three staff hold an appropriate qualification at level 2. 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 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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