

A Step Ahead Children's Nursery

Leech Pond Hill, Lower Beeding, West Sussex RH13 6NR



Inspection date	30 May 2019
Previous inspection date	10 March 2014

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Outstanding	1
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Outstanding	1
Outcomes for children		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is outstanding

- The leadership team is inspirational and highly motivated. There is a relentless determination for excellence in all areas.
- Staff work closely with outside agencies, where necessary, and have exceptional links with local primary schools. Children move on to school fully prepared.
- Partnerships with parents are impeccable. Parents describe the setting as 'a home from home' and a place where 'nothing is ever too much trouble for the staff'.
- Children have exemplary behaviour. Staff are excellent role models who offer caring guidance and support.
- New and less-experienced staff learn from a team of highly motivated individuals. They are dedicated to making sure that all children are prepared for their next steps in learning.
- Staff use rigorous assessments to accurately monitor the rapid progress children make. Any gaps in learning close quickly.
- Staff attend an exceptional range of training which is shared throughout the setting, ensuring that children continue to be challenged in their learning.
- The outside area provides an exceptional learning environment. Children are highly motivated and easily select from an extensive range of high-quality resources.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- continue to use training and professional development opportunities to maintain the outstanding level of provision.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching, both indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this had on children's learning.
- The inspector sampled planning and assessment records and other relevant documents, including staff qualifications and the setting's policies.
- The inspector conducted two joint observations with the manager.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents.
- The inspector spoke to staff and children at suitable times.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager, deputy and other members of staff.

Inspector

Wendy Papagno

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

Safeguarding is effective. The manager and staff have an excellent understanding of safeguarding practice. They quickly identify if a child is at risk and implement meticulous procedures to keep children safe. The nursery is driven by a very inspirational leadership team which constantly strives to improve the nursery's practice through effective reflection and assessment. The manager demonstrates the highest of standards and is highly regarded by both parents and staff. She monitors the staff and practice through constant supervision, room leader discussions and staff meetings. Staff feel highly valued and fully involved. They are encouraged to complete an exceptional range of training. New ideas and skills are readily shared amongst the team. For example, following training in Makaton, staff confidently use signing to support children's communication skills.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

All staff are experienced and skilled and have a deep understanding of children's individual needs. They provide exciting and challenging activities which reflect children's interests and seek to challenge their thinking by asking thought-provoking questions. For example, children in the Caterpillar Room excitedly take part in a science activity where they are challenged to predict what might happen. In the Ladybirds Room, babies enjoy an exceptional range of sensory activities and experience many different types of textures. The quality of teaching across the nursery is excellent and the staff are excellent role models. They model perfect language and behaviour, preparing children for the next steps in their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

Staff, children and families form extremely strong, positive and caring relationships. Staff show the utmost care for the children and this helps them to settle quickly. Parents are well informed of their children's development and included in activities throughout the setting. The transitions through the different rooms are perfectly thought through. Therefore, children make the change with ease and settle extremely quickly. Children are actively encouraged to become fully independent from the youngest age. For example, they serve themselves food at lunchtime and wash up their plates when they have finished. Hot meals are prepared on site and children are offered a selection of healthy food choices.

Outcomes for children are outstanding

All children, including those with special educational needs, make excellent progress. Children are exceptionally confident and highly engaged in their learning. They delight in finding out new ways to do things and show endless energy, enthusiasm and excitement when learning new skills. Children show a real thirst for knowledge and a determination to succeed when things first appear hard. Older children show kindness and sensitivity when playing around younger children. They take risks confidently and know exactly what they must do to keep themselves safe. For example, when riding the scooters outside. Children listen well, concentrate for long periods and clearly demonstrate a real passion for learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY243714
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10105067
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	72
Number of children on roll	54
Name of registered person	A Step Ahead Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP905756
Date of previous inspection	10 March 2014
Telephone number	01403 891012

A Step Ahead Children's Nursery opened in 2000 and is located in Lower Beeding, West Sussex. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6pm all year round. Funding is used for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. 16 staff work with children, 11 of whom hold early years qualifications. One member of staff holds a level 6 qualification.

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