

# Inspection of Millennium First Steps Nursery Ltd

Unit-1A, Station Approach, Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG4 9UW

---

Inspection date:

3 January 2020

---

## **Overall effectiveness**

---

## **Requires improvement**

The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Overall effectiveness at previous  
inspection

Good

## What is it like to attend this early years setting?

### The provision requires improvement

Despite weaknesses in the key-person system, children are happy to attend and have built friendly relationships with staff in general. Children's care and emotional needs are met. Babies benefit from caring interactions and attention. Children happily play alongside each other and demonstrate friendly behaviour. They cuddle their friends. Children listen to the staff and cooperate with the embedded routines. For example, they put their artwork away unprompted, ready to take home. Children behave well.

Children are keen to take part in activities. Management and staff ensure children have access to a suitable variety of appropriately challenging activities. Children are reasonably well prepared for school, or the next stage in their learning. Older children have access to Montessori teaching methods and resources. They learn about the natural world and start to learn key words in French. Children practise grating apples and cheese with different tools. They benefit from regular fresh air and active play. Children develop their physical skills.

Children learn to persevere. For example, they concentrate as they sharpen colouring pencils, so they are ready to use again another time. Children's independence skills are promoted.

### What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Managers have robust policies, and risk assessments are reviewed to ensure children can play safely. However, they do not always ensure staff practice is as thorough. For example, although staff are aware of how many children are in their care, they do not always accurately record times of attendance.
- Managers do not ensure that staff are deployed effectively. Key persons do not have sufficient opportunities to work directly with their key children. This includes times staff are supporting children in activities planned to help achieve their next steps in learning.
- Staff monitor children's progress and regularly review this information with parents. However, assessment information is not always used effectively to identify children's next steps in learning in order to build on their knowledge and help them make even better progress. Although managers have plans to support staff with children's next steps in learning, they have not closely monitored this or addressed the weaknesses.
- In general, the qualified staff understand how to support children's learning. For example, staff teach older children about the initial sounds in words. Children learn how to control a pencil and practise writing letters. They enjoy regular stories and happily join in with songs. Children develop their language and literacy skills.

- Staff report that management are supportive. At times, management role model good practice. However, staff do not always benefit from effective supervision and coaching with a clear focus on further improving the quality of their teaching.
- Children talk in small groups about what makes them unique. They look in mirrors to help them as they talk about their reflections. Staff encourage them to consider more detailed features. Staff use questions well and develop children's thinking skills. Staff introduce new words to children, such as 'unique' and 'pupil', and encourage them to use these. Children confidently use new words as they talk to authorised visitors. For example, children explain that the materials they have used in their artwork is to show that they have sun-kissed hair.
- Children learn about good hygiene routines and healthy lifestyles. For example, they talk about which foods are healthy choices.
- Staff use a variety of methods to help children develop confidence and pride in their achievements. For example, staff display children's work and use praise well.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Parents comment that staff communicate well with them. They say they get detailed information about their child's day, care and activities. Parents attend regular parents' evenings.
- Management and staff understand how to work with other professionals to support children. However, additional funding is not always used effectively to support individual children's needs. At times, it is used to buy resources for all ages and stages of children, rather than to specifically support those in receipt of additional funding.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Managers provide staff with relevant training and test their understanding to ensure staff are confident in their safeguarding knowledge. Staff can clearly explain the signs and symptoms of abuse and how to identify a child who may be at risk of harm. They demonstrate a good understanding of their responsibilities and the actions to take for any such concerns. Staff are also able to explain wider safeguarding concerns, such as how to report any worries about colleagues.

## What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

|   | Due date   |
|---|------------|
| keep accurate records of children's times of attendance | 03/02/2020 |

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| develop the key-person system to ensure that children's care and learning needs are consistently supported   | 03/02/2020 |
| improve on current arrangements to assess and monitor children's progress, to support children's next steps in learning effectively and help all children make even better progress. | 03/02/2020 |

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

- provide all staff with effective supervision meetings and coaching to drive further improvements to the quality of teaching
- review the use of additional funding to ensure it is used consistently and effectively to support individual children's needs.

## Setting details

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>                   | EY420136  |
| <b>Local authority</b>                           | Hertfordshire   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                         | 10074668  |
| <b>Type of provision</b>                         | Childcare on non-domestic premises  |
| <b>Registers</b>                                 | Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register |
| <b>Day care type</b>                             | Full day care   |
| <b>Age range of children</b>                     | 0 to 4  |
| <b>Total number of places</b>                    | 116   |
| <b>Number of children on roll</b>                | 102   |
| <b>Name of registered person</b>                 | Millennium First Steps Nursery Limited  |
| <b>Registered person unique reference number</b> | RP530293  |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                          | 01462 423 666   |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>               | 6 January 2016  |

## Information about this early years setting

Millennium First Steps Nursery Ltd registered in 2011. The nursery employs 19 members of childcare staff. Of these, 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including two at level 6. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am to 6.30pm. The nursery provides funded early education for children aged three and four years. It uses Montessori techniques to complement teaching methods in the pre-school room.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Becky Williams

## Inspection activities

- The deputy manager and the inspector conducted a learning walk together.
- The deputy manager and the inspector evaluated a joint observation. The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- At appropriate times during the inspection, the inspector spoke to staff and children.
- The inspector held meetings with the deputy manager and area manager of the setting. She looked at relevant documentation, including evidence regarding the suitability of staff.
- The inspector spoke to a small number of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

We carried out this inspection 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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 and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, 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 1231, 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 <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2020