

Inspection of First Steps To Learning Pre-School & Day Nursery

Cadet Centre, Tyrells Close, Upmimster, Essex RM14 2QA

Inspection date:

23 February 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

The nursery is a welcoming and safe environment. Children arrive happily. They settle quickly and are ready to learn. Staff organise the environment effectively to help children to make choices about their play and what they want to do. Children's emotional well-being is supported from the start. Older children are confident. For example, they greet visitors eagerly and communicate with them. Babies seek comfort from familiar adults and enjoy snuggling in for cuddles. This helps them to feel safe and secure. Children behave well in the nursery and children form strong friendships with each other.

Staff have high expectations of children and are committed to helping them to develop many skills to support their future learning. Children are confident and eager to learn. For example, they delight in finding out about insects and ask staff questions about the creatures in the tuff tray. Children have many good opportunities to take part in outdoor activities, which successfully support their physical development and well-being. Parents comment that their children are always keen to attend the nursery, they have good bonds with the staff, and are well cared for. Parents say that they appreciate having access to their children's online development diary. They are invited to regular parents' meetings to talk in detail about their child's development.

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

- The manager is passionate about giving every child a good start in life. She has developed a clear and progressive programme of learning. Staff carefully consider how they can plan activities that support children in achieving their next steps in learning. This helps children to be well prepared for the next stage on their learning journey, such as starting school.
- Permanent staff have a secure induction, which ensures that they have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities. However, the induction process is not yet good enough for non-contracted staff. As a result, not all regular staff have a secure enough understanding of the setting's policies and procedures.
- Permanent staff receive regular supervision and coaching to help improve their practice and knowledge. However, this system is not fully in place for non-contracted staff who have regular contact with the children. This means there are inconsistencies in the level of support, coaching and training given to staff to support the interests of the children.
- The manager is aware of pressures on staff and supports them effectively to manage them. However, she has not identified issues with workloads for permanent staff swiftly enough to be highly effective. On occasion, this means that permanent staff are not always available for direct interactions with the children.

- Staff teach children to be independent. Toddlers and pre-school children put on their coats and learn how to zip them up. Children use cutlery well to feed themselves at mealtimes. They independently access the resources they wish to use, which helps them to build their confidence and self-esteem.
- Children benefit from well-organised group times. They listen to staff, and contribute by choosing their favourite songs and stories. Older children can recognise their names and understand mathematical concepts, such as 'more' or 'less'. Younger children join in with action songs.
- Staff provide healthy meals and snacks for children, and adhere to any special dietary requirements or allergies children may have. Children enjoy playing in the outdoor area, where they have plenty of opportunities to be physically active. However, at times, older children coming inside disrupt the younger children during their mealtime. This means they are unable to concentrate on eating and interacting with staff.
- The manager and staff support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make good progress. They work well with external agencies and use the strategies recommended by them to support these children.
- Children's developing communication and language skills are well supported. Staff get down to the children's level and model language well. In the baby room, staff make good use of repetition and comment throughout the day on what children are doing. For example, they provide a commentary as the babies wrap up their dolls and put them in the swing. This helps children to build their vocabularies.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Managers demonstrate that they understand their role as designated safeguarding leads for the nursery. They attend relevant training to keep their knowledge up to date. Staff understand their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe. Managers have effective recruitment procedures in place to ensure that staff working with children are suitable. Staff are aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse. They understand the procedures to follow should they have a concern about a child's welfare. Children are kept safe in the setting. Staff supervise the children well and carry out daily risk assessments to ensure that the environment is safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

	Due date
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ensure that all regular staff, including those not directly employed by the setting, have a secure induction process so that they fully understand their roles and responsibilities	15/04/2022
make sure that effective supervisions and coaching are in place for all regular staff, including those not directly employed by the setting, so that any gaps in their understanding of the setting's policies and procedures are identified and addressed.	15/04/2022

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

- evaluate administration processes to minimise workload pressures on permanent staff
- review daily routines to minimise disruption to children's learning when they are moving around the nursery.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2504008
Local authority	Havering
Inspection number	10191773
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	25
Number of children on roll	35
Name of registered person	First Steps To Learning Pre-School & Day Nursery Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	2504007
Telephone number	01708 226061
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

First Steps to Learning Pre-School & Day Nursery registered in 2019. The setting employs four members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above. The setting opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7.15am until 6pm. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Claire Nunn

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The inspector observed the staff's interactions with the children in all rooms, indoors and outdoors, to assess the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager, deputy, staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The manager carried out a joint observation of an activity with the inspector and discussed the quality of education.
- The inspector looked at a sample of documentation, including evidence of staff's suitability and training.
- The inspector took account of the written views of parents.

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.

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