

Inspection of First Steps Day Nursery

St Peter's Hospital, Guildford Road, Chertsey, Surrey KT16 0PZ

Inspection date: 1 December 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children arrive happy and excited for their day at nursery. They have secure attachments with the warm and caring staff, who know the children well and are attentive to their needs. This results in children feeling safe and secure.

The curriculum is rich, varied and exciting. Children of all ages are keen to explore the wide range of experiences that are interesting and capture their attention. The youngest children are fascinated as they explore the texture of different creative materials and resources. They develop their small-muscle skills as they roll balls and make marks. Older children immerse themselves in play. They build towers out of large blocks and laugh together as they topple over. They persevere for long periods of time as they experiment with different ways of building. All children make good progress.

Children are well behaved and enjoy the company of others. This is supported effectively by staff who are very calm and caring towards children. They continuously develop children's understanding of how to manage their own behaviour through positive reinforcement and by praising children for their achievements. This helps children to take pride in what they can do. Children learn good manners as they are supported to share and take turns from a young age. Older children form positive and close friendships with each other and enjoy each other's company.

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

- The long-standing staff team works well together. There is a strong team ethos and a shared vision for continual improvement. Staff feel well supported by the management team and appreciate the support and advice given. Leaders listen to any issues the staff may have and act on them quickly to support their well-being. All staff show dedication to achieving good outcomes for the children.
- Children are curious and keen to explore and create. They are encouraged to engage in activities to develop new skills. For example, they learn to use tools and different resources during sensory play. However, on occasion, less-experienced staff do not plan activities that take into account what children already know and can do. They do not adapt activities to help children test out their ideas and try different techniques and materials. As a result, not all children are able to engage in the learning opportunity.
- Overall, children's communication and language skills are well supported. Staff engage in conversations with children, listen attentively and respond to them. They use sign language to support communication with younger children. Staff read books animatedly and encourage children to recall parts of the story. However, sometimes, staff miss opportunities to extend language even further.

At times, they use closed questions and can ask children too many questions. As a result, children are not consistently given opportunities to extend their language skills.

- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and children who need additional help are closely supported. Leaders and staff, such as the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), give high priority to working with other professionals. They identify and carry out interventions to enable children to achieve their potential and be well prepared for their move on to school. This inclusive approach means that children are given the time and attention they need to take part and make the most of what is on offer.
- Children are encouraged to be independent from the outset. For example, even the youngest children learn how to use utensils to serve themselves snack and lunch. Children confidently navigate their way around the learning environments and select the resources that they need. They put on their own coats for outdoor play and attempt to do up their zips and buttons by themselves. Children of all ages relish the opportunities to build independence skills.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Parents report on the good communication with regards to their children's care routines, learning and development. They say that they feel included and extremely valued at this nursery. Parents of children with SEND speak highly of the support they have received from the SENCo.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff have a secure knowledge of their responsibilities to protect children from harm. They can confidently identify signs and indicators of abuse. Staff have a good understanding of the impact of exposure to extremist views and behaviours. They can confidently explain the procedures to follow should they have a concern and who to report this to. Robust safer recruitment processes are in place, which ensures that staff are suitable to work with children. Leaders check staff's ongoing suitability regularly. Leaders and staff ensure that children play in a safe and secure environment, indoors and outdoors, through regular risk assessments.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- enhance staff's skills in planning and delivering activities that focus more precisely on what children know and can do, so that all children are supported to learn new skills effectively
- support staff to improve their questioning techniques so that children make the best possible progress in their language development.

Setting details

Unique reference number	120033
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10263569
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 at time of inspection	1 to 4
Total number of places	76
Number of children on roll	75
Name of registered person	Ashford and St Peters Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Registered person unique reference number	RP902251
Telephone number	01932 722192
Date of previous inspection	5 May 2017

Information about this early years setting

First Steps Day Nursery registered 1991. The setting is open each weekday, from 7am to 6pm, except for Christmas and bank holidays. It provides funded early years education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The setting employs 19 staff; 14 of whom hold relevant childcare qualifications at level 3, three at level 2 and one at level 6.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Joanne Allen

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 deputy manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- At suitable times during the inspection, the inspector spoke to staff, parents and children and took their views into account.
- The inspector, manager and deputy manager observed interactions between adults and children. They discussed the learning that took place.
- The manager and her staff explained their role in safeguarding children to the inspector.
- The inspector viewed a range of documents relating to safeguarding, suitability of staff and record-keeping.

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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