

Inspection of First Steps Pre School

The Triangle-Liss Community Centre, Mill Road, LISS, Hampshire GU33 7DX

Inspection date: 21 February 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children have good attitudes and are active in their learning. They are content and confident in their surroundings and demonstrate a sense of belonging. Staff know the children well and successfully manage and support their behaviour. For instance, staff role model expected behaviour effectively and enforce realistic rules and boundaries for children to follow. This helps children to feel safe and secure in their environment and creates a culture of respect. Furthermore, children are laying down good foundations for understanding what is right and what is wrong, which helps prepares them for their future education.

Children explore and investigate the activities with appropriate adult support and supervision. They develop positive relationships with each other and are creative in their play. For example, children have make-believe tea parties in a sensory tent. They use available resources that represent objects to support their play.

Staff engage children in conversations that are meaningful. Children learn in a language-rich environment. Interactions are positive and consistent in quantity and quality. Staff take time to explain and give examples to prompt children's thinking and deepen their understanding. The impact of this is that children feel like their words matter, and they feel valued.

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

- Children are happy, and their personal, social, and emotional needs are met. They go to staff for emotional support and reassurance, and staff are available to support their needs. Staff are nurturing in their interactions and encourage the children to recognise and explore their feelings.
- Parents speak highly of the care, support and education that their children receive. They are kept up to date with their child's progress and feel included in their learning. Managers and leaders explain the benefit of working in partnership with parents. They send out annual surveys to gather valuable information that helps them grow as a team.
- Managers and staff strive to provide high-quality learning and education for all children. They are highly effective in their practice, and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported to achieve their individual goals. Staff adapt activities to ensure that all children can access learning that is right for them. This promotes equal opportunities so that all children can make good progress.
- Managers and staff have a clear ambition: to provide the best care and educational outcomes for children and their families. They have a continual commitment to increasing and improving practice and provision. Leaders use reflection as an effective tool to evaluate ways to enhance practice. For instance,

changes are made to the daily routine, including tidy-up time, to ensure the smooth running of daily events.

- Staff have a clear vision of what they want children to learn and how to get them there. Staff understand what they are teaching children and focus on key elements of development. However, when all children participate in whole-group activities, the youngest children become distracted and lose focus. Therefore, they are not fully benefiting from the teaching and learning during this time.
- Children are polite, and staff gently encourage good manners. They respond well to the routine and demonstrate an understanding of what is happening next. Children are confident to try new things and use their senses to explore. For example, staff provide lemon and pancakes at snack time for Shrove Tuesday. Children try the lemon and have fun showing the staff their 'sour faces'. Staff praise children for trying something new.
- Managers support staff effectively and focus on ways to enhance their skills and knowledge. Their strengths are identified and used within practice, and areas to be developed are recognised. Staff have good attitudes and feel supported. They seek to enhance their skills with training and in-house learning. They understand the impact this has when growing as a team to deliver good outcomes for children and their families.
- Managers have robust systems in place to recruit staff and ensure they are suitable to work with children. They check staff's ongoing suitability to ensure the children are kept safe.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Managers and staff demonstrate their commitment to protecting children and keeping them safe from harm. With effective, ongoing training, staff have confidence and are aware of the importance of referring safeguarding concerns in a timely manner. Staff seek ways to strengthen their knowledge of the community they live in to best support children. Their wider understanding enables them to be vigilant to any rising concerns. Staff can identify different signs of abuse and show their understanding that changes in behaviour could indicate that a child is suffering from harm. Managers and staff undertake effective assessments to identify and minimise risk to keep children safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support staff to consider the developmental needs of the youngest children more effectively when they are included in whole-group activities.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2598820
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10265065
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	43
Number of children on roll	49
Name of registered person	First Steps Pre School Partnership
Registered person unique reference number	2598819
Telephone number	07877258133
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

First Steps Pre-school registered in 2020. It operates from Liss in Hampshire. It is open for 44 weeks of the year, Monday to Friday, from 8.30am to 3pm. There are nine members of staff. Of these, one holds qualified teacher status and four hold relevant qualifications at level 3. In addition, there are other qualified and experienced staff employed to work with the children. This includes a qualified early years teacher and another staff member with a level 3 early years qualification. The pre-school accepts funding to provide free early years education for children aged two-, three- and four-years old.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Kelley Ellis

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 manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- Children spoke to with the inspector during the inspection.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children.

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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