

# First Steps Kindergarten

42 Arlington Avenue, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV32 5UD



<b>Inspection date</b>	30 March 2015
Previous inspection date	26 February 2009

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Good	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Outstanding	1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Good	2
The setting <b>meets legal requirements for early years settings</b>			

## Summary of key findings for parents

### This provision is good

- Staff gain a good understanding of children's interests, capabilities and individual learning needs through regular observations and assessments. They effectively plan for children's next steps in learning.
- Babies and children have plenty of opportunities to explore, make choices, and lead their own learning.
- Highly effective key-person arrangements enable staff and parents to work together from the start to support children's well-being. Staff are calm, kind and very attentive. They form excellent relationships with children. As a result, children are extremely happy and emotionally secure.
- Staff establish very good partnerships with parents to ensure that all children's needs are met. This effectively promotes continuity in learning and care between home and the nursery.
- Children's good health is promoted very successfully. Children enjoy healthy meals and snacks that are freshly prepared on the premises. The outdoor area provides excellent opportunities for daily physical activity and exploration of the natural world.
- Children are kept safe because staff have an excellent understanding of safeguarding procedures. They effectively identify and minimise potential risks to children.

### It is not yet outstanding because:

- Occasionally, staff do not fully support children to think critically and express their thoughts and ideas during activities.
- Staff do not maximise opportunities for children to use the range of technological equipment available, to extend their learning.

## What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- challenge children to develop their communication and critical-thinking skills even further by promoting staff's use of effective questioning to encourage children to describe, share thoughts, and give explanations
- give children more opportunities to extend their learning through an increased use of the available technological toys and equipment.

### Inspection activities

- The inspector had a tour of the nursery with the manager.
- The inspector observed teaching and learning activities, indoors and outside.
- The inspector looked at a sample of policies, children's assessment records and planning documentation, and the nursery's self-evaluation form.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of staff working with the children.
- The inspector took account of the views of children, staff and parents spoken to on the day of inspection.

### Inspector

Victoria Mulholland

## Inspection findings

### **How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is good**

Staff provide a broad range of interesting and enjoyable experiences, inside and outdoors, to support children's progress across the seven areas of learning. For example, babies show curiosity as they feel the texture of shower foam. Toddlers are fascinated to explore a variety of metal objects and 'treasures'. Older children enjoy digging outside, and use magnifying viewers to look closely at worms and mud. Staff generally interact very well with children to support their speaking and language skills. They model language effectively, introduce a wide range of vocabulary, and encourage children to make links between their experiences. However, staff sometimes miss opportunities to ask open-ended questions that challenge children's thinking, and do not prompt them to verbalise their ideas or thoughts. Even so, the quality of teaching is good overall, and children are enthusiastic learners. Children have access to a variety of electronic toys and equipment, such as programmable toys and computers. However, staff do not always make the best use of these resources to enhance children's learning. Staff teach children to count and recognise numbers, and to use mathematical language to talk about shape and size. Early literacy skills are promoted well as children join in with stories, songs and rhymes. They learn to recognise letters and words, such as their own names, and begin to write and make marks with purpose. As a result, children are well supported to acquire skills in readiness for the next stage in their learning.

### **The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children is outstanding**

Children are exceptionally well cared for in a safe and tranquil environment. Staffing arrangements are consistent, so babies and children become very familiar with staff and form strong attachments. Children's behaviour is exemplary because staff are excellent role models and successfully support children to share, take turns, and play cooperatively. Children's independence and personal care skills, relative to their age and stages of development, are promoted very well. Babies and children develop increasingly high levels of confidence and self-assurance. This means that emotionally, they are extremely well prepared for moving on within the nursery, or on to school.

### **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision is good**

Managers have a good understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children's progress is effectively monitored to identify areas for further challenge or extra support. Managers secure additional support from external agencies where appropriate, so that all children make good progress in relation to their starting points. Leaders effectively review the overall quality of the nursery in the pursuit of excellence. Well-qualified experienced staff act as mentors to those less qualified. Regular peer observations enable sharing of good practice and strengthen team relationships. Staff have good opportunities to gain further qualifications for ongoing professional development, which successfully improves outcomes for children.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	200593
<b>Local authority</b>	Warwickshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	875007
<b>Type of provision</b>	Full-time provision
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	49
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	54
<b>Name of provider</b>	First Steps Kindergarten Partnership
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	26 February 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01926 332122

First Steps Kindergarten was registered in 1997. The nursery employs ten members of childcare staff, of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications at levels 2, 3 or 4. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round, except for bank holidays and a week at Christmas. It operates from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

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