

First Step Playgroup

The Scout Hut, Parkhall Road, Somersham, Cambs, PE28 3HE



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| Inspection date | 1 February 2017 |
| Previous inspection date | Not applicable |

| The quality and standards of the early years provision | This inspection: | Outstanding | 1 |
|---|-------------------------|--------------------|----------|
| | Previous inspection: | Not applicable | |
| Effectiveness of the leadership and management | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Outcomes for children | | Outstanding | 1 |

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is outstanding

- The manager leads a highly motivated and enthusiastic team of staff who are dedicated to supporting children to achieve the best outcomes. Children make rapid progress in their learning and development.
- The manager and staff are highly reflective practitioners. They seek the views of parents, children and other professionals to help to identify how to further improve the superb practice and learning experiences to inspire children's engagement and ongoing progress. For example, the current focus is to implement changes to the environment to enhance early literacy skills.
- Staff are enthusiastic and deeply passionate in their role. They effortlessly promote equality of opportunity throughout their practice. This means that all children are confident to have a go, make suggestions, test out their predictions and to keep trying if they are not successful the first time in their endeavours.
- Staff regularly share information with parents about their children's progress. Parents are extremely positive about playgroup. They state that they know about the progress their children make and how they can support their continued learning at home.
- Children are confident talkers. Staff provide rich opportunities for children to talk about what they know. Staff instinctively build on what children already know to challenge their ongoing progress. This contributes to children's sense of belonging in the playgroup, as well as the rapid progress they make.
- Children settle quickly and establish extremely strong and respectful attachments with staff. They demonstrate that they feel safe and secure, and thrive in their care.
- Staff are extremely good role models. They create a positive environment of mutual trust and respect. Children behave exceptionally well. They are kind towards each other and are well mannered.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- evaluate the planned changes to the learning environment, assessing the impact on children's enjoyment and further development of their literacy skills.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children during the inspection.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the playgroup manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the playgroup manager. She looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the playgroup.
- The inspector spoke to a number of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Gail Warnes

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is outstanding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff demonstrate a robust knowledge and understanding of what to do should they have any concerns regarding a child's welfare. They receive regular child protection training and updates about changes in requirements. Recruitment systems are rigorously implemented, helping to ensure only suitable adults work with the children. The manager highly values her staff and plans frequent supervision meetings. These are extremely effective in promoting the manager's high expectations of staff and driving the consistently high-quality practice. The manager meticulously reviews children's progress to ensure assessments are accurate and consistent. She makes insightful use of additional funds, such as the early years pupil premium. This contributes to the rapid progress made by children in receipt of these funds. Staff establish highly effective partnerships with other professionals to promote consistency and continuity in children's care and learning.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

Staff's intuitive planning is highly effective in supporting children's individual interests and their next steps in learning. Staff are highly skilled in adapting activities to support children's emerging interests. For example, children gleefully jump in a large puddle which has formed after the morning rain. When they begin to ride scooters through the puddle, staff encourage them to explore the patterns made by the tyre tracks. Children explore the changing state of water. They investigate how ice melts and the effect this has on the volume of water. Staff encourage them to think how they can return the water to a solid state. Staff weave mathematical concepts into such activities. Children confidently predict that there will be more water when the ice melts and calculate how much water they have collected using numbered scales on pipettes.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

Staff prioritise children's safety and well-being. Risk assessments are routinely completed and staff are vigilant in identifying potential hazards. For example, staff relocate water play to promote safety as children build a complex rail track around the indoor environment. This also demonstrates how children's imaginative play is valued and encouraged, which helps to build their sense of self-worth. Children learn about their local community through regular outings, such as the library and church. Staff extend their knowledge of other cultures, such as when they explore Chinese New Year celebrations. Children's good health is promoted well. For example, children enjoy regular outdoor activities and growing vegetables in the local community garden.

Outcomes for children are outstanding

Children are extremely independent and eager learners. They are deeply focused during activities and support each other as firm friendships flourish. All children, including those who have special educational needs or disabilities, make rapid progress given their starting points and capabilities. They consistently demonstrate positive attitudes and are acquiring key skills to support their future education.

Setting details

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| Unique reference number | EY490141 |
| Local authority | Cambridgeshire |
| Inspection number | 1022393 |
| Type of provision | Full-time provision |
| Day care type | Childcare - Non-Domestic |
| Registers | Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register |
| Age range of children | 2 - 4 |
| Total number of places | 30 |
| Number of children on roll | 27 |
| Name of registered person | Learning Tree Childcare Services Limited |
| Registered person unique reference number | RP534658 |
| Date of previous inspection | Not applicable |
| Telephone number | 07855035212 |

First Step Playgroup was re-registered in 2015 due to a change in ownership. It is operated by a limited company. The company employs seven members of childcare staff, four of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The playgroup opens from Monday to Friday, 9am until 3pm during term time only. Additional summer camp sessions for children up to 11 years of age are offered for two weeks during the main school holiday from 8.30am until 5pm. The playgroup provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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