

Steps to School Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY357595
Inspection date	22 July 2008
Inspector	Vanessa Wood
Setting Address	Borough Green Primary School, School Approach, Borough Green, SEVENOAKS, Kent, TN15 8JZ
Telephone number	01732 780431
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Registered person	The Governing Body of Borough Green Primary School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Sessional care, Out of School care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Steps to School Day Nursery opened in 2007 and operates from four rooms in the school grounds of Borough Green Primary School. A maximum of 62 children may attend the nursery, pre-school and out of school club at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area and several areas of the school grounds. There are currently 66 children aged from three months to under eight years on roll. Of these, 11 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery can support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs 10 staff who work with the children, plus one kitchen staff member. Of these, seven members of staff, including the manager, have an appropriate early years qualification and three members of staff are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children have an excellent understanding of good health and hygiene practices. They wash their hands independently after using the bathroom and before all meals. Children are protected from cross-infection by the staff's careful attention to good general hygiene practice, which ensures the premises are kept clean and tidy. Most staff have up-to-date first aid qualifications, and clear policies and procedures are in place for sick or injured children to be cared for effectively. Staff maintain accurate records and work closely with parents to ensure that they have all the information they need to meet children's individual needs. Young children are able to rest comfortably in a well equipped sleep room and older children are encouraged to rest and sleep after lunch. Children enjoy a very healthy diet. They learn about healthy eating through project work and they enjoy preparing different fruits as a snack at tea time. Children learn to set the tables and they eat together, sharing snacks and enjoying nutritious home cooked hot meals at lunchtime. The varied menus are displayed on the parents' notice board to inform parents of the daily meals. All meals take account of children's special dietary needs. Children enjoy daily outdoor play in the adjacent playground and also have access to the school's playing field, the adventure playground and the environmental playground.. Staff use an extensive range of equipment and interesting activities to develop children's gross motor skills, such as using the parachute and playing with bats and balls. Children's manipulative skills are developed through activities where children learn to handle tools, such as scissors, staplers and hole punches and to mould dough.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, child-friendly, comfortable and clean environment. They play freely in a well maintained and stimulating environment. Furniture and storage units are all at children's height so that children are able to make independent choices and share responsibility for keeping their environment tidy. All equipment provided for children is checked for safety on a regular basis. Children have a good understanding of their own personal safety. For example, through project work, children learn about the importance of wearing seat belts in the car and how to keep themselves safe when walking by the road. A vigilant staff team check young children who need to sleep at regular intervals to ensure their safety. Staff carry out a thorough risk assessments of the nursery to ensure all risks to children are minimised. Children also help to carry out monthly risk assessments to make them aware of their own environment and how to keep themselves safe within the nursery. Effective procedures are in place for the safe arrival and collection of children and the premises are kept secure. Staff and children practise fire drills regularly ensuring they are confident in an emergency. Children's welfare is protected because staff have a very good knowledge of child protection procedures and how to implement them should the need arise. Staff attend regular training on this subject to ensure that their knowledge remains up-to-date.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children of all ages come confidently into the school and settle quickly in familiar routines. They form strong trusting relationships with staff and play happily alongside other children. They are very confident in making choices. All children who are mobile, access their own play

and learning experiences. Staff arrange activities in response to children's likes and interests and they have the opportunity to play imaginatively in all rooms. Young children enjoy the one-to-one interaction with an established and consistent key worker. Young children are provided with many activities, such as the large chalk board and small play house where they can freely explore with all their senses. They enjoy a happy, fun time with staff as they sing well known songs with actions. Staff follow the Birth to three matters framework to assess young children's development and learning and use assessments based on the framework to plan activities to move children to the next stage in their development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Very experienced and well qualified staff have a good knowledge of how children learn. They use regular observations to make assessments on children's development and use these assessments to plan activities around subjects that children are interested in. The daily planning system is very flexible, addressing the current needs of individual children. This ensures that children make good progress in all areas and enjoy a balanced programme of activities. Good use is made of the activities to ensure a stimulating environment and staff are particularly good at enabling children to develop confidence and independence. Staff make good use of the outdoor area to take the learning programme outside and this area is used on most days of the year. However, at times organisation of the daily routine does not give children the opportunity to fully explore and investigate their self chosen activities.

Children enjoy listening to stories read by staff and are confident at speaking in large groups as staff encourage discussion about the story. They enthusiastically sing songs together and learn rhymes and new words. Children benefit from a variety of activities that develop emergent writing, such as tracing letters in sand and using ribbons outdoors to make different shapes. They learn the links between sounds and letters and learn to recognise their name on name cards at snack time. Children learn to count during everyday activities, such as counting the number of scoops of sand needed to fill a bucket. They are encouraged to count objects and to associate the spoken numbers with the numerical concept. For example, children buy ice-creams from the pretend shop for their friends.

Children are able to explore and investigate and learn about the natural world. They enjoy growing beans in the outdoor area and nurturing these and noticing how the flowers turn into beans. They look after several giant snails, learning about their diet and growth. Children have the opportunity to use the computer and learn about technology. Children use their imagination well as they play with the puppet show, making the puppets come to life. They delight in the craft table, being creative with paper, pens, glitter and glue. They express their ideas as they play with dough and build and construct with different materials. Children learn about the world around them as they celebrate different festivals such as Diwali, Chinese New Year and St Patrick's day.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children show exceptionally high standards of confidence and independence. Their individuality is respected and they show a strong sense of belonging to the group, being familiar with routines and they understand what is expected of them. Staff provide strong support and encourage children to work together, sharing and helping each other. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to ensure that children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are

included. Children are well behaved. Staff use positive methods to promote good behaviour by praising and encouraging children's achievements and promoting their self-esteem. Children develop a positive attitude towards others and gain a good understanding about the wider world through learning about festivals, such as Chinese New Year. They play with a good selection of resources that promote children's understanding of different cultures and disabilities. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered well.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. Parents receive excellent information about the nursery in the form of a comprehensive parents' pack, notice board and regular newsletters. They receive regular reports on their child's achievements and are encouraged to comment on how they feel their child is progressing. Staff ensure they work closely with parents to ensure all information is shared in order to develop the next steps in children's learning. Parents are encouraged to join in social events and are made to feel part of the nursery. Strong relationships are developed between staff and parents so that staff have a good understanding of individual children and their families.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children benefit from very good levels of supervision from an experienced and well qualified staff team. Good use is made of space to provide a safe and stimulating environment. Clear policies and procedures are in place to support children's welfare and there is a comprehensive system in place to record complaints. All records are stored securely and staff give careful attention to confidentiality. Staff are committed to providing excellent care and learning opportunities for children. They are enthusiastic and regularly attend courses to update their knowledge and understanding of childcare and education.

Leadership and management are good. The manager provides strong and enthusiastic leadership and is supported well by the governing body of the school. Effective recruitment procedures are in place and there is a formal system of staff appraisal to look at the quality of teaching. Staff are supported and encouraged to take up training opportunities to enable them to develop and improve practice within the nursery. Regular staff meetings and discussions ensure that staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities and staff work well together. Their good practice is monitored and action plans are put in place to develop areas identified for improvement. One area identified is that the daily routine can restrict the time children have for meaningful play.

The setting meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop the organisation of daily routines to give children more time to fully explore and investigate their self chosen activities

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk