

Small Steps Preschool Boreham

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY399734
Inspection date 27/04/2010
Inspector Lynn Denise Smith

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

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Description of the setting

Small Steps Pre-School opened in 2009 and operates from a community hall in Boreham, Essex, it is committee run. A ramp to the hall entrance means that the premises are accessible. A secure enclosed outdoor area is used for outdoor play activities.

The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 26 children aged from two to under five years may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 28 children on roll. The group is open five days a week, Monday to Friday during term time from 9:15am to 11:45am.

The setting employs six members of staff of whom three hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The needs of children within the Early Years Foundation Stage are being met to a satisfactory level. The setting is beginning to establish its practices and procedures to enable it to effectively operate within the framework. Children enjoy their time at pre-school and have some opportunities to play an active role in the planning of day to day experiences. The setting is beginning to implement ways of evaluating and reviewing the provision to enable it to identify areas for improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- review the organisation of snack and meal times to ensure every child receives an enjoyable and challenging learning and development experience that is tailored to meet their individual needs
- ensure self-evaluation clearly identifies specific areas for future improvements in practice, and the impact on outcomes for children
- extend opportunities for parents and others across different settings to share what they know about the child and become involved in identifying the next steps in their learning and development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Appropriate safeguarding procedures are in place to protect children. Staff demonstrate knowledge of their roles and responsibilities with regards to child protection and some staff have attended training on the subject. All staff hold current Criminal Record Bureau checks and procedures ensure that new staff who are awaiting clearance are not left unattended with the children until their checks

have been cleared. Visitors to the setting sign in and out of the visitors book. The systems in place for safety ensure that the premises offer safe and secure play opportunities to children.

This is the setting's first inspection since it re-registered as a committee run provision in 2009. The newly formed committee is operating well and staff feel supported by the management structure. The setting is beginning to review staff qualifications and training and hopes to access more training opportunities over the coming year. The manager has recently commenced reviewing and evaluating the provision through the self-evaluation process, however, this is very much in its infancy and does not currently provide opportunities for staff and parents to play an active role in this process.

Staff set the room out each morning using the low level tables to present toys and resources on. They organise the tables in a way which enables children to move freely around the setting and also provides ample space for planned activities such as physical play equipment or the role play area. Staff are effectively deployed throughout the session and are knowledgeable about their daily tasks as they follow the staff rota. All children are valued and respected within the setting. Staff get to know the children in their key-person group through discussions with parents and conversations with the children. A range of festivals and celebrations provide some opportunities for children to explore other people's cultures and religions. Parents spoken to at the time of the inspection stated how happy they were with the provision and felt that their children were making good progress in their learning. The setting has not yet implemented procedures effectively to enable them to work in partnership with other local settings in line with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children's welfare, learning and development needs are being suitably met. Staff demonstrate secure knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and are beginning to implement systems to deliver it appropriately. Children participate in a range of freely chosen play opportunities, as well as some planned activities which are prepared and organised by staff. The planning generally evolves from children's ideas or suggestions. Staff are developing effective systems for observing children's play and progress and recording this in their individual learning journeys. Children enjoy playing with an interesting selection of toys and resources. Staff set the room out each day with a range of equipment and ask children during their early morning circle time to tell them what else they would like out. Staff then facilitate their wishes, enabling children to play an active role in decision making. Children thoroughly enjoy a dough making activity, whereby they weigh the ingredients and mix them all together. They add their own artistic interpretation to the dough by using paint from the easel to colour it. This activity excites some children so much that they ask staff for the ingredients list so that they can make it at home. Children have fun in the outdoor area used by the setting. This is a communal play park with a range of climbing equipment in. Children use the small climbing frame in a range of ways, for example as a boat or

an ice cream van.

Children are and feel safe within the provision as staff are developing clear systems for safety and security. They ensure that the main door is kept locked at all times when the children are present and that visitors are carefully monitored. Children chat with staff about issues such as road safety and stranger danger. Children are able to bring comforters from home to make them feel secure and confident and access these throughout the session as and when they want them. Children are beginning to develop knowledge of keeping healthy through topics and discussions with staff. They talk about foods which are good for them at snack time and how their bodies, needs food, to keep them strong. They enjoy a mid session snack at the pre-school which generally consists of fruit and nutritious foods. Snack time is organised in a number of different ways depending on the set up of the session. Staff generally prepare all of the snack foods for children and pour their drinks for them, leaving them with few opportunities to explore independence and learn important skills for the future. Fresh air and exercise is obtained most days when the children play in the enclosed outdoor area adjacent to the hall.

Children are settled and part from their parents and carers with ease. They move confidently around the provision, approaching staff when they need to. Children are well-behaved and generally understand the setting's simple rules. They develop some knowledge of other people's differing needs through festivals and special celebrations. Children are provided with some activities which promote their skills for the future and challenge their thinking. They enjoy mark making in a range of ways and use numbers and counting in everyday activities. They benefit from having visitors from the local community come into the pre-school, to talk to them about their work.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

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| How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage? | 3 |
| The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement | 3 |

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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| How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed? | 3 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity | 3 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement | 3 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers | 3 |

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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| The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning | 2 |
| The extent to which children feel safe | 3 |
| The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which children make a positive contribution | 3 |
| The extent to which children develop skills for the future | 2 |

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