

Steps to School

School Approach, Borough Green, SEVENOAKS, Kent, TN15 8JZ



Inspection date

24 August 2017

Previous inspection date

14 April 2015

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- The manager is an ambitious and enthusiastic leader. She works hard to ensure the staff team are also dedicated to maintaining high levels of care and support for the children. The manager is committed to further enhancing practice. She works well with others to implement changes and review the impact these have.
- Children make good progress. Staff provide a welcoming and stimulating environment that supports children to learn effectively through play. Staff ensure daily experiences reflect children's interests well. This helps children to develop their own ideas and be motivated to use their developing skills to further enhance their play.
- Children are happy, settled and enjoy their time at the nursery. They develop strong bonds with the attentive and caring staff. This helps to promote children's well-being and they show high levels of self-esteem and confidence.
- Children are well supported to prepare for their next stage in learning. Staff offer tailored support to ensure children are emotionally prepared for changes. For example, with the continual support of key staff, babies regularly visit and confidently explore the toddler room and outside play space.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Some staff do not make the very best use of ongoing observation and assessment to target teaching as precisely as possible.
- Staff gather information from parents about children's care needs but do not obtain a wide range of information about what children know and can do before they start at nursery.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- support staff to refine their use of ongoing observation and assessment to continually gain the most precise picture possible of how to target support for children
- extend partnerships with parents to gain more in-depth information before children start in order to inform planning from the outset.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed interactions between the staff and children in the inside space and the outside environment.
- The inspector spoke to key people and looked at developmental records for individual children.
- The inspector talked to parents and children and considered the views of parents from written feedback.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector viewed a range of documentation, including staff records, monitoring information and policies.

Inspector

Amanda Vidler

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The manager monitors staff practice well. Regular meetings and training opportunities help to ensure all staff develop their skills and confidence. For example, staff used knowledge gained from training to review how they supported children who speak languages other than English as their home language. Working closely with parents, and introducing simple techniques, has had a positive effect and children become confident communicators in a number of languages. Safeguarding is effective. The manager has a clear understanding of her role in working with others to help ensure children are safe and their welfare is protected. She supports staff to regularly update their child protection knowledge and ensure that they are all fully aware of how to record and report concerns. The deputy manager works closely with the manager to monitor and track children's progression. Any gaps are targeted and staff work well with other professionals to offer focused support.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Overall, staff successfully offer children experiences that they enjoy and that help them make good progress. For example, children join in enthusiastically as staff use simple questions to encourage them to retell a story. Children listen to each other well, for example, as they confidently talk about the caterpillar's life cycle. Staff introduce live caterpillars and children use their mathematical skills to look at aspects, such as size and colour, and compare the caterpillars. Using photographs of moths and butterflies the children look closely and recognise the similarities and differences. Younger children enjoy using their exploration and physical skills to make marks on large sheets of paper. They roll and push a range of toys, such as cars and hoops, through the paint and over the paper. Staff skilfully introduce simple descriptive words and offer lots of praise as children name the colours.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Staff have developed a culture of respect and cooperation. Children behave well and show patience and understanding within their play. For example, children wait for each other to climb up and down a ladder on the pirate ship climbing frame. They remind each other to 'be careful' and use manners, such as saying 'excuse me, please', to enable them to have a turn. Mealtimes are social occasions and children are developing a good understanding of where food comes from. For example, during lunch children chat to their friends about potatoes being vegetables. They talk about their favourite vegetables and relay that these are 'good' foods. Children also share information about family members who grow vegetables at home.

Outcomes for children are good

Children are enthusiastic and active learners. They develop lifelong skills which support their independence and self-care. For example, young children persevere in putting on their coats. Older children confidently use knives and forks to eat, and they dress themselves in outfits to support their 'pirate' play.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY357595
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	1093098
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register
Age range of children	0 - 4
Total number of places	37
Number of children on roll	54
Name of registered person	Borough Green Primary School Governing Body
Registered person unique reference number	RP527081
Date of previous inspection	14 April 2015
Telephone number	01732 780431

Steps to School day nursery registered in 1990 and is situated in the village of Borough Green, Kent. The nursery is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm, for 50 weeks of the year. The nursery employs 20 staff. The manager and three members of staff hold qualifications at level 6. Of the remaining staff, 13 hold appropriate early years qualifications from level 2 to level 4. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The nursery is closely linked and shares staff with the on-site pre-school, before- and after-school clubs and holiday club.

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