

Inspection of Small Steps Preschool Boreham

Village Hall, Main Road, Boreham, CHELMSFORD CM3 3JD

Inspection date: 3 December 2019

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at pre-school. They are very excited to engage in the wide range of stimulating and creative activities and resources that staff provide each day. Children challenge themselves and are highly motivated to learn. For example, they make beautiful Christmas pictures as they first coat marbles in different coloured paints. They then roll and shake them all over a template to make their designs. Children focus intently and staff extend their learning as they discover how to use a shape punch to make a star. They are developing their small- and large-muscle skills through this innovative activity.

Children are free to develop their unique personalities. They feel safe and secure that staff will encourage them to try new things. Children are developing in confidence and thrive in focused learning sessions where staff help them to develop in specific areas of learning. For instance, they learn to count up groups of numbers as they pretend to make a spell and add the ingredients. Children are imaginative as they discuss how the spell will make them go to sleep and learn to love custard. They identify numbers and estimate totals with patient support and attention from staff.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Children form strong bonds with staff and have close friendships with children at the setting. They have rich opportunities to be creative and develop their imaginative skills. For example, children pretend to work in a post office and learn about where to put stamps on envelopes. They enjoy weighing letters on scales and posting the letters into a big post box. Children cut up cards and staff extend this learning to suggest that they make the pieces into a puzzle. Children work together well and are starting to share and take turns. However, staff do not always explain to children how their behaviour affects others so that they develop a deeper understanding of the expectations of behaviour.
- Partnerships with parents are excellent. They are delighted with the opportunities their children have to play in the extensive outdoor area. Parents are thrilled that their children can explore nature throughout the year. They compliment staff on the rich range of varied activities and resources they provide each day. Parents value the help and support that staff give their children when they first start so that they settle quickly and make rapid progress.
- Staff plan activities and games for children that are directly linked to their interests. This helps children to concentrate and they are highly enthusiastic in their learning. Children learn about different food groups and discuss which foods are healthy and which are treats while playing a matching game. Children learn what a pretzel and a croissant are and which food group they belong to as

staff introduce them to these words through toys.

- Staff are passionate about providing an inclusive setting. Children gain a firm understanding of the festivals and cultures that are celebrated in their community. They learn these in an age-appropriate way and through crafts, books and outings in the village. For example, they attend a Christingle service in the local church and joyfully sing Christmas carols and songs at circle time.
- Children are learning to do things independently and are proud of their accomplishments. For example, at snack time, children choose their own fruit and pour out their own drinks. They wash up and are determined as they dry their plates and cups with dish towels at the washing up station. However, occasionally, staff do not fully develop opportunities for children to do things for themselves so that they manage these even more effectively.
- Managers conduct ongoing observations on staff and provide them with regular supervisions. This helps to ensure their well-being and keeps staff motivated and happy. Staff are highly committed to their ongoing professional development. They attend training and complete online courses to keep their knowledge up to date and enhance their expertise in teaching.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff fully understand their responsibilities to safeguard children. They are confident and knowledgeable in identifying and addressing concerns relating to safeguarding or wider child protection issues. Staff attend ongoing training to keep up to date. They carry out rigorous risk assessments daily to ensure that the premises are secure. Leaders conduct safer recruitment procedures and check that staff remain suitable in their roles. Children learn to keep themselves safe, for example they help to perform risk assessments out in the grounds before they play. They complete a ticklist on clipboards and learn about hazards.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- help children to have a deeper understanding of the rules of the pre-school so that they learn even more how their behaviour affects others
- review and develop opportunities for children to do things for themselves so that they are able to manage these even more effectively.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY399734
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10074328
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children	2 to 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	31
Name of registered person	Small Steps Pre-School Boreham
Registered person unique reference number	RP535432
Telephone number	07952 471616
Date of previous inspection	12 April 2016

Information about this early years setting

Small Steps Preschool Boreham registered in 2009. The pre-school employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds an appropriate early years qualification at level 5, three hold level 3 and one holds level 2. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, during term time only. Sessions are from 9.15am until 12.15pm on Monday, and from 9am until 3pm on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Early morning drop-off sessions run from 8.15am to 9am Monday to Thursday. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Angela Doherty

Inspection activities

- The manager and the inspector completed a tour of the pre-school. The manager explained how the early years provision and curriculum are organised.
- The inspector observed a range of activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the quality of teaching and the impact on children's learning.
- The inspector and the manager observed and discussed the quality of a planned activity.
- The views of parents, children and staff were taken into consideration.
- A sample of documentation, including staff suitability records and pre-school policies and procedures, was seen by the inspector.

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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