

Inspection of Second Steps Day Nursery

Second Steps Day Nursery, Burnt Mills Road, Basildon, Essex SS13 1DY

Inspection date: 7 June 2022

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| The quality of education | Good |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
| Personal development | Good |
| Leadership and management | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Not applicable |

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children settle quickly at the nursery. They leave their parents with ease as they are excited and eager to investigate the activities on offer. Children are welcomed by caring, happy and nurturing staff. They have established close bonds with the staff, who know them well. Great focus has been given to provide children with a rich learning environment outdoors. Children relish their time in the garden as it provides them with an exciting place to learn. They take great care of the bugs they find and gently place them in the bug hotel. Children patiently sit with binoculars in the birdwatching den and excitedly talk about the nesting birds. They enthusiastically discuss how they have a hedgehog living in the garden and talk about the food they give to it. Children are encouraged to positively influence what happens in their environment. For example, during the construction of a large wooden castle, they suggest that they need a slide to exit the castle as the steps are too difficult.

Babies happily play in a bright and cosy room. They move around with ease and can access appropriate resources for their developmental needs. Staff are very attentive, and babies enjoy lots of cuddles and praise for their efforts. Children concentrate during sensory play as they use their hands to mix 'gloop'. They pour rice and pasta into containers and listen intently to the sound this makes. Children's language is developing well. Staff engage children in conversations and introduce new words to broaden their vocabulary, such as 'parlour'.

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

- Children's communication skills are fully supported and progressing well. They are confident speakers and ask lots of questions. The environment is rich in text, and staff engage children in meaningful conversations. For example, children invite staff to buy an ice cream from their 'American diner' role-play area. Staff are skilful in allowing children sufficient time to think and process questions posed. For example, children confidently speak about the different flavours of ice cream and how much it costs in dollars.
- The manager and her deputy are ambitious and forward-thinking. They have high expectations for the staff and the children. The manager fully supports staff with their professional development. She is fully aware of the positive impact training has on the outcomes for children attending. The manager has effective engagement with the staff as she monitors practice routinely within the rooms.
- Children benefit from a broad curriculum indoors and outdoors. The staff use initial assessments well and know what the children need to learn next. Staff place a strong emphasis on positively following children's own interests when planning activities. As a result, children make good progress.
- Parents speak very positively about the care and education their children

receive. They comment that the staff are very supportive and communicate well, and they say that their children have made good progress since attending. Parents comment that the 'amazing' staff spend time getting to know their children. They say that they feel reassured that their child is safe and having fun. Parents whose children require additional support comment how grateful they are to the manager and her team for all the support and reassurance they receive and the good progress their children make.

- Children are skilfully supported with their ideas and to initiate their own play. They access open-ended resources of good quality from easily accessible units. Children are busy throughout their time at the nursery as they are engrossed in their play, particularly outdoors. However, on occasions, they are not encouraged to tidy away resources when they have finished with them in order to take care of the things that they use.
- Children's behaviour is very good overall. Staff have high expectations for all children attending, and children understand what is acceptable. They are kind to one another. Children are generally encouraged to negotiate together to find a solution to a problem, for example when sharing resources. The session runs smoothly throughout the morning, and children are engrossed in their play. However, the organisation during snack and mealtimes means that staff are sometimes busy with other tasks rather than able to focus on supporting children's independence skills.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and her team of staff have a secure knowledge of how to protect children's welfare. They understand the possible behaviours and symptoms that may suggest a child is at risk. They have a sound knowledge of the process to follow should they need to report a concern. Staff are committed to ongoing training to ensure that they are up to date and have a good knowledge of the wider issues of child protection, such as breast ironing and domestic violence. The manager has a stringent recruitment policy, and ongoing suitability checks take place to ensure that children are cared for by staff who are suitable to do so.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- review the organisation of snack and mealtimes so that staff can make the most of all opportunities to help children to develop their independence skills
- help children to understand how to take more care of their books and resources, particularly when they are leading their own play.

Setting details

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| Unique reference number | 2521355 |
| Local authority | Essex |
| Inspection number | 10208073 |
| 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 at time of inspection | 1 to 4 |
| Total number of places | 38 |
| Number of children on roll | 72 |
| Name of registered person | Second Steps - Burnt Mills Ltd |
| Registered person unique reference number | 2521354 |
| Telephone number | 01268 729729 |
| Date of previous inspection | Not applicable |

Information about this early years setting

Second Steps Day Nursery registered in 2019. The nursery employs 15 members of childcare staff. Of these, 12 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The nursery is open from Monday to Friday all year round, except for bank holidays. Sessions are from 7am to 7pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lynn Hartigan

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the nursery.
- The manager showed the inspector around the areas that children access. They discussed how staff organise the nursery and plan the curriculum and experiences for children.
- The nursery manager carried out a joint observation with the inspector.
- The inspector held discussions with staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at a sample of the nursery's documents, including evidence of staff's suitability and training.

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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