

Inspection of Steps to School

BOROUGH GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL, School Approach, Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 8JZ

Inspection date: 25 April 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Babies show high levels of curiosity as they explore their environment. They move freely around the room, engaging in a variety of sensory experiences. This shows babies feel safe and secure. Staff are attentive and cheerful as they interact with babies. For example, babies become highly excited when staff engage in playing 'peekaboo'. This helps children to build positive relationships.

Children develop good social skills. Staff provide opportunities for them to engage in back-and-forth conversations with their friends during their play. For example, while children are building sand castles, they actively share the resources and work out how to take turns to ensure it is fair. As a result, children play harmoniously together and are keen to share their thoughts and ideas.

Children are active learners. Staff encourage them to be curious about the world we live in. For example, while exploring the outdoor space, children become fascinated in looking for insects using a magnifying glass. Staff facilitate this experience by encouraging children to look in the mud and the flowers. They are in the process of creating a designated habitat for bugs. This shows how staff support children to extend their knowledge about the natural world.

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

- Staff know the children very well. They talk confidently about children's current areas of development and follow children's interests to engage them in different learning opportunities. For example, children enjoy dancing and listening to music. Staff ensure this activity is part of their daily routine. Overall, children are making good progress in their learning.
- Staff support children to develop their independence skills. For example, younger children are learning to feed themselves. Pre-school children enjoy helping to clear the table after mealtimes. This gives children a sense of responsibility. However, the organisation of lunchtime means some staff spend time prioritising other tasks, such as setting up beds. This means staff are not able to fully engage children in the learning opportunities that arise at mealtimes.
- Staff provide opportunities for children to engage in physical exercise. Children access the outdoor space, where they engage in a variety of physical activities. For example, they practise balancing as they step along the blocks. This helps children to build on their core strength.
- Staff support children in developing healthy lifestyles. Children show good hygiene routines as they wash their hands before eating. The setting provides children with nutritious hot meals and snacks. Staff accommodate children's dietary requirements, ensuring they are followed. This gives children

opportunities to try new foods, encouraging them to develop a healthy, balanced diet.

- Staff help children to develop their awareness of different occupations. For example, children have opportunities to learn about hairdressers. They engage in role play as they use brushes and pretend shampoo to style the hair of dolls. However, the dolls that children play with do not reflect the diversity of children who attend the setting or who live in the wider world. Therefore, this limits children's knowledge of the similarities and differences in their own and others' heritage.
- Staff provide good support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They work closely with external professionals, including health visitors and specialist teachers. This ensures children with SEND receive the support they need to make progress in their learning and development.
- Parents speak very highly of the staff. They feel well informed about their child's progress and activities through daily feedback and meetings. Parents feel their children have made significant progress since attending this setting. They describe staff as 'supportive' and 'nurturing'. Overall, staff have positive partnerships with parents.
- The manager reflects regularly on staff practice and has identified areas that require improvements. She works closely with her team to ensure children's well-being is paramount. The manager has good support systems in place for her team. As a result, staff morale is high, and they feel well supported by the manager.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff have good safeguarding knowledge. They complete safeguarding training regularly and engage in frequent conversations to discuss any safeguarding concerns. This ensures staff knowledge is kept up to date. Staff gave some examples of potential signs and symptoms of abuse, including recognising disclosures from children. They know what to do if they have concerns regarding a children's safety and welfare. The manager knows who to contact if an allegation is made against herself or a member of staff. The manager has robust recruitment procedures in place to ensure suitability checks are carried out.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- improve daily routines to ensure staff are effectively deployed to support children's learning
- reflect the culture and diversity of the children attending the nursery, to help them make connections between their own and others' heritage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY357595
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10280536
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	54
Number of children on roll	88
Name of registered person	Borough Green Primary School Governing Body
Registered person unique reference number	RP527081
Telephone number	01732 780431
Date of previous inspection	24 August 2017

Information about this early years setting

Steps to School registered in 2007 and is located on the grounds of Borough Green Primary School. The setting operates from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, all year round. The setting employs 22 members of staff. One holds a level 6 qualification, nine hold a level 3 qualification and two hold a level 2 qualification. The setting is in receipt funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years old.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Jasmine Nelson

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with 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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