

Inspection of Little Steps Nursery & Pre-School

1229 Warwick Road, Acocks Green, BIRMINGHAM B27 6PX

Inspection date: 7 February 2024

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

The owner, manager and staff work together well as a team to provide a safe, clean and welcoming nursery for children. Children show that they are happy and settled as they play alongside their friends. They develop secure attachments with staff. For example, babies seek out staff when they want comfort, cuddles and reassurance. This helps them to feel safe and secure. All children enjoy exploring the wide range of resources and activities that staff have thoughtfully provided. For example, babies enjoy rolling tubes and moving wooden blocks through sand in a large tray on the floor. Toddlers explore the texture of rice as they fill and empty containers with it. Older children spend time prodding, rolling and pressing dough, which has been provided by staff to encourage small physical skills.

Staff plan a range of physical activities to encourage children's health and movement. For example, pre-school children relish jumping around and stamping their feet, following adult instruction well. Staff encourage them to take a moment to breathe deeply, notice their heartbeat and anticipate what will come next. They challenge themselves as they balance on one foot. They become deeply involved as they 'ssshhh' and creep quietly through the 'cave' on their dragon hunt. Younger children reach up to draw with chalks on the outside chalkboard and peddle skilfully on wheeled toys.

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

- Leaders support staff's well-being and professional development. They make sure that they meet regularly with staff to discuss how they are getting on and talk about any concerns. The manager and room leaders observe staff practice so that they can identify focused training and coaching. Staff are encouraged to take on additional responsibilities and are supported to access any additional training they need.
- The manager has a clear intention about what she wants children to learn while they attend the nursery. The team has worked hard to review exactly what skills their children need to help them take the next step in their learning journey. Furthermore, a well-planned routine focuses on child-led learning and play. This helps staff to support children's individual progress well.
- Leaders and staff provide an inclusive curriculum that meets the needs of all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Support for children with additional needs is very strong and implemented with empathy. Staff are very aware of individual needs and keep this information at the heart of what they do. The special educational needs coordinator is passionate about her role and works very closely with staff and parents to provide appropriate and focused individual support for children who need extra help. Additional funding is used for targeted intervention and specific resources

to help children's progress.

- Staff have a good understanding of child development and know their children very well. They skilfully decide where children are in their development. They recognise children's likes and their personality. They use their knowledge of child development and observations of children to highlight any gaps in learning. However, staff's knowledge of the different ways that children learn could be further developed to ensure that all children have enough opportunities to be creative and develop their own ideas.
- Teaching and interactions are generally good. For example, older children are offered a challenge to reach up high to write and draw on the chalkboard. Babies are encouraged to pull themselves up to stand, because staff arrange resources to enable this. However, occasionally, staff's interactions with toddlers do not offer them enough opportunities to hear rich language and a wide range of words.
- Children develop a love of reading because staff prioritise the use of books throughout the day. For example, older children sit with staff to read a story together. They enthusiastically retell a favourite story 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt'. Toddlers sit together with friends and listen to staff read a new story after lunch. Babies access board and cloth books as they play.
- Parents say that they are very happy with the nursery. They comment that their children enjoy attending every day. Staff keep parents informed of their children's progress through the parent app, termly reports and regular informal chats. Staff also encourage parents to share what children have learned and enjoyed at home.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- build on staff's already good teaching skills to help them further promote children's opportunities to be creative and develop their own ideas during play
- increase the opportunities for toddlers to build on their emerging communication and language skills even further.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY543929
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10327262
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	70
Number of children on roll	90
Name of registered person	Little Steps Academy Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP535031
Telephone number	01217077330
Date of previous inspection	20 September 2019

Information about this early years setting

Little Steps Nursery & Pre-School registered in 2017 and is located in Birmingham. The setting employs 15 members of staff. Of these, 12 hold appropriate early years qualifications between level 2 and level 6. The setting opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Juliette Freeman

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 provider.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- Meetings were held between the inspector, the manager and owner during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at a selection of documentation and checked the suitability of staff working with the children.
- The inspector spoke to children, staff and parents at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together.

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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