

# Inspection of Early Steps Preschool

Waterlea Adventure Playground, Crawley RH10 6SP

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Inspection date: 21 September 2021

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<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## **What is it like to attend this early years setting?**

### **The provision is good**

Children arrive happily at the setting and settle quickly at a chosen activity. They develop warm, caring relationships with staff and good friendships with each other. For example, they talk about who their friends are and that they share toys with each other as they play. Children use a wide range of resources, such as chunky chinks and a cornflour and water mixture to make marks and develop small-muscle skills. They develop a clear understanding of the impact of their actions. They receive guidance from staff and access the well-resourced calm area, where they learn about managing their feelings.

Children enjoy taking the lead in their play and learning experiences, and learn to take risks in safe surroundings. Staff are highly skilled in their interactions with children and understand how to plan a challenging curriculum for each child. They make the most of every opportunity to bring all areas of learning into each activity. Children recall recent events and take delight as they look through the book of past activities. The photographs, pictures and simple words help to prompt children to talk about the different things. For example, they recall how they made volcanoes and know which ones were theirs and which belonged to their friends.

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

- The provider and her staff team have worked hard to address areas raised at the last inspection. Staff receive a full induction and ongoing supervision to make sure that they understand their roles and responsibilities. They also have effective coaching and training. Staff complete daily risk assessments to identify and minimise potential hazards to children.
- Staff use their secure knowledge of what children know, understand and can do to support them as they play. This helps to develop children's confidence and resilience. They use simple sign language to enable children to follow instructions. Staff understand that there is a sequence to learning new skills and that children need to master each part of the sequence before moving on. They are fully aware of any gaps in children's learning and how to weave what children need to learn next into the day's play.
- Children receive effective support to encourage their listening skills. For example, they thoroughly enjoyed a lotto game. They excitedly anticipated the next sound to be played and placed their counter on their card. However, during some activities, staff occasionally use the incorrect pronunciation of words, such as 'doggy'. Also, they do not consistently give children the time that they need to gather their thoughts and respond to questions.
- Staff worked successfully to maintain effective partnerships with parents throughout the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic and share information. They found alternative ways to help parents to have an insight into daily activities

while they are unable to enter the setting due to the pandemic. However, they do not always explore different ways to make sure that all parents fully understand how they can support their children's learning at home.

- Children develop a secure understanding of what makes them unique. Staff act as positive role models and help children to learn about respecting others. For example, while pretending to be hairdressers, children explore the differing hair and skin colours of the models. This helps to enhance their knowledge of similarities and differences.
- Staff establish good links with other early years professionals. This results in teaching being focused on meeting the unique needs of individual children, who achieve well. Staff actively seek support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This enables early diagnosis and support plans to be implemented without delay, and for gaps in learning to close swiftly. Staff successfully use additional funding that children receive to support each child's individual needs.
- Children thoroughly enjoy outdoor play. Here, they learn about their shadows and show great curiosity as they realise that they follow them wherever they go when in the sun. Staff expertly support this experience as they help to draw the body shapes with chalk on the ground and clearly name parts of the body. This increases the number of words that children know and retain for future use.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a clear understanding of child protection and the wider aspects of safeguarding. They complete regular training to keep their knowledge up to date with cultural practices. Staff understand the importance of making prompt referrals should they have any concerns about a child and are fully aware of their local procedures to follow. This helps to support children's well-being. The provider follows safer recruitment procedures to make sure that staff are suitable to work with children.

## **What does the setting need to do to improve?**

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

- build on the good partnership working to explore further ways to offer learning at home opportunities
- strengthen staff's knowledge of the importance of using the correct pronunciation of words and of allowing enough time for children to respond to questions.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY554037
<b>Local authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10112801
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Sessional day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	2 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	30
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	9
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Owen, Judith
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP554036
<b>Telephone number</b>	01293544513
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	5 June 2019

## Information about this early years setting

Early Steps Preschool registered in 2017 and operates from a playroom in Waterlea Adventure Playground, Crawley, West Sussex. It is open each weekday from 8.45am to 2.45pm. There are five members of staff, three of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The provider holds early years professional status. The pre-school provides funded free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Helen Penticost

## Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting 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 manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed the curriculum.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager, spoke with staff and interacted with children.
- Parents shared their views about the setting with the inspector.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

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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