

Inspection of Halstead Nursery

C/O Halstead Primary School, Otford Lane, Halstead, SEVENOAKS, Kent TN14 7EA

Inspection date: 11 May 2022

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children thrive in this exceptional setting. They are extremely happy and secure and build excellent relationships with staff, who all know their key children incredibly well. Children confidently choose what they want to do and ask for help when needed. They are empowered to take control of their learning with skilled guidance from staff. Children have excellent manners, and they play cooperatively in the stimulating learning environments that staff provide.

Children have many fantastic opportunities to enhance their physical development. They learn to confidently manage their own risk with skill as they balance and pedal bicycles without stabilisers around the playground. Children have an amazing understanding of healthy lifestyles. Through discussions, they demonstrate how they understand the benefits of a healthy diet on their growing bodies.

Children's behaviour is excellent. They are very focused and enthusiastic in their play and the adult-led sessions on offer. Children learn to share and take turns as they play incredibly well together with their friends. They fully understand what is expected of them and show excellent independence from a young age. For instance, they are completely self-sufficient as they access the snack bar. Children enjoy tidy-up time and do this without adult intervention. Children have an incredible understanding of effective hygiene routines and thoroughly wash their hands at appropriate times without being prompted.

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

- Children thrive in a highly enriching learning environment. They make excellent progress in all areas of learning. The curriculum is ambitious for all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. A wide range of stimulating and challenging learning experiences allow children to build on and extend their skills.
- Partnership working with parents is excellent. Parents say that they would not hesitate to recommend the setting and that the manager and staff go 'above and beyond' to offer support. They highly commend the staff team and feel a part of their children's educational experience. Parents state that they receive regular feedback and information on how to support their child's learning at home.
- The manager and staff constantly plan and reflect on their existing outstanding provision. They meticulously identify where improvements are needed, based on their monitoring and observations. The manager is highly motivated to maintain a strong focus on staff's professional development needs. Recent staff training on 'communication-friendly settings' has enhanced children's development immensely in their communication and language skills. Additionally, staff's well-

being is a high priority. Staff comment that they are extremely well supported.

- Staff place the utmost priority on developing children's communication and language skills. Children take great pleasure in retelling stories from pictures. They show exceptional recall and fluency as they talk about the events in the 'Cinderella' story. This skill is further extended as children explore different types of books that tell the same story. They consider what book may be most appropriate for them. This supports a deeper understanding of stories.
- Children demonstrate excellent early literacy skills and are exceptionally well prepared for their next stage of education. For example, older children recognise different letters and the sounds that they make. In addition, they are able to confidently blend the sounds together to create short words. Children learn to write letters correctly in their name.
- Children gain an incredibly in-depth knowledge about the world they live in, which encourages them to care deeply for the environment and their local community. For example, the nursery complete 'Global Goals'. This includes teaching children to understand sustainability. Children enjoy a book swap where they exchange their pre-loved books with their friends. They participated in preparing gifts for the local elderly residents at Christmas, and enjoy nurturing their own herbs and plants in the nursery garden.
- Leaders maintain outstanding links with other professional organisations for further support in children's learning. Staff accurately identify gaps in children's learning very early on through regular observations. These gaps rapidly close with the involvement of professionals and the exceptional commitment of the staff for children to always achieve the best they can.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff have a strong focus on safeguarding children and families. The environment inside and outside is very well maintained to minimise hazards and keep children safe. Staff are alert to the signs of abuse, and they know the process to follow if they are concerned a child is at risk of harm. Children develop an exceptional understanding of safety. They gain excellent skills for their future, including a very good understanding of assessing risks. For example, staff ask thought-provoking questions about why something may not be safe. This means that children learn to think about how to ensure their environment is safe.

Setting details

Unique reference number	127219
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10108461
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	1 to 4
Total number of places	25
Number of children on roll	29
Name of registered person	Halstead Nursery Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP904817
Telephone number	07950681846
Date of previous inspection	10 March 2015

Information about this early years setting

Halstead Nursery was established in 1963. It is based in the grounds of Halstead Community Primary School in Kent. The nursery opens five days a week during term times. Sessions are from 8.45am until 3.15pm. There are eight staff employed in the nursery. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free education to children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Kimberley Luckham

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 setting.
- The inspector sampled documentation, such as staff files, first-aid certificates and risk assessments.
- The manager and the inspector took part in a learning walk at the start of the inspection to find out what staff intend children to learn and how they implement the curriculum.
- The inspector and the manager carried out a joint observation to find out how they evaluate teaching.
- The inspector spoke to staff and children throughout the inspection and gained the views of parents.

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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