

Smarties Nursery

Postley Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 6TL



Inspection date

11 May 2016

Previous inspection date

Not applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
	Previous inspection:	Not applicable	
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Outstanding	1
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Outstanding	1
Outcomes for children		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is outstanding

- The manager demonstrates an exceptionally high level of determination to make links with other early years professionals. For example, she works closely with specialist teachers and other nurseries. This helps provide a consistency of care.
- Staff are highly effective as they encourage the involvement of parents with an excellent level of shared learning with children. For example, they accompany families to meetings that relate to children's development to offer support.
- Staff are outstanding as they support children's communication skills. For example, they use highly skilful questions to encourage children to think through and discuss problems with a high level of maturity.
- Children have an abundance of very high-quality resources to encourage exciting, motivating and imaginative play. Children are extremely engaged in exemplary learning opportunities and make outstanding progress.
- There are inspirational relationships between staff and children. Children are extremely confident and happy, and have an excellent level of emotional well-being.
- Older children develop a highly impressive understanding of mathematics through play. For example, they carefully measure out the ingredients for their dough, and accurately count and compare numbers during a game with other children. This supports them exceptionally well for their future learning.
- Staff work extremely hard to develop babies' and toddlers' communication and language skills. For example, they make excellent use of signing and enthusiastically encourage them to join in with action songs.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- strengthen the already excellent understanding that children have of people's similarities and differences.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the staff's interaction with children.
- The inspector viewed the indoor and outdoor environments.
- The inspector looked at the written documentation, including a sample of the policies and procedures, risk assessments and staff training records.
- The inspector spoke to children, parents and staff, and took their views into consideration.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.

Inspector

Kelly Hawkins

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is outstanding

The manager monitors the inspirational quality of teaching exceptionally well. For example, she holds regular team meetings and encourages staff to review the learning environments all the time. She provides excellent mentoring for staff and motivates them to extend their impressive teaching knowledge even further. For example, they attend training to ensure they consistently meet the specific learning needs of children. Additional funding is used exceptionally well to meet the needs of the children. All staff have an extremely comprehensive knowledge of the procedures to follow and who to contact to protect children's welfare. Children challenge themselves physically and manage appropriate risks safely. For example, children confidently use the climbing wall and the rope swings, and build seesaws out of wooden crates. Safeguarding is effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

Staff have an exceptional knowledge of children's interests and are extremely skilled at spontaneously building on these. For example, children have a significant interest in dinosaurs and staff help them create 'dinosaur dens' and they make and bake 'dinosaur eggs'. Children have inspirational opportunities to develop their creativity and imagination. For example, the children have easy free access to ingredients in dispensers to make their own modelling dough. The manager and staff monitor children's development very accurately with detailed tracking of their progress, for individuals and groups of children, such as boys and girls. They promptly highlight any gaps and close them rapidly with individual support.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

Children behave in an exemplary way and are exceptionally polite. They have excellent opportunities to develop their understanding of people's similarities and differences. However, the manager is aware that, at times, the teaching does not always significantly strengthen children's understanding outside of their own experiences. Children have exceptional opportunities to develop their physical skills and learn about healthy lifestyles. For example, children enthusiastically engage with staff as they cut and prepare real nutritious foods in the role-play areas, such as potatoes and different fruits.

Outcomes for children are outstanding

All children make outstanding progress from their starting points. Children develop an exceptional understanding of literacy. For example, they write in the pet guinea pigs' 'learning records' and add their ideas to different project books. Children have a highly impressive interest in reading. For example, they access the extensive range of written material, including traditional books and magazines. Children gain extremely positive skills to manage the move to school exceptionally well.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY486595
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	1007001
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register
Age range of children	0 - 4
Total number of places	46
Number of children on roll	78
Name of provider	Kent County Council
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	01622 692374

Smarties Nursery registered in 2015. It is run by Kent County Council and operates from the site of Southborough Primary School in Maidstone, Kent. The nursery is open Monday to Friday, from 8am to 6pm, for 50 weeks of the year. It receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The nursery employs 11 staff, nine of whom hold relevant early years qualifications at level 3 and one staff member holds a relevant early years qualification at level 4.

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