

The Firs Nursery

Chartham Primary School, Shalmsford Street, Chartham, Canterbury,
Kent CT4 7QN



Inspection date	7 November 2018
Previous inspection date	1 November 2017

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

The provision is good

- Staff help to support children develop their independence. For instance, they support them with managing their personal needs, such as putting on and fastening their own coats before going outside to play.
- Children have built warm and trusting relationships with the staff. Staff know the children well and are responsive to their individual needs. For example, they talk to them about family members and activities they have been to, such as watching firework displays.
- The management committee has strong recruitment and induction procedures in place, to help support new and existing staff build confidence in their roles.
- Children are happy and excited to come into nursery to meet with friends and staff. They play in a well-resourced environment where they are able to access a wide variety of toys easily, which helps to support them to be active in their play and motivated to learn.
- Staff have a good understanding of how to support children. They complete precise observations and assessments of children's learning. Staff use these to plan a range of experiences that focuses on children's next steps to help ensure children make good progress.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- At times, staff do not take all opportunities to help support younger children's mathematical skills, in particular to increase their understanding of numbers and quantities.
- Children, particularly those who prefer to play outdoors, do not have consistent opportunities to explore making marks and practising their early writing skills.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- strengthen opportunities for younger children to develop an interest and build on their early mathematical skills
- review and improve the range of opportunities available for children to develop and practise their early writing skills, particularly for those who learn best outside.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed staff interactions with children and spoke to staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation, including children's assessment records, management committee information and staff professional development folders.
- The inspector read letters of reference and spoke to parents and carers to gain their views on the service they receive.
- The inspector carried out joint observations with the manager and asked her to feed back on the practice observed.
- The inspector discussed with the manager the changes implemented since the last inspection and plans for the future of the nursery.

Inspector
Sara Garrity

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

The manager and staff have a good understanding of the signs and symptoms that might indicate that a child may be at risk of harm and the procedures to follow to help protect them. Safeguarding is effective. Staff work well together as part of a team. The manager deploys them effectively to ensure they closely supervise children to maintain their safety. The children's progress is tracked efficiently. Any gaps in learning are quickly identified and appropriate action taken. For example, staff make good use of additional funding to help support individual children's needs. The manager carries out regular supervision meetings with staff and encourages them to develop their professional practice. For instance, staff have used recent training on the different ways that children learn, to improve their teaching skills. The committee members have used recent training well to improve practice and to support the manager. The manager regularly evaluates the nursery to improve outcomes for all children. The nursery has positive partnerships with parents and strong connections with other early years professionals and local schools, to help ensure all children receive any extra assistance required.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff effectively support children to develop good communication and language skills. For example, they sing nursery rhymes and make strong use of repetition to reinforce correct pronunciation and help increase children's vocabulary. Children demonstrate good levels of concentration and persevere with tasks. For example, staff praise children as they practise hammering golf tees into a pumpkin to make patterns. Staff make good use of spontaneous events to extend children's learning. For instance, they make children aware of the squirrel in the tree and encourage them to stop and listen to the noises it makes as it climbs. This helps to support children to develop an awareness of the natural world.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Staff teach children how to identify risks and keep themselves safe. For example, they show them how to use the knife safely when cutting up their fruit for snack time. Mealtimes are a social occasion, where children are eager to serve themselves and practise using cutlery as they learn valuable life skills. Children learn about the feelings of others and respond positively to behaviour boundaries. They behave well. Staff offer children opportunities to learn about the wider world in positive ways. For example, they provide children with a range of experiences that reflects the backgrounds of all children attending.

Outcomes for children are good

All children, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress from their starting points. They are inquisitive and curious learners. For instance, they skilfully chip away at a small block of ice to see what is hidden inside. Children improve their physical skills and demonstrate good control and coordination. For instance, they are excited to draw up water into syringes and see if they can hit the target with the water. Children are acquiring the skills needed for the next stages in their development and eventual move to school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	127688
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10079447
Type of provision	Full day care
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Age range of children	2 - 8
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	72
Name of registered person	The Firs Nursery Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP518901
Date of previous inspection	1 November 2017
Telephone number	01227 731876

The Firs Nursery registered in 1994 and is committee run. It operates from premises located in the grounds of Chartham Primary School in Chartham, near Canterbury, Kent. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.45am to 6pm, during term time only. The provider also offers a breakfast and after-school club for school-aged children. The nursery receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The provider employs 11 members of staff, seven of whom hold relevant early years qualifications at level 2 or above. This includes one member of staff who has an early years teaching qualification.

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