

Inspection of Highways at Hamstreet Kindergarten

Ham Street Primary Academy, Hamstreet, ASHFORD, Kent TN26 2EA

Inspection date: 8 January 2020

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
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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 are enthusiastic and eager to play as soon as they arrive at this exceptionally stimulating and nurturing kindergarten. They are immediately drawn to their favourite activities and begin the day focused and motivated. Attachments to staff are excellent and children demonstrate particularly high levels of well-being and happiness.

Well-qualified staff have an excellent knowledge of how children learn. The curriculum is highly effective in targeting children's individual needs and learning styles, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The environment is expertly arranged to give children maximum space and choice over how they want to play. For instance, children were enthralled as they investigated and experimented in the exciting and innovative 'dough station'. As staff watch children play, they constantly notice 'teachable' moments to extend and build on what children can do and know, for example by stepping in to help them use scissors to improve physical skills.

Children are extremely calm as they learn to negotiate with one another, take turns and understand each other's feelings. They are supported by exceptionally empathetic staff who help them manage and understand their feelings and emotions using strategies suited to their individual needs. Children learn to behave extremely well as they develop the skills they need to be successful life-long learners.

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

- The manager's high-quality action plans, targeted professional development and regular networking with other professionals help her maintain excellent standards and teaching in the kindergarten. Senior leaders act as excellent 'critical friends', ensuring targets for improvement are met and their impact for children is fully evaluated.
- Staff use subtle, yet highly effective, teaching strategies to ensure all children make progress. Following training, staff have recently reflected on how they plan resources and the environment to better extend children's learning. For example, they expertly used children's fascinations and interest in water to learn about floating and sinking.
- Children with SEND are supported exceedingly well. Staff work closely with parents, professionals and other settings that children attend to plan excellent targeted support and interventions. Additional funding is used extremely effectively. Children benefit from new experiences and exciting resources, such as the outdoor sensory room.
- Parents are delighted with the care and education children receive. Staff have

developed excellent ways of keeping communication flowing between kindergarten and home. Parents know what their children are learning and feel involved in their community. Staff invite them to share special events, such as den building in the woods for Father's Day, or reading stories from their different cultures.

- Staff consistently extend and build children's communication skills and vocabulary. For instance, as children enthusiastically dig up worms in the garden, staff talk about a 'wormery' and 'habitats'. Children's listening and attention skills are superb. They listen carefully to rhymes, stories and songs, and follow instructions.
- Staff cleverly introduce mathematical concepts in playful and meaningful ways. For example, children were keen to hold puppets and act out a counting song as they learned to add up and take away numbers to 10.
- Children benefit from plenty of exercise in the imaginative and exciting outdoor space. They develop their strength and coordination as they pedal bikes up a slight incline, carry logs and sticks for building and use large spades in the digging patch. They learn to prepare their own healthy and nutritious foods at snack time. Children demonstrate excellent independence skills as they wash up after snack, dress themselves and choose their own activities.
- Children make extraordinary discoveries as they are encouraged to find their own ways of doing things. Staff praise their perseverance and efforts, allowing them to make mistakes in order to find a better solution. For instance, children regularly pour and mix their own paints. They were fascinated by the changes they saw happening and were motivated to try different variations, such as pouring water over powder paint they had dropped onto the patio outside. Their delight in watching coloured water running downhill inspired them to ask staff questions in order to learn more.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Children's welfare and safety are firmly placed at the heart of the kindergarten's practice. Leaders have robust policies and systems in place to safeguard all children. Excellent recruitment and induction procedures ensure staff are suitable and that they fully understand their role in keeping children safe. All staff know what to do if they are concerned about the welfare or safety of a child. The manager and senior staff maintain excellent communication with the local school and other professionals, where they share critical information to support families and children when they move to school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	127250
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10128683
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	2 to 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	56
Name of registered person	Highways At Hamstreet
Registered person unique reference number	RP522594
Telephone number	01233 732 915
Date of previous inspection	22 January 2016

Information about this early years setting

Highways at Hamstreet Kindergarten registered in 2001 and is managed by a committee. It operates from a building within the grounds of Hamstreet Primary School in Hamstreet, Ashford, Kent, and links with the school are established. The kindergarten operates Monday to Friday, from 8.30am to 3.30pm, during term time only. It receives funding to provide early education for children aged two, three and four years. The kindergarten employs nine staff members. Of these, eight have relevant early years qualifications. This includes two staff with level 6 qualifications and one with qualified teacher status.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Alison Martin

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching and the impact this has on children's learning indoors and outside.
- The manager spoke with the inspector about the curriculum for children on a learning walk around the kindergarten.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager and the provider, and spoke with all staff at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector spoke with children and parents to take their views into account.
- The manager and the inspector conducted a shared observation.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation, including the kindergarten's self-evaluation and improvement plans, evidence of staff suitability, and policies and procedures.

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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