

Inspection of Little Oaks Kindergarten

85 Canterbury Road, Hawkinge, Folkestone CT18 7BP

Inspection date: 24 February 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children enter the nursery happy and eager to begin their day. Babies develop secure attachments with their kind and caring key person, which helps them to settle quickly. Children confidently explore the activities and resources available. They demonstrate high levels of engagement and enthusiasm in their play. Older children show confidence and fascination as they participate in activities. For example, children estimate what will happen to items during a sinking and floating activity. They express their thoughts and predict what will happen next.

Most children behave well. Staff support them to sit and wait their turn to wash their hands before mealtimes. Children follow simple instructions such as bringing their water bottles to the lunch table. This helps to promote their independence skills. Pre-school children enjoy helping to tidy up the toys and receive positive praise from staff when the task is completed.

Children have daily opportunities to develop their communication and language skills. Staff sing nursery rhymes with younger children, read stories and use music and movement games to promote listening skills. For example, babies rock back and forth with staff who sing 'row your boat' and toddlers listen intently to 'ten little princesses' and answer simple questions.

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

- The management team has a clear vision for the nursery. They effectively evaluate the quality of their provision and practices to identify areas where further improvements need to be made. Thorough induction processes and training opportunities ensure that staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They receive regular supervisions and are encouraged to complete ongoing training to help progress their professional development.
- The management team recognises that since COVID-19, children need further support in their personal, social and emotional development, as well as their communication and language skills. The nursery's curriculum places a strong focus on the key skills children need to learn, which staff implement through the children's interests. However, not all staff fully understand the purpose of some planned activities that lack focus on what they want children to learn.
- Effective systems identify what children already know and can do on entering the nursery. Staff speak confidently about their key children's likes, dislikes and abilities. Any gaps in children's development are identified quickly and acted upon.
- Staff successfully work in partnership with other professionals to support children and their families, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Effective strategies ensure that all children continue to make good

progress in their development. For instance, staff learn Makaton and provide visual aids that support children's ability to communicate.

- Staff manage children's behaviour effectively. Children know the nursery's routines well and they receive good levels of support to understand the behaviour expected of them. When conflicts arise during play, staff encourage children to think about their actions and share their toys.
- Staff provide opportunities for pre-school children to speculate and test their knowledge during planned activities. For example, children have fun exploring which resources will sink or float when placed in water. However, on occasions, staff do not always extend the activities to challenge children further in their thinking and learning.
- Staff provide regular opportunities for all children to build on their physical development. For example, they encourage tummy time with the youngest of babies to build on their core strength and leg muscles before later introducing walker toys to aid standing and walking. Older children access the outside play spaces in all weather conditions. They enjoy running and jumping in muddy puddles and riding bicycles and scooters as they learn to balance and negotiate space.
- During COVID-19, staff kept in touch with parents and provided resources to help support their children's learning and development at home. Parents confirm they receive effective communication both in person and online that keeps them well informed about their child's learning and development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff undertake regular training, including that of wider safeguarding issues such as female genital mutilation, 'Prevent' duty, county lines and radicalisation. This helps staff to develop a robust understanding of child protection. Staff demonstrate a secure understanding of the procedures to follow in the event of a concern or allegation being made against an adult working with the children. They understand the importance of their role in reporting safeguarding concerns beyond the management team if they were unhappy with their response to any concern raised. The management team follow effective safer recruitment procedures that enables them to check the suitability of the staff working with children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen staff's understanding of the early years curriculum intent so that they are clear on what they want children to learn from the activities provided
- support staff to make greater use of planned activities to further challenge older children in their learning to extend their thinking skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY475631
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10219813
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 at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	66
Name of registered person	Little Oaks Early Years Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP519609
Telephone number	01303850203
Date of previous inspection	5 August 2016

Information about this early years setting

Little Oaks Kindergarten is owned by Little Oaks Early Years Limited. It was registered in 2014 and is located in Hawkinge, near Folkestone in Kent. The nursery operates from a large private house, with secure outside play spaces. The setting opens Monday to Friday, from 8am to 6pm, throughout the year. There are 18 members of staff. Of these, 14 hold relevant childcare qualifications at level 2 or above. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Laura Rigden

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken this into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity within the two- to three-year-old room.
- The inspector held conversations with the staff and management at convenient times during the inspection to discuss the early years curriculum and safeguarding.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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