

Inspection of Mini Scholars Nursery

Shadoxhurst Village Hall, Tally Ho Road, Ashford, Kent TN26 1HW

Inspection date: 27 May 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	Requires improvement
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the nursery. They are happy on arrival and eager to see their friends. Children feel safe and secure. They separate well from their parents and are familiar with the daily routine. Children have strong bonds with staff, who know the children in their care well. Children are supported well through times of change, such as starting at the setting. Furthermore, staff share information and liaise with teachers to support pre-school children moving to school.

Children respond well to the consistent high expectations of staff. They know the rules and boundaries of the nursery. For example, while waiting to wash their plates after snack, they remind each other 'not to push in and take turns'. Children are respectful of their peers and staff. They listen to adults and follow instructions well.

Children learn how to keep themselves healthy. They enjoy nutritious snacks provided by staff and help themselves to drinking water throughout the day. Children are encouraged to wash their own hands before meals and after using the toilet. They play with resources such as toothbrushes to help them understand about the importance of good dental health.

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

- Staff successfully enhance children's communication and language skills. They skilfully introduce new words, such as 'river' and 'bridge', as children play with toy boats and water. Additionally, staff ask open-ended questions, such as, 'I wonder which way the boats will go?' This ignites children's curiosity and supports their exploration skills effectively.
- Leaders have made positive improvements since the last inspection. They have reviewed the curriculum to provide more learning opportunities to promote children's independence. For example, children pour their own drinks and serve their own snacks. Since the last inspection, leaders have improved the outdoor learning environment. Children access the outdoor area daily, where they benefit from fresh air and exercise. Additionally, leaders plan to restart walks in the local neighbourhood, which stopped during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Since the last inspection, leaders have greatly improved partnerships with parents. For example, staff feed back to parents daily about what their children have enjoyed doing during their time at nursery. Additionally, parents receive a termly written report of their child's progress, which includes areas for development and next steps in learning. Staff share home-learning ideas and resources, such as books, so that parents can build on children's learning at home.

- Staff attend training to help keep their knowledge and skills up to date. Leaders check on the workload and well-being of staff regularly. They observe each other's practice to help identify areas for development. However, staff monitoring does not fully identify all areas where staff need support, to ensure teaching is of the highest standard.
- Staff provide a safe and stimulating learning environment. Children choose and lead their own play. For example, they help themselves to resources that are on low shelves. Staff plan a range of interesting activities that build on children's interests. Activities are accessible to all children and cover several areas of learning. For example, children develop their early mathematical and social skills as they work together to wash away shapes drawn on the wall. However, there are not enough learning experiences across the curriculum to fully develop children's understanding of diversity and equality.
- Children behave well and demonstrate good manners. For example, they wait patiently for their turn to wash their hands and share resources readily. Children enjoy exploring through play. They spend long periods of time concentrating on activities that stimulate their curiosity. For example, children of all ages enjoy filling containers with water and squirting it in the air.
- Staff give children plenty of praise and encouragement as they play. For example, they cheer when children score a goal during a game of basketball. This successfully promotes children's self-esteem. Additionally, children show high levels of confidence. For example, they proudly explain to visitors what they have made with play dough.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know the signs that a child may be at risk of harm or neglect. They fully understand the processes to follow should they have concerns about children's welfare. This includes what to do in the event of an allegation against a staff member. Leaders employ effective strategies, such as risk assessments, to ensure the ongoing safety of children. They complete daily checks of the environment, indoors and outdoors, to identify and minimise any risks to children. Effective recruitment and vetting processes are in place to ensure adults working with children are suitable.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- increase opportunities to enhance children's learning and understanding of equality and diversity
- strengthen the monitoring of staff performance to ensure all staff are supported to consistently teach to the highest standard.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2548703
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10201434
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	2 to 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	15
Name of registered person	Mini Scholars Nursery Partnership
Registered person unique reference number	2548702
Telephone number	07921969998
Date of previous inspection	18 June 2021

Information about this early years setting

Mini Scholars Nursery registered in 2019. It is located in Shadoxhurst, Ashford in Kent. The setting is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday, from 9.15am until 2.15pm, term time only. The setting receives funding to provide free early education for children aged three and four years. The setting employs three members of staff; all hold relevant early years qualifications at levels 3 or 4.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Michaela Borland

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The provider and the inspector completed a joint observation of staff practice.
- The inspector held discussions with staff, children and parents throughout the visit and took their views into account.
- The inspector sampled a range of documents, including recruitment and vetting checks, to ensure adults are suitable to work with children.

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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