

Inspection of Histon Early Years Centre

New School Road, Histon, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB24 9LL

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 July 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Children love attending Histon Early Years Centre. Adults provide children with rich experiences to allow them to explore the world around them. Children love exploring the outdoor areas such as the 'pebble riverbed', the garden area and the ice cream shop. These provide wonderful settings for children to develop their physical, language and social skills.

Adults care deeply for the children they work with. Children receive great support and guidance. This is especially the case for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Children with SEND are very well supported. Skilled adults adapt the learning for these children so they can learn the same curriculum as their peers.

Children learn routines to help them be independent. This includes the very youngest children. They help with serving their own lunch. Children enjoy chatting with each other during snack times. There are many times through the day when children develop their social language and interactions.

Relationships between adults and children are strong. Children behave very well. They play together, laugh together and share equipment well. Children can say what is making them feel sad or angry because they have been taught the words that they need to use to express these feelings. When there are disagreements between children, adults are quick to help them resolve situations.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Children learn well. Leaders have identified what they expect children to know and be able to do by the end of each year. Adults interact skilfully with children and help them to learn new words and practise these in different contexts. Adults pay close attention to children's own interests and help them learn and practise new knowledge and skills.

Children develop a love of books. They listen to, and join in with, a wide range of stories, poems and songs. Adults select 'focus books' that they regularly share with children. Children enjoy retelling or acting out these stories that they know in depth. This helps children increase their range of vocabulary, which they use well.

Children develop a detailed knowledge of the world around them. Younger children know and can explain the life cycle of a butterfly, including how 'caterpillars go into their cocoon'. Older children learn a great deal about space travel and the planets in the solar system.

In a few areas of learning, leaders are finalising their curriculum design and thinking. They have not yet precisely identified what they expect children to know, remember and be able to do and how they ensure consistency of provision across different rooms. This means that during times when children choose their own

activities it is not always clear what adults want children to learn or gain from an activity.

The needs of children with SEND are well met. Adults are skilled at adapting activities to allow children with SEND to access the full curriculum. They also know when to step back. This means children with SEND are well supported to develop independence. Parents, rightly, highly value the support their children with SEND receive.

The provision for children's personal development is of very high quality. Children contribute to the local community. There is a well-established relationship with the local residential care home which provides children with the chance to interact and spend time with the residents. Children are responsible for growing, and caring for, a range of plants and vegetables in the school's garden, some of which end up on their plate at lunchtime. Differences between children are celebrated. Children know not everyone is the same because adults regularly talk with children about differences.

Children behave extremely well. Adults and children have developed very positive relationships with each other. There are clear routines that children know how to follow. For example, when going to the outside areas on a sunny day, children know they must put on their sun hats and sun cream and ensure they hydrate. They use equipment with care and tidy it away neatly once they have finished.

Adults value the support that senior leaders provide for them. Leaders look after staff's well-being and workload. Adults have opportunities to develop professionally, through training, working with other local nurseries and through links with nurseries in other countries that have been established.

Governance has been strengthened since the previous inspection. Several newly appointed governors have brought skills and knowledge to the governing body. This includes knowledge of finance which was lacking in the past. These recently appointed governors require further training and support to ensure they carry out their roles effectively. This is especially the case when challenging leaders over the quality of education children receive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a culture of vigilance. Safeguarding is at the forefront of everyone's mind. Adults are well trained to spot the signs that a child may be at risk of harm. They know exactly what to do if they have a concern. Leaders keep detailed records of any concerns that are raised. Where children need extra help, leaders are quick to provide this.

Leaders carry out detailed checks on adults who start work in school. Governors know their responsibility to check regularly to ensure leaders are doing all they

should to keep children safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have designed a curriculum with clear and ambitious end points for each year. In a few remaining areas of learning, there is not sufficient clarity about the specific knowledge and skills children need to know, remember and be able to do and how leaders ensure consistency for children across different rooms. This means that adults are not always clear about what children should learn and gain from activities, especially when children are choosing and working independently. Leaders should ensure they complete the work they have started, so children can learn well across all areas of learning.
- Some recently appointed governors do not have a clear and full understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Governors should receive further training so they fully understand, and carry out, their roles to continue to improve and sustain the quality of education children receive.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	110595
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10210943
Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	1 to 5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	114
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jacqueline Wade
Headteacher	Karen Scott
Website	www.histon.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26 March 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The on-site provision for one-year-olds, 'Little Owls', is registered separately on Ofsted's early years register and was not part of this inspection.
- The school operates wraparound provision for nursery-age children, both at the start and end of the day.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these areas of learning: communication and language (including early reading), mathematics, physical development and understanding the world. For each deep dive, inspectors met with leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to practitioners and spoke with some children about their learning.

- The lead inspector evaluated the curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about several other areas of learning.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body and held a telephone conversation with one governor. The lead inspector held separate telephone conversations with two representatives of the local authority.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised the single central record and evaluated safeguarding paperwork and systems. Inspectors spoke to leaders, practitioners, support staff, governors and children.
- Inspectors considered the 36 responses and free-text comments to Ofsted's questionnaire for parents, along with the 17 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

Nathan Lowe, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Kim Hall

Her Majesty's Inspector

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