

# Inspection of Saplings Rural Day Nursery and Preschool

Saplings, Court Lane, Hadlow TN11 0DU

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Inspection date: 9 November 2022

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

## **What is it like to attend this early years setting?**

### **The provision is good**

Children are happy, content and confident. They are very aware of their play environment and happily explore the indoor and outdoor spaces. They develop close relationships with familiar staff, who enhance the bonds and attachments with children through reassuring cuddles and one-to-one activities. For example, babies snuggle up on staffs' laps to read favourite stories when they are tired.

Children develop independence skills from an early age. They learn to find their boots for outdoor play and attempt to put their coats on themselves. Older children select more resources from low-level storage, making decisions about where to play, who to play with and for how long. Children gain self-help skills in readiness for school. For example, they learn to pull the hand towel to find a dry section to dry their hands after toileting.

Children are eager to learn and enthusiastically take part in group activities. They are busy making choices in their play on their own, with a friend or in groups. Staff are quick to engage in children's play when necessary. They also show confidence to step back and watch children think for themselves to help develop their critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

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

- Staff know the children well. They help children to develop trust, and they promote a sensitive approach towards meeting children's individual needs. Staff know how individual children learn, and they plan stimulating experiences for them. However, staff do not consistently use children's strengths and preferred styles of learning to help children participate in areas of learning that they show less interest in.
- Managers play a vital role in children's development and care. They are actively involved in daily routines and engage directly with the children. Staff appreciate their active roles. They feel valued and respected by the managers for their practice and professional knowledge and skills.
- Children's behaviour is exemplary. Children listen carefully to rules. Those who test boundaries have positive interactions to support their understanding of the rules. They make close friendships and help each other. Children remind others that 'we need to share the book'. Others help friends by asking, 'Can I fill the bucket up for you?' They listen to each other, learning to take turns in conversations and value what others say.
- Children show curiosity and intrigue in their play. They confidently explore and experiment with natural materials. Babies crawl through water, splashing water with their hands. Toddlers fill and empty bowls and buckets. They explore what happens when water is poured on the floor. Older children talk confidently about

their experiences, such as watching bonfires. They explore water in the tyres and where the water came from.

- Children learn to communicate for a purpose. They express themselves through gestures, expressions and words. Staff recognise children who have limited confidence to talk or have delayed speech. They use positive strategies to encourage communication, using words, eye contact and repetitive sounds. However, staff commentate throughout some children's play and do not consistently support children's introduction to new vocabulary.
- Parents make very positive comments about the care their children receive and the progress their children make. They feel reassured and confident in the staff that look after their children. They talk confidently about how young children learn, and they use the information received to support their children's learning at home. They have access to a wealth of information through face-to-face discussions or electronic systems and websites.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive very positive care. The knowledgeable special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) works tirelessly to support children's needs and to close the gaps in their development. Staff help children to flourish to their full potential. The SENCo works closely with parents and other professionals to provide a consistent approach to their learning and care.
- Babies thrive through a flexible routine that meets their individual needs. Staff engage sensitively, making eye contact and instilling confidence for children to explore by themselves. Babies thoroughly enjoy music as part of their routine. Staff enthusiastically join in with songs and actions. Children recognise their favourite songs and initiate dances to match the actions.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a robust knowledge of the procedures to follow to protect children from harm. They attend ongoing training, and their knowledge is frequently tested through discussions, questions and scenarios. Staff have a clear understanding of the signs and symptoms of child abuse. Effective recruitment and ongoing suitability procedures are implemented to ensure children are cared for by suitably checked and qualified staff. Children play in a safe and secure environment. Thorough risk assessments are carried out and are linked to children's physical capabilities. Staff help children to recognise hazards, and they learn to risk assess for themselves, for example when walking on wet logs.

## **What does the setting need to do to improve?**

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

- enhance staff's knowledge of using children's recognised strengths to underpin

and support other areas of development

- extend staff's understanding of how to support some children's confidence to develop conversational skills and further their vocabulary.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	2608513
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	10251706
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	0 to 11
<b>Total number of places</b>	69
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	93
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Saplings Rural Day Nursery and Preschool Ltd
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	2608515
<b>Telephone number</b>	01732 850958
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable

## Information about this early years setting

Saplings Rural Day Nursery and Preschool registered in 2020. It operates from a purpose-built premises in the village of Hadlow, Kent. It is open from 7.45am until 6pm, Monday to Friday, for 50 weeks of the year. It offers term time sessions from 9am until 3pm, and a holiday club for school-aged children during school holidays. 17 staff work with the children. Of these, 13 are qualified to level 2 and above. The setting offers funded places for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Claire Parnell

## Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The two managers 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 spoke to children to find out about their time at the setting.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The SENCo spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with the managers.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The managers showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

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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