

Inspection of Hedgehogs Rochester

The Annexe Fort Pitt House, New Road, Rochester, Kent ME1 1DX

Inspection date: 20 December 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	Inadequate
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy at the nursery and become extremely independent learners. Staff have worked hard to create a stimulating and very well-resourced environment, indoors and out. Babies concentrate for very long periods as they explore resources, such as play dough. They watch intently as staff demonstrate rolling and manipulating the dough. Babies giggle as they work out how to break off and throw small pieces, delighting in their achievements. Staff recognise the importance of these small steps in children's journey to mastering more complex skills.

Older children instigate complex games and use the knowledge they have gained over time to enrich their play. They take on different characters in their role play and work together to build and solve problems. Children become engrossed in very animated discussions with staff and with their friends. They speak clearly and with expression.

Children develop a secure understanding of the routines and boundaries in place in the nursery. Overall, children behave very well and display very mature social skills for their ages. They form friendships and, with focussed support from the staff, very effectively share and take turns. The creation of a children's committee has provided children with a regular opportunity to share their views and suggestions about what happens in their nursery.

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

- There has been significant improvement since the last inspection. Senior leaders have worked with the new manager to embed a challenging curriculum. This is successfully targeted at nurturing children's unique personalities while supporting them to make good progress in their learning and development.
- The manager has strengthened arrangements to support staff. She completes regular supervision meetings and spends much of her time in the group rooms, monitoring practice and providing guidance. Apprentices who are completing qualifications receive the help they need to complete the requirements of their course.
- The manager and staff team understand how children learn. They plan experiences that allow children to learn new skills, practising them regularly until they are fully confident. For example, children take an active part in cooking the nursery meals each day. Babies blend bread mix and water to make rolls. Older children very confidently chop vegetables, talking with great experience about the best way to remove seeds from bell peppers. An ongoing focus on promoting children's communication is very effectively giving children the vocabulary they need to express themselves confidently.

- For much of the day, children have the freedom to lead their learning, and staff skilfully intervene when appropriate. There are some occasions when staff do not manage to effectively include all children who show an interest in activities. At these times, more confident children become fully engaged while others gain less from the experience. However, overall, staff interactions are very positive and successfully promote children's learning.
- The leadership team and all staff focus on providing challenge, not only to close gaps in children's learning, but also in areas where achievements are high. For example, they have purchased new equipment to extend children's physical development. The arrangements to promote children's creative development are particularly impressive. Staff teach children a range of techniques and give them a great deal of freedom and encouragement to explore these. Children create highly unique and expressive artwork.
- The manager has strengthened partnership working with parents. Staff now provide more focused feedback about children's progress to enable parents to support learning at home. Staff develop an in-depth knowledge of the backgrounds and lives of their individual key children. This enables them to reflect children's unique interests and experiences in their planning and interactions. However, they do not always share specific details provided by parents with their colleagues. Although all staff know what each child enjoys and can do, they do not always have the fullest picture of their backgrounds, to make the most of their interactions. For example, all staff know which children speak English as an additional language but are not all aware of the different languages that children hear at home.
- Staff have good arrangements to promote children's health. They focus on healthy eating and have recently tightened up the processes around allergies. Hygiene arrangements are effective. Children know when they need to wash their hands and staff wipe runny noses promptly.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The designated safeguarding lead and all staff have a robust knowledge of their safeguarding responsibilities. They attend relevant training and the manager uses a range of strategies, including quizzes, to check that their knowledge remains up to date. There are robust arrangements to recruit new staff and to check the ongoing suitability of existing staff. Since the last inspection, there have been a number of effective changes within the learning environment to improve safety arrangements. In addition, staff are vigilant in their supervision of children who are using the new, more challenging equipment to test their physical capabilities.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen the arrangements to share relevant information among staff so that all those working with children have the same precise knowledge to support their interactions
- support staff to gain greater confidence in managing group situations and adapting activities to more effectively include all children who want to take part.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2630755
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	10249438
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	0 to 4
Total number of places	33
Number of children on roll	61
Name of registered person	Hedgehogs Childcare (Kent and Medway) Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	2630759
Telephone number	01634 953743
Date of previous inspection	24 June 2022

Information about this early years setting

Hedgehogs Rochester registered in 2021 and is in Rochester, Kent. The nursery is one of a chain of settings owned by Hedgehogs Childcare (Kent and Medway) Ltd. The nursery provides care from 7.30am to 6.30pm, Monday to Friday, all year round. It provides free early education funding for children aged two-, three- and four-years-old. There are 12 staff working in the nursery, of whom seven hold a relevant childcare qualification from level 3 to level 4. The manager holds a qualification at level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Liz Caluori

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager led the inspector on a learning walk throughout the nursery. She explained the improvements made since the last inspection and outlined the intent behind the early years curriculum.
- The inspector observed the interaction of staff and children during a range of activities, indoors and out.
- The manager and inspector undertook a joint observation of an activity and evaluated the quality of education.
- The inspector considered the views of parents gathered during the inspection and spoke to staff and children at appropriate times.
- A range of relevant documentation was scrutinised.

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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