

# Inspection of Hawkhurst Pre-School

Hawkhurst Church of England Primary School, Fowlers Park, Rye Road, Hawkhurst,  
CRANBROOK, Kent TN18 4JJ

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Inspection date: 9 February 2023

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## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Outstanding**

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The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Overall effectiveness at previous  
inspection

Good

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

### The provision is outstanding

Children happily run into the pre-school and launch themselves at the caring staff for a cuddle. They have wonderful relationships with the adults. During group times, older children build their memories as they enthusiastically use props to join in with a story. Younger children sit in their own cosy area to listen to the story of 'Postman Bear'. Afterwards, they delight in writing their own letters, putting them in envelopes and posting them. This helps them to make connections and to develop fine motor and turn-taking skills. Older children benefit enormously from staff support of their emotional development. For example, they relish hearing a story about emotions and then choosing paint colours to match how they are feeling that day. They describe their emotions and the colour that represents them. Staff give children thinking time and wait patiently for them to identify their feelings. Some choose yellow, as it means happy. They say that green means they are relaxing. The activity is a chance for children to develop their memory skills, as they recall parts of the story. Children share pipettes to transport the coloured paint into jars, which helps to support fine motor development and turn-taking skills.

Outside, children enthusiastically explore capacity and volume as they make 'tea' for the staff in the water tray. Children cooperate with each other in an exemplary way as they dig for 'treasure' in the large walk-in sandpit. They have enormous fun building their physical skills in the huge outside area by climbing a log stairway over a gulley. Children wear all-weather clothes, which enables them to experience the joy of wading in a very muddy ditch.

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

- The curriculum is strongly focused on individual children's needs. Children benefit enormously from this, as staff ensure they plan experiences for individual children that build extremely well on their skills and help prepare them for school. Staff understand how children learn and are very knowledgeable about child development. For instance, when they identify that some children are fascinated with how things move, they provide opportunities for them to explore cars and make their own bowling alley. This results in children excitedly focusing on resources that will help them to develop their concentration spans.
- Staff ensure that children are ready to move on to the next stage of their education. Staff focus on helping children learn to trust, attach to their key person and thrive in the first instance. This results in children who are ready to learn and who excite in the opportunities available to them.
- The older and most able children have an extra afternoon session to help prepare them for school. Staff follow guidance from the school to support children with early literacy skills. This helps children make rapid progress in this

area. For example, some children make the sign of the first letter of their name. Staff sound words out to them, and they write legibly. Children count to 10 by pointing to the spots on a ladybird cushion, and they all join in with enthusiasm and joy.

- Staff encourage the development of children's learning to continue at home. For instance, children are supported to make bird-food cakes to share with their parents, which enthral the children. They investigate which birds will eat them. Children compare the results of their investigation of the birds at the pre-school. An interactive display table excites their curiosity, and reading fiction and non-fiction books about birds further engages their curiosity.
- Staff ensure that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully supported. They are exemplary at forging a network of supportive links. They swiftly report any issues to the relevant agencies, and this results in children seeing experts at the earliest opportunity. Furthermore, children benefit from an approach that includes parents and professionals. The sense of urgency displayed by staff enables children to reach their full potential in a timely way. Parents have full involvement in this process, which means that children have a strong relationship between home and the pre-school. Parents report that they are happy to participate. Staff work tirelessly to ensure that children and parents get all the help and support available to them.
- Children show that they have outstanding independence skills. They receive encouragement to be self-sufficient at every opportunity. For example, children look at a wooden numeral and choose the same number of fruit and bread, counting out the pieces. Children get their own water bottles without asking and pour milk by themselves. They learn to persist as they spread butter with a real knife. This supports the development of their fine motor skills. Furthermore, it helps to build confidence, trust and a sense of responsibility.
- Children demonstrate remarkably high levels of respect and exceptional behaviour and attitudes. For instance, they show empathy to a peer. Children willingly jump at the chance to cuddle an upset child to make them feel better. They share the play dough without staff intervention and cooperate while digging in the sand.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff at the pre-school are very knowledgeable about the signs and symptoms of abuse. They know what to do to keep children safe from harm. There is a robust training programme that ensures staff know how to report any issues swiftly. Staff are fully aware of current issues in safeguarding, such as county lines, female genital mutilation and 'Prevent' duty. They feel confident about reporting concerns to the correct authority. The manager conducts the necessary recruitment checks on staff before they start, which ensures the safety of children. Staff give parents training to keep their children safe online, and parents pass this on to their children. For instance, they recently sent out a leaflet with points to look out for.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY440900
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	10276135
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	2 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	23
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	39
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Hawkhurst Pre-School
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP531319
<b>Telephone number</b>	01580754226
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	3 July 2017

## Information about this early years setting

Hawkhurst Pre-School registered in 2010 and is adjacent to the Primary School in Hawkhurst, Kent. It is open each weekday, from 9am until 3pm. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are four members of staff; one member of staff is qualified to level 6 with EYPS, one to level 6 and two working to level 3.

## Information about this inspection

**Inspector**  
Kay Beckwith

## Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The inspector observed interactions between staff and the children.
- The inspector had a tour of the nursery and took part in a joint observation with the manager.
- The children had conversations with the inspector, who listened to their views.
- The inspector completed a joint observation of a member of staff.
- The manager and staff had discussions with the inspector.
- The inspector considered the views of parents spoken to on the day.

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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