

Inspection of Highmoor Nursery School

Highmoor Memorial Hall, Highmoor Cross, HENLEY-ON-THAMES, Oxfordshire RG9 5DX

Inspection date: 10 February 2023

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

The provision is good

Children play, explore and learn with enthusiasm in this inviting setting. They engage well in activities led by members of staff, and they direct their own play from a wide array of exciting activities on offer. Children form trusted and affectionate bonds with the manager and staff, who genuinely want them to reach their full potential. Children follow the staff's lead and show compassion towards each other. For example, older children readily welcome the younger ones into their play. Children feel safe and comfortable in this nurturing environment.

Children's language skills are developing well. They eagerly engage in two-way conversations with staff and make good connections in their learning. For example, they proudly talk about a tractor with big and small tyres, which links to real-life experiences. Children demonstrate a wide vocabulary, such as when they correctly name a combine harvester.

The setting offers a wealth of opportunities that enrich children's experiences. For example, there are walks to the woods and yoga sessions led by a qualified instructor. This allows for children who may have limited experiences to become fully immersed in learning new things. Children also develop their critical-thinking skills as they solve problems, such as when their wellington boots get stuck in mud on their way to the woods. Children are prepared well for their next stage in education.

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

- The manager is a capable and knowledgeable leader. She evaluates the quality of education and care children receive on a regular basis. Consequently, the manager is aware of the strengths and priorities to improve even more. She has high expectations and maintains open and honest communication with staff, children and families. Staff well-being is given the highest priority, which is demonstrated by their supervision meetings. They say they are supported well to enhance their professional development and feel highly valued. This leads to high staff morale and a committed team.
- The manager and staff focus effectively on developing children's self-care skills right from the start. For instance, children are guided sensitively by staff to independently put on their own outdoor clothing ready for their walk. They are praised by staff for persevering with tasks that may be tricky, such as placing the correct finger into gloves.
- Staff place a special emphasis on supporting children's emotional well-being. This has become an even higher priority, particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic. Children are encouraged to recognise and discuss how their emotions may change throughout the day. They use 'Colour Monster' characters to name

different emotions. For example, children show their imaginative abilities as they mix 'grumpy' and 'angry' together to become 'grampy'. This demonstrates their increased understanding of these emotions.

- Children experience good-quality outdoor opportunities, which helps to solidify children's learning through real-life experiences. Their observational skills are promoted to help them take note of specific details and enhance their natural curiosity further. For instance, children notice different prints in the mud on their walk. They recognise tractor tyre prints and footprints of people, deer and dogs. Children are given clues to help them distinguish between each one, such as to pay closer attention to the size and shape of the prints. In addition, children's confidence to try new things is growing, such as when they splash in a shallow stream in their wellington boots. In this way, children learn to become more resilient.
- The manager and staff regularly assess children's learning and development. They use this information to plan focused, adult-led groups to support their progress. However, on occasion, the same children often call out their responses to questions posed by staff, and quieter children sometimes get overlooked. This prevents the quieter ones from developing the confidence to share their views.
- Parents highly value the education and care their children receive at the setting. They commend the dedication of all staff in promoting children's learning. Parents are impressed with the innovative curriculum on offer, such as when children cook with an external professional. Parents are kept informed of their children's progress on a regular basis and in a variety of ways. They play an active role in supporting their children's learning. For example, they collect items with their children that start with a particular phonic sound to share at group times.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff have a secure understanding of their role and responsibilities to keep children safe. They can identify possible signs and symptoms that may indicate that a child is at risk of harm, including exposure to extreme views and behaviours. The manager ensures that staff keep their safeguarding knowledge current by sharing regular updates. Leaders and staff check the premises thoroughly and carry out ongoing risk assessments to ensure that it remains safe for children to play in. Children are supervised effectively, and there are robust procedures in place for trips to the woods, including crossing the road safely.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support staff to identify quieter children and include them more in group

discussions and activities to build their confidence to share their views.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY433900
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10276237
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	33
Number of children on roll	47
Name of registered person	Highmoor Nursery School Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP902527
Telephone number	01491642162
Date of previous inspection	6 July 2017

Information about this early years setting

Highmoor Nursery School registered in 1996 and operates from Highmoor Memorial Hall in the village of Highmoor, near Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire. The nursery is open five days a week, from 8.30am until 3pm, during term time only. The nursery employs 13 members of childcare staff who work directly with the children. Of these, 11 have appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Sonia Panchal

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the pre-school 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 pre-school.
- The manager and deputy manager completed a learning walk with the inspector and talked about the pre-school's curriculum to support children's learning and development.
- The inspector spoke with children and staff at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The manager, deputy manager and inspector carried out a joint observation together of a literacy activity and evaluated the quality of teaching on children's learning.
- The inspector reviewed relevant documentation on request.
- Parents spoke to the inspector and gave written views about the education and care their children receive at the pre-school. The inspector took their views into account.

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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