

Inspection of Little Scarecrows

Preston Road, Manston, Ramsgate, Kent CT12 5BA

Inspection date: 28 February 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

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

Staff provide a stimulating and exciting environment for children. Children flourish in the care of skilled and sensitive practitioners. They quickly settle and form close, nurturing bonds with all staff. This supports them to feel safe and secure and able to benefit from all the many experiences on offer. Children smile throughout the day, run to staff to share in their achievements and giggle with each other as they play. Children are highly inclusive and enjoy making space for their friends to join in and sharing resources with them.

All staff are accomplished at providing a curriculum that is ambitious and ensures that all children make excellent progress. Activities are carefully planned around children's interests to entice them into learning. Staff deliver teaching in an engaging way. They ask questions and use consistently high-quality conversations to extend and build on existing knowledge. Children show awe and wonder as they explore the jungle, make magic potions and discover hidden bugs in spaghetti.

Children are highly motivated to join in. They are engrossed in each and every activity and given ample time to explore. They enjoy recalling previous learning as they excitedly call out the names of different shapes and wild animals. They demonstrate great perseverance in mastering tricky skills, such as cutting, threading and blowing big bubbles. They thrive on gaining new knowledge and sharing this with the staff and their parents. Children are very well prepared to move on to school as confident, happy, inquisitive and enthusiastic learners.

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

- Leaders and staff ensure that they are constantly providing an ambitious curriculum that is relevant to children's needs and interests. Learning is expertly scaffolded to build on children's prior knowledge, and activities are linked to each other. For example, children learn about the jungle and plants. They later plant a herb garden and then relish in making magic herb potions. This provides children with a rich variety of activities, where they gain a deeper understanding and knowledge base across the curriculum.
- Staff are naturally skilled at weaving mathematics into all activities. Older children are challenged to think about what number is one more than a given number and to estimate how much pasta they will need to fill different containers. Younger children count the bubbles as they chase and pop them in the garden, and they count the spots on butterfly wings.
- Children are immersed in a language-rich environment. Staff effortlessly build children's speech and language skills through meaningful conversations. They are aware of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and make every effort to ensure they make excellent progress. Staff use a greater depth of

questioning and constantly introduce new language. Children explore different textures, using the words 'sticky' and 'prickly'. They learn the words 'deep', 'push' and 'cover' when planting. Children are also offered many opportunities to learn early writing skills. They delight in painting and drawing their favourite story characters, writing their names and creating labels for plants.

- Children become deeply engrossed in their learning. They spend extended periods of time concentrating on making the perfect threading picture or building a house from construction blocks. Staff support them to problem solve with confidence. They talk excitedly about each activity and learn highly valuable skills, such as attentive listening and critical thinking.
- Huge importance is placed on supporting children's emotional health and well-being. Staff help children to understand and name different emotions in small-group times. If children are ever upset, staff sit alongside them and calmly acknowledge their feelings. Through skilful interactions, they enable children to find their own ways to deal with emotions, and they are quickly back to being engaged in effective play. For example, when children are missing home, staff support them to think about home in a positive way. They ask children what they would like to do at nursery to make them feel better and then organise this for the next day. Children beam as they exclaim, 'I'm telling mummy I'm coming to nursery tomorrow!'
- Leaders make effective use of additional funding. Leaders understand the needs of every child well and use funding to target specific needs, including speech and language development. This helps children to make rapid progress in identified areas, including regulating their behaviour.
- The manager is constantly evaluative of the nursery. She utilises the expertise of her team, colleagues from other nurseries and parent feedback to identify and address any areas for improvement. This ensures that, through focused, effective professional development, children are supported to the highest level.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff have a clear understanding of child protection issues and their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding all children. Staff are clear on how to identify the signs and symptoms of possible abuse and the procedures to adopt if they are worried about a child's welfare. Staff know what to do if an allegation is made against a member of staff. Leaders carry out robust recruitment procedures to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. They check staff's ongoing suitability. This helps to keep children safe. Staff complete daily checks of the environment to ensure that the premises are safe and secure.

Setting details

Unique reference number	127366
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10276375
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 4
Total number of places	17
Number of children on roll	23
Name of registered person	Hartridge, Lisa Jayne
Registered person unique reference number	RP512940
Telephone number	01843 823 918
Date of previous inspection	13 July 2017

Information about this early years setting

Little Scarecrows registered in 1993 and is one of two nurseries owned by the provider. It operates in Manston, near Ramsgate, Kent. The nursery is open each weekday, from 8am to 5pm, for 49 weeks of the year. The provider receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are seven members of staff, including the owner. All staff hold a relevant early years qualification at level 3 or above.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Nina Harvey

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 manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector spoke with staff and observed interactions between staff and children.
- Children spoke with the inspector about what they enjoy doing at nursery.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.

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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