

Inspection of an outstanding school: Haven Early Years Centre

Harris Road, Gosport, Hampshire PO13 0UY

Inspection date: 4 May 2023

Outcome

Haven Early Years Centre continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Every Haven child is treated as unique. Staff build strong relationships with their 'family group' of children. They have in-depth knowledge about their needs and interests, and expertly use this to shape learning. Staff listen to children and encourage them to ask questions. There is an atmosphere of shared discovery, alongside skilful teaching, where every interaction helps children to learn and develop. Not a moment is wasted, and children achieve well.

Children are happy and confident. They enjoy chatting with their friends at snack times and lunchtimes, showing good manners and kindness to each other. They behave well because they understand their routines and feel comfortable and secure in their setting. Children know the staff are always there to help and look after them.

Children particularly enjoy exploring the outdoor environment. Riding scooters and tricycles is popular, as are the many opportunities to climb, balance and jump. Children show an impressive awareness of the natural world. They are excited to explore their forest school area. Here, they learn about the wildlife living there, for example examining butterflies with magnifying glasses and noticing their symmetry. They squeal with excitement when the wind blows blossom from the trees, and they wonder aloud what it is. Curiosity is encouraged.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have designed a highly engaging curriculum, giving careful consideration to all areas of learning. There are clearly defined goals for children to work towards. Staff are knowledgeable about children's starting points. They know what to teach and when to adapt learning activities. As a result, children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are extremely well supported. Leaders talk about there being no 'glass ceiling', and their high expectations enable all to achieve.

Children's communication skills are developed extremely well. Children who need additional support receive it in a highly personalised way. This includes using a range of visual resources and communication aids. In all interactions with all children, staff model appropriate language. They ask open questions to help children respond as fully as possible. They echo children's sentences and extend them with additional vocabulary. For example, children were keen to discuss the King's Coronation and who would be invited. Staff supported this discussion well, and skilfully developed it into a learning opportunity. Children learned new vocabulary and gained an understanding about what information would be needed in an invitation.

Leaders promote a strong love for reading and stories. Core texts are deliberately repeated, in an 'over and over' approach, so that children grow an awareness of story structure. During 'family group' story times, familiar books are greeted with excitement. For example, children delight in acting out going on a bear hunt, using expressions and refrains from the book. They enthusiastically join in with well-known songs and nursery rhymes. Parents appreciate this language-rich culture, with one saying, 'My child is forever retelling stories and singing songs he has learned.'

Children's personal, social and emotional development is a top priority for leaders. This is evident through the clearly established routines and nurturing culture. Across the setting, children behave exceptionally well and are expertly supported in communicating their emotions. Staff know when to intervene and when to stand back. They encourage children to make their own choices and articulate their feelings. For example, when the snack café is declared open, children choose when to visit it and what to eat and drink. Staff monitor this in an unobtrusive way. This approach allows children to grow their independence. They choose where to sit and with whom. They chat with their friends and show that they can share and take turns.

Leaders ensure that strong relationships are established with parents. These partnerships begin with purposeful home visits, where key information is shared. This ensures a smooth transition for children into Haven. Staff communicate regularly with parents. This happens informally, during daily handover times, and at other, more formal events, such as parents' meetings. Parents have a clear understanding of how and what their child learns. Family members enjoy attending 'stay and play' sessions, which give them additional insight into daily routines.

Governors are fully committed to Haven. They share leaders' aspirations for all children to be well prepared for the next stage in their education. They provide appropriate challenge and checks, with children's best interests at the heart of all decision-making. Leaders listen to staff and are reflective about the training and well-being opportunities they offer. Staff feel extremely well supported, and share a sense of pride about being part of the Haven family.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure staff are trained in how to identify and report any safeguarding concerns. They frequently check staff's understanding by posing questions and exploring scenarios. Leaders appropriately refer safeguarding concerns to external agencies. They are relentless in the way they check that these are acted on. Governors routinely check the effectiveness of the school's procedures.

Children are looked after well. They form strong relationships with the key workers in their family groups. They know that they can talk to adults about any worries. Children understand that there are people who help them through the jobs they do, such as the police.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in January 2013.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	115830
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10256554
Type of school	Local authority nursery school
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	132
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Joan Kerr
Headteacher	Jodie Hope
Website	www.haven-sch.org
Date of previous inspection	31 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has resourced provision for 28 children with a broad range of SEND, who require specialist support. The admissions for this provision are managed by the local authority.
- The governing body and leadership team also manage day care for children from birth to three years on the same site. This provision was not part of this inspection.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, school leaders, staff and children.
- The lead inspector met with a group of governors, including the chair of governors. She also had a telephone call with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: communication and language; personal, social and emotional development; and understanding the world. For each

deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited classrooms and outdoor learning areas, spoke to staff and talked with children.

- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors checked the single central record, reviewed safeguarding records and spoke to leaders, staff and governors.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and development plans.
- The inspection team considered the responses to the confidential staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and the additional free-text responses. The lead inspector had informal conversations with some parents at the start of the morning session.

Inspection team

Kate Fripp, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Chris Parker

His Majesty's Inspector

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