

Inspection of Highfield Road Pre-school

Highfield Road Baptist Church, Springvale North, Dartford DA1 2JY

Inspection date: 12 July 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Staff at the pre-school warmly welcome all children and families. Staff provide an environment where children feel safe, enjoy freely exploring activities, and begin learning how to form positive friendships. Staff support children to settle by, for example, offering a hand as they dance to morning music or holding them in their arms as they sing. Children smile and offer cuddles, ready to start their day.

Staff talk to children about good behaviours and rules to keep them safe. Generally, children respond well to these. They treat their friends with kindness when blowing bubbles for them to pop. They say 'Yes' when their friends confidently ask, 'Can I play?'. Children carefully put snails back under the plants to keep them cool from the sun. Staff play alongside children, promoting good discussions and asking questions to deepen children's focus and interest in their learning.

Staff plan well to provide different learning opportunities based around the children's interests and termly topics. They provide appropriate challenges for children to make good progress. Older children enjoy using water and measuring cylinders to learn about adding and subtracting. Younger children are praised as they learn what features to give their chalk drawings of people.

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

- Staff focus well on promoting children's communication and language skills. They have identified this as an area where children have fallen behind as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff model good language and introduce new words, such as 'wriggle' and 'slither', when looking at bugs. They speak clearly and repeat words often, encouraging children to copy and remember them. Staff support children to engage in conversations, talking about their imaginary butterflies, thinking about what they look like and where they fly to.
- Staff monitor all children's progress closely. They are quick to recognise when a child may need extra support in their learning and development and are prompt to contact other relevant professionals. However, they are not fully confident in how to support these children until coordinated personalised plans are in place. There are occasions when some children are not included as well as possible in activities.
- Staff have well-embedded routines to support children to understand what is expected of them and their behaviour. Staff use regular group activities to help children cope with transition times and feel more settled. Staff lead singing and stories to provide a calm period between activities. Most children enjoy these activities and join in well, clapping and copying actions. However, group activities are not always planned well enough. Sometimes, children lose

engagement, facing the wrong way or chatting to their friends throughout. This does not help to maximise their learning.

- Staff provide activities to engage children of different ages. Children focus for long periods of time, showing enjoyment in their learning. Children delight in demonstrating how they use their new magnifying glasses to search for hidden treasure. Others proudly show staff their carefully stencilled numbers.
- Children have good opportunities to learn to respect and value others. Staff help children to understand the different faiths and cultures of the children attending the pre-school. They celebrate different festivals relating to the individual children, such as Eid, where the children enjoy showing their friends their henna designs. Parents are invited to support their children's learning, such as by providing traditional party foods for all to share.
- The manager is constantly evaluative of the pre-school and the care and education it offers. She uses both professional and parent feedback to improve the provision. The manager actively seeks further training for herself and her staff to better support the children. For example, staff have recently furthered their skills in supporting two-year-old children.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. The manager is genuinely passionate about caring for every child and their family. The manager ensures that she supports parents in addition to children and adapts methods of working to best suit everyone. Parents speak highly of the pre-school, commenting particularly on the communication and support for home learning. They say the staff are compassionate, attentive and always make time for them.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a clear understanding of child protection issues and their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding all children. Staff are clear about the importance of making prompt referrals should they have any concerns about a child. They understand how to deal with allegations made against colleagues. Staff undertake effective risk assessments of the pre-school environment, which helps to reduce and minimise any potential hazards.

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 plan and organise group activities more effectively
- support and coach staff to gain confidence to include and engage children who may require extra help more effectively.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2641654
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10295741
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	34
Number of children on roll	40
Name of registered person	Little Oakes Limited
Registered person unique reference number	2641653
Telephone number	07551979606
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Highfield Road Pre-school registered in June 2021 and is in Dartford, Kent. The pre-school offers care from Monday to Thursday, 9.15am to 2.45pm, during term time only. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two, three and four years. There are eight members of staff, of whom six hold relevant early years qualifications.

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 provider and the inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed the curriculum.
- The inspector spoke with staff and observed interactions between staff and children.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the provider.
- 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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