

Inspection of Hedgehogs Chatham Day Nursery

1a Hills Terrace, Chatham ME4 6PX

Inspection date:

31 October 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Staff create a positive environment where children can interact with a wide range of natural resources. However, there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning children receive. The provider has a clear vision for the nursery. They have a strong focus on developing children's curiosity and independence. Children feel safe and are happy to come into the nursery to meet with friends and staff. Staff know the children well and support them to settle, but those working with younger children are not always effectively deployed. As a result, the younger children do not always engage in meaningful play experiences. Children's behaviour is age-appropriate and staff encourage them to share. For instance, the children take turns adding the ingredients to the bowl as they make play dough.

Children are active learners who enjoy taking on challenges. For example, staff hold on to the older children's hands as they walk across a wooden ladder balanced between two tyres. The younger children practise stepping from one rung to the next with the ladder on the floor. All children gain a sense of achievement as staff make focused use of praise to encourage them. Staff provide the children with a range of opportunities to build their muscles as they practise their physical skills.

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

- The provider has recently appointed a new manager, but has failed to notify Ofsted of the change, as required. Ofsted will not be taking any further action on this occasion. The manager has a secure understanding of the strengths and areas for development at the nursery. She has been working hard to bring about improvements and has a clear focus. For instance, she carries out regular supervision of staff to help identify any support and training needs they might have. The manager spends time working alongside staff to model good practice. However, as the quality of teaching is variable, activities do not always successfully build on children's existing skills and extend their learning. This does not support children to make consistently good progress.
- Staff support children to develop strong communication and language skills. For example, staff introduce new words as they talk about the noise the cars make as they 'splash' into the pot of water. Staff take time to listen to the children's responses and use repetition to ensure children hear the correct pronunciation of words. However, at times, the deployment of staff does not ensure younger children consistently benefit from positive adult interactions.
- Staff offer children a variety of activities to engage with outside. The older children are keen to practise using their fine motor skills. They transfer rice from one container to another using different tools. Children develop their problem-solving skills. They investigate how cars travel along a length of guttering. However, staff do not ensure that activities in the outdoor environment are easily

accessible to younger children. As a result, younger children are not as interested and focused on learning outside.

- Partnerships with parents are a high priority at the nursery. Staff share information through children's online learning records as well as speaking with parents at drop-off and collection times. Parents state that they are very pleased with the support they receive from the manager and staff at the nursery.
- The special educational needs coordinator works closely with staff and families. They ensure all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, are fully supported. The manager has made good use of extra funding. For instance, they have purchased specific resources that help support children to identify and manage their emotions.
- Staff place a strong emphasis on giving children a variety of real life experiences. The children develop their life skills as they learn about the world around them. For instance, children are eager to help peel the sweet potatoes and mix and knead the bread mixture as they help to prepare their lunchtime meal. Staff help children to learn about the importance of physical health.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff team have a good understanding of how to safeguard children. They regularly complete child protection training to ensure they keep their knowledge up to date. Staff are aware of signs that might indicate a child is at risk of harm, including issues such as the 'Prevent' duty and being alert to extreme views and beliefs. They know the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child's safety. The manager works with external agencies and professionals to help promote children's well-being. The directors have robust recruitment and vetting systems in place to ensure all staff working with children are suitable.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
ensure staff provide good-quality learning experiences that effectively extend children's learning	01/01/2024
monitor staff to make sure they are more effectively deployed to support younger children's learning and development.	02/11/2023

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

- review and improve the organisation of the outdoor environment to enhance younger children's learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2630754
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	10269482
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	0 to 5
Total number of places	45
Number of children on roll	73
Name of registered person	Hedgehogs Childcare (Kent and Medway) Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	2630759
Telephone number	01634 953743
Date of previous inspection	29 November 2022

Information about this early years setting

Hedgehogs Chatham Day Nursery registered in 2021 and operates in Chatham, Medway, Kent. It is one of four settings owned by Hedgehogs Childcare (Kent and Medway) Ltd. The nursery is open from 7.30am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, for most of the year. The provider receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. They employ nine members of staff, four of whom have relevant early years qualifications at level 3 and two at level 2.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Sara Garrity

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the nursery.
- The manager and directors joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to parents and read letters from parents to take account of their views.
- The inspector carried out joint observations with the manager and sampled a range of documentation.

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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