

Inspection of The Firs Nursery

Chartham Primary School, Shalmsford Street, Chartham, Canterbury, Kent CT4 7QN

Inspection date: 10 January 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
------------------------------	-------------

The quality of education	Good
--------------------------	-------------

Behaviour and attitudes	Good
-------------------------	-------------

Personal development	Good
----------------------	-------------

Leadership and management	Good
---------------------------	-------------

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
--	------

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at this friendly, welcoming nursery. The woodland setting is extremely inviting, and children enjoy observing the birds and exploring the wildlife nearby. This feature provides a great start to the day and help to ignite children's interests and curiosity. Staff offer children many experiences to support all areas of learning. For example, children join in with the teaching of forest-school activity sessions. Staff help them learn independence skills and to develop a sense of belonging as they work with their peers to solve problems and build strong relationships.

Children build secure attachments with staff and feel safe. Children confidently ask for help if needed, and staff ensure that they encourage children to be independent and try for themselves, before stepping in to support them. Behaviour is good. Children learn to share and take turns effectively. Staff ensure that children are reminded of the consequences of their actions when moving around the nursery. Children learn to understand that some of their actions may not be safe and may cause harm to others. For example, children know they must be careful not to run in small spaces. Staff have high expectations for children, and children are happy, relaxed and calm in the nurturing environment.

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

- The manager has a strong understanding of what she wants children to learn and reflects well on the varying individual needs of the children. Staff are given the ownership of implementing exciting and engaging activities. They consider what children already know and what they need to learn next. During independent playtimes, staff skilfully weave in interactions that help children to move forward in their learning. Children play with resources they know and love. Additional funding is used carefully to provide resources and experiences that help all children to make good progress.
- Overall, staff plan a well-sequenced curriculum that is flexible to support each child's age and stage of development. However, the planning of organised adult-directed group times does not always enable all children to benefit fully from the experience. For example, the aims of the activity are not always pitched at the right level for some groups of children. This means that, at times, group activities do not suit the differing needs of all the children taking part.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported particularly well. The special educational needs coordinator is confident in her role. She works with parents, staff, and other external professionals effectively to ensure that children swiftly get the help they need. Support is put in place to help children work towards achievable targets, and activities are planned to implement these. These help children to make good progress in their

development and to feel included in the provision at all times.

- Children learn about various aspects of their local environment and engage with the local community. For example, children help raise money and collect food items for the local food bank. There is a strong community spirit, and children become confident in their interactions. However, during independent playtimes, children have few opportunities to become curious about more varied cultures and backgrounds beyond their own experiences.
- Partnerships with parents are strong, and staff establish a firm relationship with families from the outset. For example, leaders complete home visits to ensure that they find out key information to help children settle effectively into the nursery. Leaders and staff work hard to support good communication with parents about all aspects of their child's care. Families have varied opportunities to come in and learn about the setting, for instance, at 'Stay and Play' sessions at the weekend. Parents say they feel well informed and involved in their child's experiences within the nursery.
- Leaders support staff well. They meet with them individually to discuss work and training needs. They regularly refresh their understanding of important aspects of child protection and safeguarding. Staff have received training from external experts. For example, a qualified speech and language therapist provided strategies that helped staff successfully enhance their support for children's communication and language skills.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- review and improve the organisation of group times to consistently meet the needs of all children and to ensure the best possible engagement
- strengthen opportunities for children to learn about diversity in their community and the wider world.

Setting details

Unique reference number	127688
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10303539
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	2 to 8
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	59
Name of registered person	The Firs Nursery Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP518901
Telephone number	01227 731876
Date of previous inspection	7 November 2018

Information about this early years setting

The Firs Nursery registered in 1994 and is committee run. It operates from premises located in the grounds of Chartham Primary School in Chartham, near Canterbury, Kent. The nursery employs 12 members of childcare staff. Of whom, seven hold relevant early years qualifications at level 2 or above. This includes one member of staff who has an early years teaching qualification. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, during term-time only. Sessions are from 7.45am to 6pm. The nursery also offers a breakfast- and after-school club for school-aged children. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Kate Williams

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery 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 nursery.
- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the nursery.
- The deputy manager, the manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years foundation stage curriculum.
- The inspector talked to the staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with the manager.
- Parents shared their views of the nursery with the inspector.
- The manager provided the inspector with a sample of key documentation on request.

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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024