

Inspection of Hedgehogs Chatham Day Nursery

1a Hills Terrace, Chatham ME4 6PX

Inspection date: 30 July 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	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Staff welcome children and families with warmth at this 'home-away-from-home', inclusive environment, where children are at the heart of what they do. Staff are affectionate and attentive to the children, offering encouragement and praise regularly, which nurtures children's self-esteem and confidence. Staff prioritise children's safety and well-being effectively. They help children to choose sun hats from the 'summer shop', discussing with them how to keep themselves safe in the sun. This helps children develop a positive understanding of how to keep themselves healthy.

Children benefit from a wide range of inspiring activities designed to meet their interests and needs. Older children sustain high levels of engagement when exploring how to 'catch' gems in water. Staff encourage them to remember previous learning following their interest in volcanoes. Younger children delight in playing peekaboo with staff, giggling as they wait to open their eyes. This helps develop their attention and listening skills effectively. Staff foster a positive learning environment, encouraging children to water the fruits and vegetables they have planted, which enhances their sense of responsibility. Children are well behaved, promptly assisting in tidying up and gathering toys when asked. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive effective support. All children flourish.

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

- Leaders, managers and staff have all worked hard since the last inspection to make significant improvements and changes. All staff show genuine interest in children, and listen attentively to them. They are patient and calm in their interactions and engage with them well, helping children to extend enjoyment in their play. For example, young children beam with smiles when they successfully make the paint dispensers work. This supports their emotional well-being positively.
- Children gain significant benefit from exploring the exciting environment and resources that have been created by staff to inspire them and capture their imagination. For example, staff design role-play spaces for children to help them develop their interest in, and understanding of, other countries. These successfully encourage children to discuss the different places they have visited in the world. During discussion, children explore the concepts of hot and cold climates and the countries their friends come from. Staff also motivate children to share the diverse meals they eat at home, enhancing their understanding of the wider world.
- Staff are skilled at promoting children's language and communication skills. Children excitedly join in activities such as 'silly soup', where they have great fun

as they practise rhyming words. Staff have created a lending library and children enjoy choosing books to read at home. This helps foster a passion for reading.

- Children with SEND are strongly supported. Staff use funding effectively to purchase resources to support them and to take on additional training themselves. They have plans to develop a sensory space for children to relax and retreat to. Children who were nonverbal when they started now use words and actions to communicate. All children make good progress.
- Older children benefit from clear, embedded routines and respond to these well. For example, they scrape their lunch plates and help staff clean tables. However, there are some inconsistencies in the arrangements to promote all children's independence. On occasion, younger children do not receive as much encouragement to try to complete tasks for themselves. At these times, they do not always benefit from opportunities to further develop their independence and self-reliance skills.
- Staff have strong relationships with external agencies, the local community and nearby schools. They share a range of information to ensure children and families have a positive start. They help parents by accompanying them on visits to support smooth transitions. However, sometimes, information gathered from parents, such as the languages children speak and hear at home, is not checked well enough to enable key persons to precisely understand the specific needs of new children to help them settle when they first start.
- Leaders and managers have made significant progress in developing provision since their last inspection. They access high-quality training and support to ensure this continues. They are proactive, passionate and committed to ensuring staff are well qualified and trained to provide children and families with good-quality care and education.
- Communication with parents is effective. Parents appreciate the flexible and individual arrangements to support them in settling their children. Parents value the helpful support they receive from staff and their friendly and approachable nature. Parents receive regular updates about their children's progress and ideas to support them at home and, as such, children make good progress in their speech, behaviour and social 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:

- support staff to recognise when children can attempt to do things more for

- themselves, to support their developing independence skills further
- strengthen processes for using information from parents, including other languages spoken at home, to aid settling-in processes.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2630754
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	10320444
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	32
Number of children on roll	63
Name of registered person	Hedgehogs Childcare (Kent and Medway) Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	2630759
Telephone number	01634 953743
Date of previous inspection	31 October 2023

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. It receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The nursery employs 10 members of staff. Of these, five have relevant early years qualifications at level 3 and two at level 2.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Victoria Salisbury

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 joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- Staff talked to the inspector at appropriate times during the inspection and the inspector took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with the nominated individuals about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, was observed by the inspector and the impact that this was having on children's learning was assessed.
- 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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