

Inspection of Hemsley House Nursery School

7 Terrace Road, Maidstone ME16 8HU

Inspection date: 17 October 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	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Leaders have implemented very secure settling-in procedures. The staff work extremely closely with parents. They are dedicated to providing children with a nurturing, homely environment. This helps babies and toddlers to build close bonds with the staff as they confidently investigate their surroundings. The staff know the children exceptionally well and are sensitive to their needs. They make sure that the children have familiar resources available to them. For example, staff set up activities to explore children's favourite stories. They encourage children to predict which animal the mouse will meet next. Staff place a strong emphasis on supporting children's well-being. This helps children to gain a sense of security and belonging as they settle and progress through the nursery.

Staff have high expectations for all children in the nursery. They plan a well-sequenced curriculum that incorporates the needs of all children. For example, staff support toddlers to learn about positional language as they hide items 'under' the sand. Children's behaviour is appropriate to their age. They learn to share as they take turns to hide the items. Leaders have a wealth of knowledge to ensure that they support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those children who speak English as an additional language. For instance, staff make effective use of sign language and 'now and next' boards to help communicate with children. As a result, children make good progress from their starting points.

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

- The curriculum that staff plan for babies and toddlers has a focused intent for learning. For instance, children develop their physical skills as they use water and paintbrushes to make marks on the blackboard. They explore a variety of movements as they learn how to hold tools. Staff encourage children to copy patterns and shapes. For example, the children excitedly draw large and small circles as they develop their fine motor skills. Staff who are working with babies help them to build their muscle strength as they encourage them to stand and move around the furniture in preparation for their first steps.
- Staff make good use of spontaneous events. For instance, they encourage the children to look for the squirrel in the garden. They reinforce words with actions to help introduce babies and toddlers to new vocabulary. For example, staff 'shake' the sensory bottles and encourage the babies to watch as the bubbles form in the bottle. Toddlers listen to the noise they make as they 'tap, tap' the top of the container filled with sand. However, at times, some staff working with toddlers do not consistently recognise when to talk to children to build on their learning. As a result, toddlers do not always benefit from adult interactions that help to develop their knowledge and extend their language skills.

- Staff have a clear focus on helping children to learn to be independent and develop their self-care skills. For instance, babies and toddlers learn to wash their hands after nappy changes. Staff encourage them to have a go at putting on wellington boots and coats in preparation for going outside to play.
- Children are kind to their friends as they learn to share and take turns. Staff are good role models and make positive use of praise to encourage children to take managed risks in their play. For example, children watch their friends walk along the plank that is balanced on top of the tyre, before stepping on to have a go. Children are keen to join in, knowing that a member of staff is close by if they need help.
- The leaders are exceptionally passionate about providing a high-quality service for families. They have strong links with other professionals and leaders within the company to help develop practice. The leaders recognise the importance of supporting the staff team. They make sure that staff receive regular training, and support their well-being. As a result, staff morale is high.
- Partnerships with parents are a great strength of the nursery. Staff provide parents with books and resources to support home learning. They offer parents opportunities to attend coffee mornings to meet with other parents and staff. Staff make effective use of children's online assessment records and face-to-face discussions to communicate with parents. Parents comment on how friendly and approachable leaders and staff are.

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 strengthen their interactions with children to help consistently extend learning and further develop children's language skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2685153
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10363684
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 2
Total number of places	34
Number of children on roll	53
Name of registered person	Storal Nurseries Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP524868
Telephone number	01622 677702
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Hemsley House Nursery School re-registered in 2022. It is located in Maidstone, Kent. The nursery is owned by Storal Nurseries Limited. It operates from Monday to Friday, 7.30am until 6.30pm, for most of the year. The provider employs 12 members of staff at this nursery. Of these, seven hold a relevant early years qualification at level 3. One member of staff holds a level 6 qualification. The provider receives funding for children aged two years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Sara Garrity

Inspection activities

- The nursery leadership team and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector spoke to parents and read letters of reference to gain their views of the nursery.
- The leaders and staff spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND and children who speak English as an additional language.
- The inspector spoke to staff at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on the babies' and toddlers' learning.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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