

Inspection of Horsmonden Kindergarten

Back Lane, Horsmonden, Tonbridge TN12 8NJ

Inspection date: 26 February 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children arrive at the nursery happy, settle in quickly and eagerly explore the activities. They confidently use the self-registration system and independently choose a place for their belongings. The environment is peaceful and children remain engaged in their play. They form strong bonds with staff and seek comfort when needed, which helps them feel safe and secure. Staff consider children's interests well. They arrange the environment to support their development and learning intentions. Staff consider children's interests, arranging the environment to support development and learning. Younger children have a dedicated space, separated by doors that open later, offering age-specific activities and a free-flow experience.

Older children are encouraged to think critically, explore ideas, and approach problem-solving during play. For example, during an activity using cars on a ramp, children experiment with speed and movement. They predict how adding tape would affect the cars' speed. Staff support their enquiry and encourage them to test their theory and adapt the activity when the cars change direction. Children further extend the activity by adding writing numbers to the game. They show curiosity and deep engagement. Staff create a positive atmosphere with clear communication and use of Makaton. They model good manners, teaching children to say 'please' and 'thank you.' Through guidance, staff help children learn to share, take turns, and make good choices, promoting positive behaviour and social development.

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

- Leaders and staff provide strong support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They make referrals and collaborate closely with parents and external professionals. Leaders ensure that targeted plans are put into action, allowing children to access early intervention. This proactive approach positively contributes to children's progress and helps them reach their full potential.
- Leaders have a clear vision for the nursery's curriculum. They establish key priorities, such as fostering children's social skills, nurturing relationships, and promoting independence. However, not all staff understand how to adapt their practice in order to extend children's learning further. This means that children are not always fully provided with high levels of challenge.
- Staff provide activities that develop children's physical skills. They promote children's gross motor skills by encouraging them to play group games and supporting them in using bikes. Children's fine motor skills are promoted during activities, such as using scissors to cut various materials. These activities help support children to express themselves creatively.

- Children are developing a passion for books and reading. Staff frequently share a variety of stories throughout the day that capture children's interest. For example, children enjoy snuggling up with staff in inviting reading areas. Staff make story time engaging and enjoyable. This helps to support children's early literacy development.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. The staff communicate well with parents. For example, they provide regular updates on children's care and learning and invite parents to meetings to discuss children's progress.
- Staff support children's creativity and imagination. They provide opportunities for children to express themselves using open-ended resources. Staff ask children questions to encourage their thinking, such as 'I wonder what will happen next.'
- The leaders work closely together and utilise each other's professional knowledge to manage the overall effectiveness of the setting.
- Staff consider children's interests alongside their next steps in learning when they plan activities. This means that children's learning is relevant and appropriate for their stage of development. Communication with parents helps to extend children's learning at home. Staff use information parents share and observations they make to identify gaps in children's learning as early as possible. This helps them to plan effectively to support children's progress.

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:

- strengthen the monitoring of staff practice so that all staff understand how to adapt their teaching to extend children's learning further.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY546431
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10388506
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	2 to 5
Total number of places	44
Number of children on roll	44
Name of registered person	Horsmonden Kindergarten CIO
Registered person unique reference number	RP546430
Telephone number	01892724805
Date of previous inspection	15 July 2019

Information about this early years setting

Horsmonden Kindergarten re-registered in 2017. It previously registered in 1992 and is situated in Horsmonden, Kent. The kindergarten opens Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 3.30pm during term times. It is in receipt of funding for the free education of children aged two, three and four years, and receives specific funding for disadvantaged children. There are currently nine staff employed to work with the children. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications from level 3 to level 6.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Laura Hodges

Inspection activities

- The manager and the inspector conducted a learning walk together across all areas of the nursery and discussed the curriculum.
- Children engaged in conversations with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke with staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector had a discussion with the leadership team regarding the leadership and management of the nursery.
- The inspector observed the quality of education offered, both indoors and outdoors, and evaluated its impact on children's learning.
- Staff shared insights with the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The manager and the inspector conducted a collaborative observation.
- Parents provided their feedback about the setting to the inspector.
- The inspector reviewed relevant documentation and assessed evidence regarding the suitability of staff working at 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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