

Inspection of Otford Nursery School

Otford Nursery School, High St, Otford, Kent TN14 5PG

Inspection date: 4 July 2024

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

Staff have implemented very effective settling-in procedures. They focus on the needs of the children and their families. This enables children to become familiar with daily routines and form close relationships with staff. Children feel safe and confidently ask staff for a quick reassuring cuddle when needed before going off to play.

Staff are good role models who help children to develop their social skills. The children are keen to interact with friends and are learning how to share and take turns. For instance, children enjoy playing 'the box game'. They listen to the staff and wait for their turn to get an item out of the box. The children carefully lift the lid off the tube they have chosen. Staff make effective use of praise as the children persevere and eventually get the tight lid off the tube. There is lots of laughter when the toy snake pops out and lands on the floor.

Outside play is a high priority for the staff at the nursery. They understand the importance of providing children with space to take managed risks in their play. For example, staff encourage children to have a go and learn new skills, such as using large play equipment to build their muscle strength. The children join in with action songs as they develop their physical skills. The staff support children to negotiate their way around objects as they become aware of how their bodies move and the space around them.

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

- The management at the nursery is dedicated to providing high-quality experiences for children and their families. There is a well-established staff team that works extremely well together. The staff state that they feel valued in their role. The management has identified areas of strength and has plans in place to continually improve and develop the service it provides. For example, the manager holds regular staff meetings and works in collaboration to help develop the nursery. There is a clear focus on the support and well-being of staff.
- Staff plan a well-sequenced curriculum. There is a clear intent for learning which focuses on children's interests. For example, staff hone in on children's fascination with water. They provide different tools for children to pour and transport water. The children work as a team as they hold the length of guttering ready for their friends to carefully pour water down. However, during larger group activities, staff do not fully support the younger children in the group. As a result, younger children lose focus, become distracted, and do not fully benefit from taking part in the activities.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) works closely with staff, parents and other professionals to help support children with special educational

needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff complete specialist training to help them recognise and plan to support children with SEND. They make strong use of puppets and picture exchange cards to help support communication. The manager has made good use of extra funding to help children settle in the nursery and build their confidence. As a result, all children, including children who speak English as an additional language, achieve their best possible outcomes.

- The manager and staff have established very positive relationships with parents. They make sure that parents receive regular communications. For example, they share information through face-to-face discussions and using an online app. Staff have regular formalised meetings with parents about children's development. Parents comment on the family feel to the nursery and how friendly and approachable the staff are.
- Communication and language development are a high priority at the nursery. For instance, staff talk to the children about the feel of the cooked pasta. Children 'squidge' the pasta through their fingers. Staff ensure that the children hear a wide range of descriptive words as the children explore their senses. However, on occasion, staff do not give children time to respond to questions. As a result, children do not always have opportunities to develop their thinking skills even further.
- Children are happy and eager to join in the well-planned and interesting activities. For example, young children make patterns with their fingers as they explore the feel of paint. Older children proudly draw the shapes of the letters in their names. The staff engage children in a wealth of experiences to support them to develop their early writing 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 to give children time to think through and share their ideas to extend their learning further
- strengthen the organisation of group activities to ensure that younger children are consistently supported to meet their learning needs.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY475278
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10350874
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 11
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	99
Name of registered person	Otford Nursery School Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP533489
Telephone number	01959522364
Date of previous inspection	7 September 2018

Information about this early years setting

Otford Nursery School registered in 2014. The nursery is situated in the grounds of Otford Primary School in Otford, near Sevenoaks, Kent. It operates Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 3pm during term time only. The nursery also provides an after-school club from 3.10pm to 6pm. The provider holds a level 5 childcare qualification. They employ eight members of staff, six of whom hold a relevant early years qualification at level 3. The nursery receives funding to provide free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Sara Garrity

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 provider.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Staff, including the SENCo, spoke to the inspector at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector carried out joint observations with the deputy manager to assess the impact of staff's teaching on children's learning.
- The inspector talked to children about their interests and activities.
- The inspector considered the views of parents through face-to-face discussions and written testimonials.

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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