

Inspection of Ide Hill Pre-School

Ide Hill Village Hall, Ide Hill, SEVENOAKS, Kent TN14 6JG

Inspection date: 19 October 2021

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
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The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children flourish as they play and learn, expertly supported by the highly motivated staff team. All children are independent learners and eagerly explore the exciting resources set out to reflect their interests. They soon become engrossed in their chosen activities. For example, an activity to make potions arose from the children's fascination in a discussion about Halloween. The presentation of curious bottles of different shapes, sizes and colours, along with food colouring, petals and glitter, was irresistible. Children became absorbed in the magical world of witches and wizards. They showed immense concentration as they mastered the use of large pipettes after repeated practise and perseverance. Children confidently mixed colours, using richly descriptive language such as 'blood red'.

Throughout the setting, children busily explore, experiment, laugh or talk. Whether constructing walls, washing baby dolls or sitting with friends in dens to read books, they play extremely cooperatively. They work together to solve problems in very mature ways. For example, a group of children operating a large toy concrete mixer negotiated how best to achieve their goals. While one child turned the handle to keep the mixer constantly turning, another very proficiently used a spade to scoop the sand in from the edges to mix with the water. When they realised the mix was too wet, another child took responsibility for finding more sand until they obtained the right consistency. Children also find plenty of time to relax, searching out staff to read them a story or just to sit and have a chat.

Children display impeccable social skills and behaviour, following the excellent example set by staff. They are caring, polite and extremely friendly. They respond very well to the recognition and praise they receive for simple courtesies such as waiting patiently for their turn. This creates a very harmonious and positive atmosphere, allowing children to develop the confidence and security to try new things in a safe environment.

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

- The leadership and management of the setting are inspirational. The close working relationships between the manager and staff team result in a highly efficient service that fully meets the needs of children and their families. The manager closely monitors the outcomes for children. She and her staff work quickly to focus additional support where needed to close any emerging gaps in children's learning or development. The arrangements to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are coordinated extremely well. Staff work in full partnership with parents and other professionals to meet children's individual needs.
- Staff have created a very stimulating and exciting learning environment. Children

use the wonderful resources in a variety of ways to extend their games and explore new ideas. For example, there is currently a replica of a farm shop in the gazebo, well stocked with real fruit and vegetables. This very successfully promotes children's language and mathematical skills and their understanding of the world. Children also independently choose to use this space to practise writing in the small notebooks staff have provided. Each and every staff member demonstrates excellent teaching skills. They know when to intervene to offer new ideas or challenge, and when to stand back and allow children to learn through discovery.

- The extremely effective organisation of the day allows children plenty of time to play, while also offering a carefully planned level of routine. This, along with their excellent social skills and high levels of achievement, helps to prepare children well for their future learning. Staff are aware of the different cultural influences in children's lives and reflect these positively in the setting. This helps children to feel valued as individuals and supports them to learn about the lives and experiences of others.
- Parents and carers are extremely positive in their feedback, particularly in their praise for staff. They provide numerous examples of the ways in which the manager and staff have gone beyond the expectations of their role to support children and their families. Parents take a very active role in the day-to-day life of the setting. For example, they joined staff in raising funds to build a covered gazebo and have created an elaborate 'bug hotel' in the garden.
- Staff are consistent in supporting children's health well. Children know to wash their hands regularly and also learn about the importance of good oral hygiene. Nutritious snack options help children to make healthy food choices. In addition, they understand where their food comes from as they grow herbs, vegetables and fruits in the garden. Children benefit from many opportunities to engage in energetic games. They move with control and coordination. Children climb, balance and swing in the garden, and take part in forest school activities in local woodlands.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff team have a thorough understanding of their responsibility to keep children safe. They maintain an up-to-date knowledge of the signs that may indicate that a child is at risk of harm, including the risks associated with extreme views and beliefs. The procedures for reporting concerns about children, or adults working with children, are clearly outlined in the setting's safeguarding policy. There are robust recruitment procedures and effective arrangements to check the ongoing suitability of staff.

Setting details

Unique reference number	127275
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10128684
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 5
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	38
Name of registered person	Ide Hill Preschool Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP522674
Telephone number	01732 750749
Date of previous inspection	2 July 2015

Information about this early years setting

Ide Hill Pre-School registered in 1992 and is a committee-run group. The pre-school is open from 9.15am to 2.45pm, Monday to Friday, during term time only. The pre-school receives funding for free early education sessions for children aged three and four. There are six staff who work directly with the children. All staff hold relevant early years qualifications at level 5 or level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Liz Caluori

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 setting.
- The manager led the inspector on a tour of the premises, explaining the aims of the educational programme.
- The inspector observed children and staff engaged in a range of activities, indoors and outdoors, and completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The views of several parents were gathered through discussions and written feedback.

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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