Inspection of Hambledon Nursery School Limited

Hambledon Road, Godalming GU8 4DR

Inspection date:	16 September 2025

Overall effectiveness	**Outstanding**
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 thoroughly enjoy their time at this exceptional nursery. They are warmly welcomed into this nurturing and highly stimulating environment, keen to take part in the exciting experiences that staff provide for them. Children form secure attachments with caring and attentive staff, which helps them to settle quickly and feel safe. From the youngest new starters to those preparing for school, children demonstrate high levels of confidence and curiosity and a strong motivation to learn. They are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their education. When recalling previous learning, children get excited about discussing fairy tales and trying to guess which one they will listen to next. Activities are planned to extend experiences for children, and staff use all the senses to reinforce learning. For example, the room smells of turnip when reading 'The Enormous Turnip' as children are given opportunities to explore cut turnips.

Children choose their play activities and make independent choices. This enables them to follow their interests and understand from a very young age that their views are valued and important. Children show immense concentration and persistence at their chosen tasks. For example, using children's favourite characters to explore mark making in paint enables children to develop very high levels of control and small muscle development. Staff are highly adept at supporting children through demonstrating and guiding their play and learning.

Staff have consistently high expectations for all children, and children rise to meet them. They work extremely well with others, showing exemplary social skills, emotional maturity and cooperation. Children show an exceptional understanding of caring for others, including the animals on site. For example, without prompting, children pick grass to feed the guinea pigs, talking about how they like eating grass and dandelion leaves, showing their learned knowledge. They take turns, share and support one another, demonstrating a strong sense of empathy and respect. Staff promote personal development exceptionally well, helping children to recognise and regulate their emotions. Children express their needs with confidence and build resilience in both their learning and relationships. As a result, children's behaviour is exemplary.

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

- Leaders are inspirational in their vision for children's learning and development through the bespoke curriculum, which is embedded for each age range through age-appropriate activities. They ensure that staff plan activities and experiences that children can fully immerse themselves in. These follow children's interests, and staff seamlessly weave into the experiences what they know children need to learn next. This means all children make exceptional progress in their

learning.

- The experienced and well-established staff team reports feeling consistently supported by leaders, resulting in exceptionally high morale. Leaders implement thorough supervision processes and facilitate ongoing professional development. Staff share training to the whole staff team, ensuring that consistent practice is in place when supporting children. This helps to drive improvement and further improve outcomes for children.
- Staff demonstrate a deep understanding of children's assessments and what they would like children to learn next. They demonstrate that they know which children they would like to focus on during a given activity and can talk about their learning intentions. Staff provide an abundance of exciting activities, and there are strong literacy links to other areas of learning. For example, in the role play area, children are provided with large clipboards and paper menus to plan what their 'customers' would like to eat.
- Staff are exceptionally well equipped to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They are given specific training and are involved in meetings with parents and other professionals. Staff ensure that they make adaptations to planning and resources to enable them to be accessible to all.
- Staff have an extremely in-depth knowledge of not only their key children, but all children attending. This enables them to make the most of interactions with children to challenge their learning further. Staff continually and consistently observe and assess children's development. They promptly identify any potential emerging gaps in learning and plan effectively for what children need to learn next. In turn, this supports children to make rapid progress from their starting points.
- The outdoor provision is rich, varied and carefully planned to promote curiosity, exploration and physical development. Children engage in sensory experiences such as caring for the guinea pigs, and they explore enquiry-based stations, including digging in the fairy garden. Children develop hand dexterity as they create their large-scale paintings. When playing in the water tray, staff skilfully extend the activity into a sensory science experience using a bubble mixture to create foamy water. Furthermore, children navigate large logs, developing balance, coordination and confidence. Consequently, physical development is consistently well supported.
- Children's independence is securely embedded in practice and actively encouraged through thoughtful provision. Even the youngest children develop a strong sense of responsibility as they confidently clear their plates and cups. Staff supervise the children closely, offering useful tips and praising them for their efforts. Children demonstrate great pride in their achievements.
- There are extremely high levels of support for staff's welfare and well-being. Staff consistently report that they receive well-targeted and individualised guidance, enabling them to be constantly focused on their roles and responsibilities. They comment that leaders 'genuinely care about staff' and that they know each staff member as an individual. This creates an environment where staff work cohesively as a team and where staff retention is excellent. Therefore, consistency for children and their families is highly evident.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY472201
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10399568
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	45
Number of children on roll	40
Name of registered person	Hambledon Nursery School Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP533275
Telephone number	01428 684892
Date of previous inspection	5 December 2019

Information about this early years setting

Hambledon Nursery School Limited re-registered in 2013 and operates in Hambledon, Surrey. Trustees and a management committee run the nursery. The nursery opens from 9am until 3pm, Monday to Friday, term-time only. The setting employs 16 members of staff, of whom five hold early years qualifications at level 6. The nursery provides funded early education for all eligible children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Amanda Harrison

Inspection activities

- The headteacher and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector and headteacher carried out joint observations of a group activity.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector considered the views of parents by speaking to some of them and reviewing written feedback.
- The inspector sampled 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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