HAMBLEDON NURSERY ACHIEVES OUTSTANDING OFSTED INSPECTION RESULT…AGAIN!

The Autumn term has been an eventful one for the nursery school because in second week of the term and we had THE CALL and Ofsted came visiting to conduct an Early Years Inspection on Tuesday 16th September. We are thrilled to be able to share the fantastic news that the grading judgment of 'Outstanding' was reached in all areas. This includes the quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, personal development and leadership and management.

The nursery is understandably over the moon about this result, and we are so very proud of the accomplishment of maintaining the Outstanding grading following our previous inspection in December 2019. Staff all continue to work extremely hard to maintain excellence across all aspects of our provision as this exceptional standard is difficult to achieve and hard to maintain and we have always been committed to ensuring that we strive for continuous improvement so that we can be sure of offering inclusive, highest-quality provision.

During the inspection itself, the inspector gathered evidence about the quality of care, teaching and learning by:

- observing the children at play
- talking to the children and practitioners about what they are learning from the activities and experiences provided
- talking to parents to gain their views on the quality of care and education provided
- observing the interactions between practitioners and children
- gauging children's levels of understanding and their engagement in learning
- talking to practitioners about their assessment of what children know and can do and how they are building on it

- observing care routines and how they are used to support children's personal development, including the setting's approach to toilet training
- evaluating the practitioners' knowledge of the EYFS curriculum and of children's development.
- observing the quality of the implementation of the curriculum/educational programmes of the nursery school and the quality of staff members interactions with the children.

The result of all this evidence gathering on the day resulted in the remarkable achievement of once again securing an 'Outstanding' rating which is described in the inspection handbook as follows:

'Outstanding is a challenging and exacting judgement. To reach this standard, it is not enough that the provision is strong against some aspects of the judgement and not against others: it must meet each and every criterion. In addition, there are further criteria set out under the outstanding judgement, all of which the provision will also need to meet. Provision should only be judged 'outstanding' in a particular area if it is performing exceptionally, and this exceptional performance in that area is consistent and secure across the whole provision'.

I share with you some extracts from our inspection report published on 15th October 2025, the full report can be found on our website.

'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'.

'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'.

'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'.

'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'.

I am pleased to share a selection of the feedback comments which parents provided:

“Hambledon Nursery is faultless. I have sent my three children to a variety of different nursery settings and Hambledon is by far and away in a league of its own.

The overall feel of the nursery and the staff that work there are exceptional. The setting is beautiful - calm, tranquil and immersed in nature. The activities that are arranged each day are thoughtful, engaging and often tailored to each individual child. The staff are warm, compassionate and the effort they put into their role and the enjoyment they clearly get from it is clear to see”.

“Kate is highly professional, a great communicator and obviously extremely knowledgeable about the early years. She goes above and beyond. I particularly love the emphasis that she and her team place on involving the children in the natural world and being outdoors. The nursery’s values and commitment to excellence are clear to see”.
Dorothy Drechsler

“Hambledon Nursery is a very special place with very special people. I feel incredibly lucky that my son gets to have it as a part of his story, right at the beginning of his learning journey. The activities and opportunities available to the children are vast with baking and outdoor play at the top of my son’s favourite list. The thought and care that goes into the planning of each day is amazing. I am often reminded by my child’s key person that if there is anything he is particularly interested in, it can be individually included in the sessions. This means that the learning is so incredibly personalised for each individual child which feels truly special”.

“All of the staff are friendly, welcoming, kind and caring and it is obvious that that care spreads deeply to the children. My son feels safe and secure and excited about going to Hambledon each week and I believe it is the perfect set up in preparing him for school”.

“The outdoor space provides a magical experience for the children to play, explore and learn. I am so grateful for Hambledon nursery and wish that all villages, towns and cities could have a special place like this”.

Louise Clarke

“Hambledon Nursery is unique!

Hambledon Nursery has this magic about it. Every single member of staff is so happy to be there and gives their all to the children. The provision is just second to none; it's not the standard painting, sand, playdough. Oh no. It's dinosaurs in the tuff tray stomping through chocolate mousse dessert, Paw Patrol characters that have been frozen into ice cubes and need to be rescued by chipping away with little hammers and pick axes. It's shadow drawing on the playground floor, real eggs and chicks hatching, guinea pigs, incredible water play, mud kitchen, tree climbing, marshmallow toasting in a campfire, the list goes on. Both my children were so sad when it was the school holidays and couldn't go in! This first-class provision is coupled with staff who genuinely care for and enjoy the company of the children hugely. They dress up with them, have tea parties, guide them and nurture them and give each individual child exactly what they need”.

Carrie Piper

And finally, a kind note from David Evans our Chair …

Hambledon Nursery School has had another very good year, culminating in another Outstanding rating from Ofsted. Ofsted visits are always rather nerve-wracking affairs, so it is very gratifying to have this outcome confirmed.

The school benefits greatly from its rural setting, and extensive outside space. The children have such a safe and stimulating environment for their learning and development. It benefits greatly too from the active involvement and support of parents and carers.

Credit principally though should go to Kate our excellent Head Teacher and to her staff. It is they who consistently ensure the practices and ethos that have been recognised by Ofsted.

We look forward to many more Outstanding years!

HAMBLEDON NURSERY SCHOOL

Ofsted Outstanding Provider