

Inspection of Artisans Kindergarten

Crabtree Fields The Scout Hut HQ, Waldegrave Park, HARPENDEN, Hertfordshire
AL5 5SF

Inspection date: 13 February 2020

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 enter the kindergarten with a spring in their step. They feel happy, safe and secure. They choose confidently from a wide range of exciting and easily accessible activities. For example, they keenly choose to test the way marbles roll through an adjustable network of guttering. Elsewhere, staff guide children to safely cut out pictures of their favourite toys and insert them in a catalogue. In the outdoor area, children challenge themselves to wheel a full barrow over the grassed mounds. Others make themselves into 'pencils' to roll down slopes safely. At the painting easel, a small group watch with deep interest as another child thoughtfully adds different-coloured concentric circles to make a unique piece of artwork. The highly skilled and dedicated staff know when to stand back, or when to offer support. Nothing happens by chance. Every step of learning is thought through.

Children gain word knowledge by repeating rhymes and finishing sentences in well-loved stories. They explore emotions, reactions and consequences as they listen to 'The Smartest Giant in Town'. They match facial expressions to 'the grumpy giant'. Children respect the impressively organised, well-resourced environment. They use high-quality domestic items as a matter of course and treat them with great care. Children feel extremely trusted and valued. Their behaviour is exceptional.

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

- The provider, who is also the manager, and her staff are ambitious for all the children in their care. They are proud of the impact they have on children's development. They ensure that all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, make exceptional progress.
- The provider gives staff dedicated time to work together. Joint key persons know their children exceptionally well. They share expertise and assessments. As a result, staff know how to assist each child's learning and when to adjust teaching. Children are very well prepared for school.
- Staff are deeply committed to giving children an exceptionally good experience. They plan inspirational activities to build on existing interests and abilities. For example, children create a map of their local nature walk. Staff challenge children to use a bird's eye view, and to draw solid objects as flat shapes.
- Children develop mathematical skills through various activities. For example, staff help them to accurately count toy vehicles and sort them by the materials they are made from. Children compare group numbers and observe similarities and differences.
- Staff challenge children to fit pegs into holes in wooden blocks, to help develop

a good grip for pencil-shaped objects. Staff encourage children to listen carefully to all sounds around them, however small. This helps children pick out sounds that letters make in words. Children learn to write their names.

- On birthdays, children celebrate their uniqueness. They bring yearly photographs and items from home. They gain confidence when talking about their favourite things. Parents of the birthday child are invited to stay for lunch, cooked by the kindergarten's chef.
- Children learn to appreciate the wider world. They find Australia on the globe and learn how to use a boomerang. Children learn about other cultures from parents who visit to explain different customs and artefacts.
- Staff guide and encourage children to do things themselves, such as putting on and taking off their own shoes and outdoor clothes. Children learn to look after themselves and all living things. They feed their pet guinea pigs and put food out for two resident robins. Staff guide children to use cutting equipment safely to make a fruit salad.
- The provider and staff constantly evaluate and develop activities and practices. In a newly created 'home' area, children enjoy practising life skills such as ironing. A member of staff talks about how to use an iron safely. After evaluation of music provision, children now independently plug in earphones and play tracks on a music centre.
- Parents appreciate being involved in making choices and the excellent communications involved. For example, the provider invites parents to decide whether children wear indoor shoes or go barefoot and provides them with relevant research findings.
- Parents unanimously praise the nursery. They appreciate its 'calm' atmosphere. They find communication regarding their child's progress 'just right'. Parents say they would not choose anywhere else. One parent said, 'Staff make children feel special... the children are pumped full of pride.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are extremely well trained and knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities relating to child protection issues and keeping children safe. They know and understand signs of possible child abuse or neglect and of being drawn into extreme behaviours or ideas. They have a clear understanding of how to report concerns about a child's safety. The provider carries out robust vetting procedures and ongoing checks to ensure staff are suitable to work with children. Staff receive a thorough induction when they start. The provider carries out detailed observations and supervisions to target training and ensure staff always know how well they are progressing towards well-defined goals. All activities and routines are risk assessed to ensure children are safe. For example, there are stringent assessments of walks in open spaces.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY376536
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10127327
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	2 to 4
Total number of places	50
Number of children on roll	72
Name of registered person	Tasty Tales Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP902509
Telephone number	07795 510 130
Date of previous inspection	24 April 2014

Information about this early years setting

Artisans Kindergarten registered in 2008 and is situated in Harpenden, Hertfordshire. The kindergarten's educational ethos is based on the Montessori method. The kindergarten is open during term time only. Morning sessions are from 8.30am to midday, Monday to Friday. Lunch club is from midday to 12.30pm. Afternoon sessions are from 12.30pm to 4pm, Monday to Thursday. The kindergarten provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. It employs 14 members of childcare staff who hold a childcare qualification at level 3 and above. Of these, five have qualified teacher status, one holds early years teacher status and eight hold a Montessori teaching qualification.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Liz Kissane

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities, inside and outdoors, and conducted a joint observation with the provider.
- At appropriate times throughout the inspection, the inspector held meetings with the provider and senior leaders, and spoke with staff and children.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation, including children's assessments and planning information, the setting's risk assessments, safety records and a range of other documents.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of staff working in the kindergarten. She discussed the kindergarten's self-evaluation with the provider.
- During the inspection, the inspector spoke to a selection of parents. She took account of their views.

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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