

Inspection of Southover Nursery School

Southover Nursery School, Southover, Church Hall, St. James Street, Lewes BN7 1HR

Inspection date: 17 June 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

The children arrive happily and are greeted warmly. The curriculum is well thought out to support all children to make progress. Staff communicate daily to discuss children's needs, interests and learning. This helps children to become highly engaged in experiences that develop their fascinations. For example, while digging for fossils in the sand, children discuss their goals to become 'archaeologists' and 'palaeontologists'.

Staff support children's language development effectively, for instance through books, poems, songs and interactions. They encourage children to experiment with language through familiar songs at music time. Children's emotions are supported effectively by staff. For example, when children struggle to share, adults support them to manage how they feel. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported.

Leaders work with local schools to consider which skills are beneficial at school. This helps staff to plan interesting activities to support literacy and mathematics skills. For example, they plan a treasure hunt to provide children with mark-making opportunities, and children experiment with weight and capacity in the sand with playing scales. Staff make effective use of any additional funding children are entitled to, helping to close any gaps in learning and development.

Staff give clear and consistent guidance, which helps the older children to understand the routine and what is expected of them. For example, during snack time, children find their snack and name card, then tidy up before going to the garden.

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

- Language development is well considered within the curriculum. Staff enhance children's speech by choosing and introducing complex words into conversations, such as 'anemones'. Staff read stories with enthusiasm and children listen intently. Staff and children passionately discuss the story, which leads to rich knowledge sharing on tsunamis.
- Key persons plan activities based on their secure knowledge of the children's needs, interests and next steps. This results in children being highly motivated, engaged and ready to explore. Interactions between staff and children provide opportunities to extend children's thinking. For example, staff encourage children to use their senses to explore the sea creatures in the water tray.
- Children explore physical development through weekly music and movement sessions and regular yoga sessions. Staff support children to experiment with different ways to move their body and children gain good physical skills.

- Children are consistently reminded of the rules. Staff redirect children's behaviour by understanding their needs. Children's emotions are well supported. For example, staff comfort and support children who have conflicts with their friends. Children's care needs are sensitively met and staff tell children before they wipe their nose.
- Staff support children's self-care and independence. They plan activities for children to learn about sun safety. This helps children to protect themselves in the sun. For example, they regularly access water during outdoor play. The nursery bear 'Henry' goes to children's homes and promotes discussions around healthy eating and oral hygiene.
- The setting works effectively in partnership with parents. Parents report that the staff are nurturing and support children's well-being. Staff share children's progress, learning and ways that they can be helped at home with parents. Parents are provided with termly questionnaires to share their views. They are invited into the setting to share a hobby or profession. This helps children experience a consistent approach to their learning and care.
- Staff understand children's backgrounds and home lives. They plan a range of experiences for all children, including those with SEND. Children celebrate festivals such as Christmas and Diwali. They explore food tasting through an activity based on 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'. This helps children to explore the lives of others and engage in a wide variety of experiences.
- Children with SEND make good progress. Staff work collaboratively with parents and outside agencies to meet their needs. Funding is used effectively to support children's well-being and learning. For example, they have developed the use of an interactive bucket to encourage children's focus and joint attention. Staff provide space and a sensory tent for those that need it.
- Staff use strategies such as 'traffic light' cards, as well as cues and songs, to support the children with transitions throughout the day. As a result, older children are confident to independently follow the routine. However, younger children are not always provided with appropriate visual support during transitional times. At times, this can mean they do not understand what is happening or what to expect next.
- Leaders have a clear vision for the setting. They are reflective about what is working well and what needs improving. Staff feel well supported and have regular supervisions. Staff's professional development is supported by the leaders, and as a result, staff's skills are utilised well in the setting. They follow safer recruitment procedures to check staff are suitable to work with children. Staff are thoroughly inducted so they feel competent within their new role.

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:

- review and improve arrangements for supporting younger children during daily routines, to help them understand what is happening and what to expect next.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2725815
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10399256
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 5
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	30
Name of registered person	Hasan, Charlotte
Registered person unique reference number	2725813
Telephone number	01273 486435
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Southover Nursery School registered under its current ownership in 2023 and is located in Lewes, East Sussex. The setting is open during term time only on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 8.30am to 3pm, and on Thursday and Friday from 8.30am to 12.30pm.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lisa Glassey

Inspection activities

- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed the early years curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- The manager and inspector completed a joint observation.
- The inspector spoke with staff and interacted with the children.
- Parents shared their views about the setting with the inspector.
- The manager showed the inspector relevant documentation.
- The inspector observed interactions between the staff and the children.

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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