

Forest Pulse

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Jennifer Cutler

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Forest Pulse was first registered 2004. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It provides a variety of out-of-school play and social activities at the Heart of the Forest Community Special School, close to Speech House, Cinderford and Coleford. It provides a play scheme through part of most school holidays, daily from 10.00 to 16.00. The group, which is a registered charity and committee-run, offers places to children and young people with special educational needs and with severe, complex and profound physical disabilities. Siblings may also attend the play scheme. It is registered to take up to 20 children from four to eight years and currently has 20 children under eight on roll, all attending for a variety of sessions. It also caters for young people up to the age of 19 years. Eight staff work with the children at various times and according to need, two of whom hold a recognised early-years qualification. Additional staff are also called upon to work with the children and young people on a one-to-one basis. At the time of the inspection the play scheme was using the nearby premises of Steam Mills Primary School due to major building works going on at the Heart of the Forest Community Special School site.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

This is a good setting where children and young people, many of whom have severe learning and or physical disabilities, can get together during the summer holidays and become involved in a variety of social and creative activities. The play scheme is highly inclusive and has very good procedures for supporting all children well. Extremely effective communications and partnerships with parents, carers and other agencies make sure that the children are very safe and well looked after and that all their complex needs are effectively met. The manager and her team are a devoted group who are keen to improve and want to provide stimulating experiences for the children in their care. They do this by seeking out relevant courses which meet the demands of working with children and young people with highly specialised needs. As a result the setting has good capacity to improve.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- keep a formal record of all daily safety checks carried out and subsequent action to remedy any health and safety issues

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The very experienced manager and her team work very well together and have done a grand job at keeping the holiday play scheme going in temporary premises in a local primary school whilst building works are carried out at their original base, Heart of the Forest Community Special School. The scheme is a life-line for many families who value a period of respite.

There is a high focus on keeping children safe. Very good attention has been given to safety in and around the temporary site. Children are closely supervised in the school grounds, where they can play safely and enjoy the pleasant open spaces of the school playgrounds. Appropriate arrangements for risk assessments are in place, but daily health and safety checks on equipment, buildings and grounds and whether action is taken to remedy any health and safety issues are not formally recorded. Visitors are met at the front entrance and required to sign in and sign out.

All staff, helpers and volunteers are closely vetted for suitability in working at the play scheme. Staff are well trained in safeguarding and catering for the highly specialised needs of the children. For example, procedures for intimate care, specialised feeding procedures and the administration of medicines are exemplary and carried out with care and sensitivity. Specialist lifting equipment has been brought from the Forest School to ensure that children's personal care is dealt with in a safe way. As a result the deployment of resources is good. The setting uses self-evaluation well to identify improvements in the provision of experiences and activities made for their children. In particular, the manager is very concerned that her staff have access to appropriate training courses in order to give children the best possible deal. Consequently, her drive and ambition make the play scheme a vibrant setting for all. Children's well-being is further enhanced by the excellent links the manager has with parents and carers and other external agencies. The manager values parents' and carers' opinions, and questionnaires are sent out at the end of the scheme's duration to find out what can be done to improve provision further. Indeed, the staff know about the children's needs in detail. There are detailed records which staff can refer to if a child needs medication, if a child has an allergy or if there is a certain emergency procedure to be followed for some medical conditions. Staff are well trained in first aid procedures.

The strong links with the Forest Special School and other agencies such as the social services, the paediatrician or the community nurse enhance the well-being and care of children and demonstrate the settings excellent promotion of equality of opportunity and tackling of any discrimination. This enables the manager to pass on information about the children and how well they achieved at the holiday play scheme.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

The siblings of children or young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are enthusiastically invited to attend the Heart of the Forest holiday play scheme. Provision is good, and the manager and her team have continued to cater for the youngest children very well. Although there are few under-fives on the premises at any one time, they have the opportunity to join in in a very relaxed way with all the activities on offer. They are well cared for by staff and volunteers, and have ample opportunity to develop their personal and social skills by working with others in groups, when painting or on a one-to-one basis whilst reading stories and nursery rhymes. They develop an awareness of others' needs and learn that some people have special food or need to be fed according to a certain procedure. They learn about what foods are healthy and that it is necessary to observe hygiene procedures at lunch time. They learn about how important it is for some children to take medicines and how important it is to rest.

There are ample opportunities for children to develop their imagination and their speaking and listening skills. A visit from the local librarian, who read a story to all the children, engaged everyone in an enjoyable start to the day. Children dress up according to the theme for the week and have fun being a witch, Harry Potter or Doctor Who. Children are involved in dance or music with visiting teachers. They enjoy visits from the fire service, who teach them about fire safety or from a group who show them how to operate remote-controlled vehicles. Older children and young people enjoy going on excursions and trips; for example, to an adventure park.

Children have free access to most activities on offer, such as painting, play dough and junk modelling. Planning is adaptable and responds to the next steps in children's development. Children also have the choice of playing indoors with construction toys or going outside to ride on bikes or play with water or large bricks. This gives them confidence to take risks, make decisions and have a strong sense of security.

Children develop positive relationships with staff and volunteers. Adults set a good example to those in their care, are patient and use positive language to praise them and encourage them for what they have done. Children are well behaved, but when there is a need for a child or young person to have time alone the manager has made sure that there is a quiet area or the sensory room to go to for peace.

Children make a positive contribution in the local and wider community by becoming involved in recycling and by fund raising to support their play-scheme activities in the future.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met