

Marsden Park Forest School

Marsden Hall, Walton Lane, NELSON, Lancashire, BB9 8BW

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

10/06/2013

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend 2

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children 2

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision 2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Staff are skilled at adapting the forest school principles to the Early Years Foundation Stage. This means that all children are challenged to make good progress, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Children learn and play outdoors in a stimulating, practical and exciting way, led by experienced and enthusiastic staff.
- Children agree their own boundaries and work together very well to decide the guidelines for their games. This ensures that children are interested, fully engaged and gaining confidence in their ability to make decisions.
- The leaders of the forest school have a strong commitment and enthusiasm to develop the setting further. This, and the support received from nursery and children's centre teams, means that they have a very good capacity for improvement.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Owing to the short time the forest school has been operating, planning for individual children using the very good links with schools and nursery, is not fully embedded to support their children's already very good learning.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector held discussions with the registered person, forest school leader and staff, safeguarding officer, special educational needs co-ordinator and the senior teacher.
- The inspector observed staff and children during a forest school session.
- The inspector sampled documentation, including risk assessments, activity plans and extracts of children's learning journals.

Inspector

Linda Shore

Full Report

Information about the setting

Marsden Park Forest School was registered in 2012 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The setting is situated in Marsden Old Hall, in Marsden Park, Nelson, Lancashire. It is managed by Rocking Horse Club, Pendle Ltd. The school follows the principles of the forest school philosophies, primarily outdoor play and exploratory learning in a nearby wooded area.

The nursery employs two members of staff, who lead forest school sessions. Both hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 4 and forest schools training at level 3. The school opens Monday to Friday, all year round, delivering tailored sessions for local schools and nursery schools. Children attend with their own teachers and key persons. Due to the nature of the setting, it does not have children registered on roll. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. It supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- strengthen the very good system for planning for children's individual needs over time. For example, by exploring further ways to exchange information with all other settings they attend to ensure children's learning is maximised.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Staff have a very good knowledge of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and how children learn. They effectively observe the children on a regular basis and use the information they gather to plan exciting and challenging activities at the forest school. Staff pass observations on to children's key person or teacher, who incorporates it seamlessly into their record of learning. Assessment of children's development informs planning for children's progress and the next steps in development. The forest school complements and enhances children's experiences in all areas of learning. Activities are planned based on information received from observation, school and nursery teachers and practitioners. Parents feed into children's learning journey through key persons and have been encouraged to visit and experience taster sessions to help them to fully understand and support the setting. The leaders are trained and skilled at supporting all areas of learning through the forest school principles. As a result, children make good progress in all areas of learning in relation to their starting points as demonstrated through their electronic learning records.

Children focus well and fully engage in the activities provided. Staff are skilful at interacting with children and challenge them to think by using open-ended questioning. Children feel respected as staff value their comments and contribution.

Children are confident communicators and those who have speech and language delays communicate better in the outdoor environment. They listen to staff, follow instructions and enter into detailed conversations. For example, all measurements outdoors are done with body parts and children know that they should only play with sticks that are no longer than their arm. When children try to play with much longer sticks, a very involved conversation evolves as other children join in, measuring and comparing sizes and advising each other about which are safe. This discussion helps children to value each other, take turns when speaking and involves them in simple mathematics.

'Sticks and stones' code cards give older children a chance to solve clues, decipher language and find the treasure on a hunt. To enhance children's writing skills, they participate in purposeful activities, which develop large and small muscle groups, such as using sticks in mud to write. These activities, along with making environmental art, also help children to express their creativity and imagination well. They learn about technology well as they play with electronic metal detectors and use cameras in their play. Children's physical development is good and they have plenty of opportunities to develop small muscle handling skills as they learn to use tools. For instance, they use tweezers as bird beaks to collect 'wool worms' from the forest floor. The outdoor environment enables the children to have freedom to explore, be physically active and have first-hand experiences of the seasons and weather.

Children's needs are very well met due to high staff ratios and high quality teaching. Staff are friendly, happy and completely involved in children's play without intruding. This encourages children very well to acquire the skills for their future learning. Consequently, children have fun and look forward to their time at the forest school as they prepare well to move onto school.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Safety is a high priority at the forest school. Children learn how to keep themselves safe in fun and innovative ways. Forest school leaders have adapted well-known children's songs and rhymes to remind them how to keep themselves safe. For example, they sing, 'Canopy, shrub, field and ground', to the tune of head, shoulders, knees and toes. Children also transfer their forest skills back to nursery. They help others identify risks, such as uneven ground as they shout 'ground' and point out the dangers. Wherever possible, children direct their own play and set appropriate boundaries. For instance, children decide the boundaries of their play areas and all agree before starting, giving high regard to remaining with a safe distance. As a result, children are becoming aware of how to keep themselves safe at all times. Staff promote children's good health through effective health and hygiene routines, such as hand washing after playing outside. Children show they have a good understanding of why they must wash hands even if they do not look dirty as they discuss that germs are 'too small to see'.

Children make choices about their own play, helping them to build confidence in their ability to make decisions. Before starting a game of 'one, two, three where are you?' children look at the size of the area they have to hide in and then agree a number to count up to. As a result, children are always actively engaged in play. Children make their own decisions about the needs of their body when in the forest area. They freely access and pour their own drinks when they are thirsty. This supports their growing independence and self-awareness.

Children come to forest school from nearby schools and nurseries to take part in sessions. They are happy in the welcoming environment and feel secure, even if visits are infrequent, as they are accompanied by their own teachers or key persons. This helps children to settle into the routine of the forest school quickly and make a smooth transition.

Children learn about their community and local history as they venture out of base camp into the forest. Staff encourage children to follow a local tradition and place a leaf in the holes of the large stone arch and make a wish as they pass through. This enhances children learning about diversity and gives them a greater understanding of the wider world.

Children are secure within the familiar routines and consistent boundaries and expectations. They know that rules are few and the only requirements are that they have fun and stay safe. Children are kind, courteous and work well together as a team as they agree whether to take the running path or the walking path. They are well cared for and above all, they thoroughly enjoy their time at forest school.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

Leadership and management are very good because there is a strong commitment to providing a high quality provision for all children. The team demonstrate enthusiasm and passion for their work and this is evident in their well-planned sessions with the children. The forest school has been operating fully for only six weeks at the time of inspection and strong progress and provision is evident with an excellent capability to continue to improve. Links with other settings that children attend are very good and the free exchange of children's needs and development information means that the forest school is very well placed to provide purposeful activities to support children's learning. However, due to the very short time the setting has been operating, there has not been time for these very good systems to become fully embedded.

Children are well safeguarded at the forest school and staff have an accurate knowledge and understanding of the safeguarding procedures. They are aware of the steps to follow should they have any concerns and all receive current training. Staff effectively promote children's welfare as records accurately reflect accidents and incidents. Full risk assessments are completed for the premises to help ensure children's safety. The setting is supported by a safeguarding officer and special educational needs co-ordinator. This

ensures that all children's needs are fully met by ensuring staff are trained and fostering close partnerships with outside agencies.

There are very good links with the local schools and nursery that the children attend and meetings with the teachers prior to sessions ensures activities are tailored to the needs of the children attending and the teacher's curriculum planning. Effective performance management, such as supervision and appraisals, supports staff to improve their skills and identify training needs. All staff are supported in their continuous professional development. This in turn, makes sure that children benefit from current childcare practices and knowledgeable staff to ensure their readiness for future learning.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY457172
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	895942
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	56
Number of children on roll	0
Name of provider	The Rocking Horse Club - Pendle Limited
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01282613437

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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