

Inspection of Forest Friends Childcare

Marsh House Sports And Community Centre, Marsh House Avenue, Billingham TS23 3HB

Inspection date: 27 July 2021

| 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 | Not applicable |

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children show high levels of enjoyment and enthusiasm in everything they do and are willing to try any experience staff provide. Young children approach new activities with great confidence. They bubble with excitement as they wait for their chocolate bananas to roast on the camp fire. Older children use their extensive vocabulary, literacy skills and imagination to describe witches' recipes as they read the cookery book together. Children consistently show exemplary behaviour and they take pride in being kind and helpful towards each other. Staff are highly responsive, caring and enthusiastic. They show dedication and are passionate about providing children with a wealth of experiences that give them the best possible start in life. For example, staff teach children to use real tools and equipment, such as a saw, hose pipes and screwdriver. Children learn about problem-solving, safety and consequences in using tools properly.

In spite of the challenges faced throughout the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, the manager and staff team have continued to enhance their nursery and make regular adjustments to keep everyone safe. Although parents no longer come into the setting, they use an online communication tool to share information. They have instant access to their child's key person, pictures of their child's day and highly detailed information about how care needs are met. Staff have maintained highly effective ways to help new children settle into the nursery. Children in every room of the nursery show they feel safe and secure, and this has an incredible impact on their confidence and ability to learn.

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

- The extensive and varied curriculum promotes all aspects of learning extremely well. Staff embrace children's own ideas and interests and experiences are highly engaging, particularly outdoors. Babies crawl outside as soon as they arrive and are excited to explore gloop. They are fascinated as they take off their own shoes and socks to use their toes. Toddlers take turns to fill and empty containers with the large hose as they distribute water to their friends. Older children show exceptional levels of concentration and perseverance as they join in a Spanish lesson. They delight in finding objects to match the colour names spoken to them in Spanish and make outstanding effort to pronounce and copy the language.
- The expectations of children's achievement are high and children are visibly delighted with what they manage to do. Toddlers use tools outdoors and know how to hold the saw to cut firewood effectively. They recognise when they are able to use this skill again to cut the chocolate for their bananas and proudly show staff. Older children use problem-solving skills and share ideas as they make their dough independently, following a written recipe. They talk to staff

about what has happened to their mixture and experiment using different ways to correct it. Children make rapid progress in speaking skills, which staff encourage at every opportunity. Children's vocabulary is continually extended, for example using the term, 'liquid', when they describe how the chocolate has melted.

- The bonds between staff and children are very close and provide children with a sense of belonging and family. Older children demonstrate an advanced awareness of their own emotions. They share their reasons why they have chosen the colour and emotion, discussing an extensive range of feelings, including love, anger, excitement and sadness. Toddlers collect their own photographs and stick them on the wall under their key-person's picture. Staff know how to meet their care needs exceptionally well and provide calm, nurturing environments for them. Staff prepare experiences based on information gathered from children's parents to help them feel excited when they attend.
- Children have an excellent understanding of what it means to be healthy, safe, and independent. Toddlers show confidence in their own ability as they wash their hands, telling their friends they 'need to wash the bubbles off so all the germs have gone'. They tell staff they can call the fire brigade if their campfire is out of control and show pride in 'helping' staff to wash their hands properly, offering them soap. Older children delight in watering the fresh produce grown in their garden and enjoy using this for their healthy snacks. They talk extensively about how things grow and the different types of seeds they have planted.
- Staff are highly skilled in a wide range of different areas and managers inspire them to continuously reflect on the impact of their practice for children. For example, the special educational needs leader has developed a tracking tool to celebrate all achievements and improve the information they provide when children move on to school. Teachers say they know children much better when they start school. Staff are highly skilled and their support helps those children with special educational needs and/or disabilities to achieve well. Staff who work with older babies have been successful in creating an environment that is calm. This has had a positive impact on children's behaviour and emotional well-being.
- Staff build really strong relationships with parents. Parents speak very highly of the staff, and how proud they are to be part of the 'Forest Friends Family'. They are extremely pleased with the high levels of care and the development their children make. They credit this to the 'wonderful, nurturing, child-led environment'. Staff say they feel very grateful to be here with this team of 'inspiring' practitioners.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff are highly vigilant and know how to identify and respond to concerns swiftly. The safeguarding lead is highly experienced and has an extensive knowledge of the local area and the families in her care. She provides consistent

support to all staff and ensures that children's safety and well-being are prioritised. Parents and staff are provided with a wealth of information on how to keep children safe. The manager follows robust procedures to help ensure staff are suitable to work with children. Children learn how to keep themselves safe and assess risks really well.

Setting details

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| Unique reference number | EY560246 |
| Local authority | Stockton-on-Tees |
| Inspection number | 10191017 |
| Type of provision | Childcare on non-domestic premises |
| Registers | Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register |
| Day care type | Full day care |
| Age range of children at time of inspection | 0 to 12 |
| Total number of places | 60 |
| Number of children on roll | 129 |
| Name of registered person | Forest Friends Childcare Ltd |
| Registered person unique reference number | RP560245 |
| Telephone number | 07396073783 |
| Date of previous inspection | Not applicable |

Information about this early years setting

Forest Friends Childcare registered in 2018. It is situated in a private space within Marsh House Community Centre in Billingham. The nursery employs 21 members of childcare staff. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The manager has a level 4 childcare qualification and eight staff members have a relevant early years degree. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round, with the exception of bank holidays and two weeks at Christmas. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two, three- and four-year-old children. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities attend.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Michelle Lorains

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the setting and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the setting.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact this has on children's learning. She discussed children's learning and development with the staff team and nursery manager.
- The inspector held a discussion with the manager and deputy manager, in relation to the leadership and management of the nursery. She looked at relevant documentation, such as evidence of recruitment, staff's qualifications and their suitability to work with children.
- A joint observation was completed by the inspector and nursery manager during an outdoor activity.
- The inspector spoke to parents and carers on the day of inspection to obtain feedback. The Early Years Officer from the local authority provided additional written feedback for the inspection.

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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