

Inspection of Churchwood Forest School

Churchwood Valley, Wembury, Plymouth, Devon PL9 0DZ

Inspection date: 3 November 2021

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
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 thrive in this exceptionally nurturing and stimulating environment. Young children settle quickly and staff are attentive to their individual needs. Children develop high levels of confidence and independence as they safely explore the wealth of opportunities for outdoor learning. They follow familiar routines and are eager to play and learn. For instance, children make nests for toy birds, build dens and use a range of tools purposefully. Staff encourage children to keep trying when they find something difficult and they praise children frequently for their persistence. Consequently, children are highly motivated and extremely proud of their achievements.

Children's behaviour is exemplary and they happily take turns and share with others. They demonstrate respect and kindness for one another and for the natural world. They listen and respond to instructions very well and show a good understanding of how to stay safe in the environment. Leaders and staff have very high expectations for all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and they support them extremely well to make very good progress. As a result, children are very well equipped for school and later learning.

Leaders have introduced some changes as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, children are dropped off by their parents at the entrance of the forest school. Staff and parents report that children are more independent as a result of this change.

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

- The passionate leaders have designed an inspirational curriculum for the children. They are highly ambitious about providing outdoor education, which supports children in all areas of their learning. All staff have an excellent understanding of child development and teaching is of a consistently high standard. Staff get to know the children very well and use their interests to plan new and exciting opportunities to extend their learning.
- Children have ample opportunities to develop their physical skills. Young children learn to confidently navigate the woodland area as they balance and climb. They learn to take appropriate risks as they use rope swings safely. They use wheelbarrows to transport materials on the site and help to construct new and exciting things to play with. For instance, they helped dig and create a pond to encourage new wildlife.
- Children make excellent progress in their language development. They are confident speakers and they join in with songs and stories with enthusiasm. Staff ensure children have access to a range of books and they read to them regularly. Children are rapidly learning new vocabulary. For example, they know

that spiders are arachnids and not insects.

- Children frequently use problem-solving skills in their play. Staff use effective questioning to help children explain their ideas. For instance, they decide where to attach a flag to make a pirate ship and to adjust the height of a hammock. They are developing a secure understanding of number as they count the things they see around them.
- Staff teach the children how to keep themselves safe and healthy. Children learn about the site boundaries, fire safety, how to use tools and to recognise things they must not touch, for example mushrooms. Children wash their hands independently and they eat healthy and nourishing food, which gives them the energy they need to be physically active.
- Staff support the children to understand and respect the environment and to care for living things. Children kindly care for bugs they find and they notice the changes in the seasons. Staff teach the children about different cultures and beliefs. They promote equality and children are supported to understand what makes them unique.
- Partnership with parents is very effective. Parents are highly complimentary of the setting and they value the wonderful experiences their children have. Staff provide detailed accounts based on their secure understanding of each child's progress and parents report that they are very well informed.
- Leaders continually strive to improve the quality of the provision. They ensure a high ratio of staff who are well trained and supported. The staff team are all extremely committed and they are encouraged to share their ideas as they continue to develop the forest school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Children's safety and well-being are given the highest priority. Leaders ensure the staff are well trained to identify and act on any concerns about a child's welfare. They are confident in recognising the signs that may indicate a child is at risk from harm and how to report them. When recruiting new staff, leaders follow a thorough process to ensure staff are suitable for their roles. Staff are trained to give first aid. They respond quickly to identify and remove any potential hazards and they ensure the site is safe and secure at all times.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2525174
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10204334
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 at time of inspection	2 to 5
Total number of places	15
Number of children on roll	23
Name of registered person	Draper, Emma
Registered person unique reference number	2525173
Telephone number	07833133435
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Churchwood Forest School registered in 2019. It operates from Churchwood Valley Holiday Park, near Wembury in Devon. The setting provides outdoor education Monday to Thursday from 8.30 am to 4pm term time only. There are six members of staff employed to work with the children. One member of staff holds early years professional status, two hold qualified teacher status and one staff member holds an early years qualification at level 3. Two members of staff are unqualified.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Den Russell

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection of the setting since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the setting.
- The owner, manager and the inspector went on a learning walk across all areas of the forest school and discussed how the early years provision and curriculum is organised.
- The manager and the inspector jointly observed and evaluated an activity.
- The manager and the owner discussed the leadership of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector spoke to children and parents to gather 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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