

Inspection of Clare's Little Bears - Forest Pre School

Pin Green Adventure Play Ground, Webb Rise, Stevenage, Hertfordshire SG1 5QU

Inspection date: 23 June 2022

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

Children quickly engage in their play as they explore the enticing forest school environment. They happily investigate the woods, with support from the kind and caring staff. Children seek staff out for comfort, enjoying stories and cuddles. They demonstrate a positive attitude as they excitedly engage in forest school activities. For example, they happily sing songs together as they make bananas from sticks and yellow string. Children interact and engage well with others. They learn to wait patiently for their turn as they practise jumping off tree stumps and climbing ropes.

Children benefit from a language-rich environment. They have ample opportunity to engage regularly in conversation with adults and their peers. Together they make comparisons about animals that live in the woods and the rainforest. Children learn new vocabulary, such as 'toucan' and 'anaconda', and talk about the habitats they live in. This helps children gain an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the world. Children learn to listen to one another and wait for their turn to talk. For example, during circle times, children pass the 'talking feather' to each other and learn when it is their turn to talk or listen. This helps children to feel valued and heard.

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

- The managers lead a motivated staff team. They use an effective programme of supervision to ensure staff's ongoing suitability for their role. Staff undertake essential training towards their roles and responsibilities. Apprentices say that they feel well supported. Additional funding is used well and allows children to attend the pre-school more often.
- Children's behaviour is good. Staff are excellent role models. They teach children the pre-school rules and explain why they are important. For example, children learn to not walk through the 'fire circle' or eat berries they may find around the woods. Staff reinforce children's learning through games and activities, using resources to support their understanding. Children are confident to remind each other of how many are allowed on the climbing ropes at a time.
- The curriculum has a clear focus on children's personal and emotional development. Staff support children to separate from their parents through effective settling-in periods. They work closely with parents to ensure they have a good understanding of children's home lives and how best to support them. While staff provide children with a broad curriculum of opportunities, they do not focus effectively on children's individual development journey consistently. This means some children are not always challenged to their fullest potential.
- Children learn to be healthy as they wash their hands for snack times. While children learn routines well, staff do not always recognise when children could

do more for themselves independently. For example, children do not pour their own drinks or cut up their own fruit.

- Children access books throughout the day. They spend time under cosy canopies looking at books independently. Staff tell stories throughout the day as they sit for food times. Children are taught early mathematical concepts. Younger children count as they jump up and down in puddles, while older children use sticks and stones to weigh and measure. Children learn to make marks, using natural materials found in the woods. They use mud paints and charcoal gathered from the extinguished fire pit to draw with. Children use chalks to decorate the environment with pictures of animals and insects they see in the woods in which they play.
- Parents are extremely positive about the pre-school and staff. They say that their children are very happy to attend the pre-school. They appreciate the regular photos of their children's day through the online communication methods. Parents say that they are pleased that staff help children open their minds to the world beyond technology. They talk about how their children overcome fears of insects and learn to care for nature and wildlife. Each child's key person reports to parents about children's developmental progress and make suggestions as to how this can be continued at home.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities to safeguard children. They are aware of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse and how to report their concerns. Staff are confident to talk to the designated safeguarding lead if they feel a child is at risk of harm. The management team ensures staff keep their knowledge up to date with regular online and in-house training, which helps widen their knowledge about safeguarding issues. Staff teach child how to use tools safely during forest school sessions. Children learn to keep themselves safe and manage risks.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- review the planning and delivery of activities to focus precisely on individual children's learning and development and offer them even more challenge
- make the most of opportunities during routines and activities to enable children to develop their independence further.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2556613
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10215814
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 4
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	14
Name of registered person	Cole, Clare Louise
Registered person unique reference number	RP903100
Telephone number	07917363980
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Clare's Little Bears - Forest Pre School registered in 2019 and is situated in Stevenage, Hertfordshire. The pre-school operates term time only, from 8.30am to 2.30pm. The pre-school employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Rachael Small

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The deputy manager and the inspector had a learning walk together and discussed how the curriculum is organised.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities outdoors and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector took time to speak to parents, children and staff at appropriate times and considered their thoughts and views.
- The inspector took part in a joint observation with the pre-school deputy manager and discussed the intent and impact of the activity.
- A leadership and management discussion was held between the inspector and the manager, where relevant documents were reviewed, including safeguarding policies and recruitment processes.

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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