

Inspection of Acorn Forest Schools Holiday Club

Salcey Forest, Wootton Road, Hartwell, Northampton NN7 2HX

Inspection date: 25 July 2022

**The quality and
standards of early
years provision**

**This
inspection**

Met

Previous
inspection

Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

This provision meets requirements

This holiday club is a special place to be. When children arrive, they wave enthusiastically to their friends and greet them with open arms. For children when it is their first day, staff sensitively support them by holding their hand and explaining what is happening now and what will happen next. Children settle quickly and take part in team games before walking down to the forest area. They know the expectations very well. For example, children explain to visitors to the setting that they must not walk inside the fire pit area, and must walk around the outside of the tree stumps and logs.

The environment is harmonious. All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) work well together as a team. They negotiate roles together effectively. For example, they decide who will hold the string tight and who will attempt to tie the knot to a log, when making a tent using a tarpaulin. Later, older children help those younger than themselves on the rope swing. They explain how to put their foot in the loop and check with their friends that they are not pushing them too high. Children are polite at all times. At snack time, children tuck into hot chocolate and marshmallows. As staff hand them their cup of hot chocolate, children say, 'Thank you,' without being prompted.

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

- Staff find out all about children before they start at the club. They ask parents what children's likes and dislikes are. This helps staff to support children to build positive relationships when they start at the club. Staff know in great detail about children's individual needs, especially those with SEND. They tailor activities towards children's individual needs.
- Staff support children to take managed risks exceptionally well. For example, four-year-old children confidently use vegetable peelers to whittle sticks. They tell visitors they have to hold the peeler in the hand they pick up their pencil with. Children explain they have to push the peeler away from them. Staff supervise children closely and intervene when needed.
- Staff provide many opportunities for children to develop their understanding of healthy lifestyles. Four-year-old children independently fetch their sun cream out of their bag when the weather becomes warmer. They confidently explain they do not want their skin to burn. Children experience cooking on an outside fire pit. They learn about all different foods by cooking nachos, cheese fondue and toast. Staff support children who have individual food allergies well, by having clear procedures in place to prevent cross-contamination.
- Parents are extremely happy with the provision offered. Many parents travel a considerable distance so their children can attend the club, because of how

much they enjoy it. They say their children's confidence has grown considerably since attending. Parents say the communication from staff is excellent and they receive photos throughout the day of what their children have been doing.

- Staff supervise children very effectively throughout the day. They communicate with each other constantly to ensure all staff know how many children are present. Staff take every opportunity to engage with children positively. They join in with children when they show staff a treasure map they have made. Staff enthusiastically go with children to try to find the treasure. Children actively seek out staff to share their experiences with.
- Staff provide a vast range of opportunities for children to be creative. Children spend sustained periods of time making a bow and arrows. Staff support children when needed. Children are delighted when they succeed. They exclaim, 'look how far the arrow went!' and show a beaming smile. Later, children play imaginatively with their friends using woodland animal puppets.
- The management team is passionate about the provision it offers. The team want to continually improve. Staff have regular appraisals and are supported well to identify their strengths and any areas for development. The management team checks regularly on staff well-being and provides additional support if needed. When new staff join the club, robust recruitment procedures are in place.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a secure understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse. They know how children may present if their welfare is at risk. Staff know the signs that may indicate a child is at risk from extremist views or behaviours. They are aware of who the designated safeguarding lead staff member is to report their concerns to. Staff are confident that they would pass on any of their worries. They attend safeguarding training regularly to ensure their knowledge is kept up to date. Staff supervise children very closely. They ensure unknown adults cannot come into unsupervised contact with children.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2539107
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10215303
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Out-of-school day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	4 to 14
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	153
Name of registered person	Acorn Early Years Foundation
Registered person unique reference number	RP901362
Telephone number	07872470266
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Acorn Forest Schools Holiday Club registered in 2019. It is managed by the Acorn Early Years Foundation. It operates from Salcey Forest, Northamptonshire. The club employs four members of staff. Of these, all hold appropriate qualifications between level 3 and level 6. The club opens from Monday to Thursday, during school holidays only. The opening hours are 8.30am until 4.30pm.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Emily Lofts

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 inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The inspector observed the interactions between the staff and children.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

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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