

Inspection of The Woodyard Nursery

Church Road, Ashburnham, Battle, East Sussex TN33 9NU

Inspection date:

15 September 2022

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

The Woodyard Nursery is an awe-inspiring outdoor nursery where all children flourish. The nursery is a safe, well-organised place for children to learn. Children thrive here because staff care about them and provide stimulating learning experiences for them to explore. For example, children explore the woodland for animal homes and then create their own using clay and natural resources. Staff want the very best for all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Staff give the development of children's communication and language a very high priority. Opportunities for talking and listening are weaved through the curriculum, and children enjoy joining in with stories and songs. Staff use props and photos to spark conversations and introduce new words. For example, they talk about what seeds need to grow.

Children behave exceptionally well in this calm environment. They enjoy warm, supportive relationships with the staff and with one another. Staff are wonderful role models for children and make the most of every opportunity to promote children's personal and social skills. For example, they use phrases like 'good teamwork' when two children push the heavy wheelbarrow up a steep slope. Children are incredibly keen to work together.

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

- Children's communication and language develop quickly. They show a deep love of reading. They listen attentively to stories being read aloud and are completely engrossed. Children get opportunities to use props for storytelling, for example a picnic basket and blanket to take outdoors. They enjoy telling stories, showing they have understood the conventions of the language of stories. For example, children retell familiar stories, repeating phrases and running their fingers along the text as they read.
- Children gain a deep understanding of why it is important to lead a healthy lifestyle in this outdoor setting. They enjoy a range of healthy snacks, including apples picked straight from the tree. At lunchtime, the children talked about the vegetables they were eating. Children spend time planting, growing, harvesting and cooking the fruit and vegetables. All these rich experiences give staff excellent opportunities to talk about healthy foods.
- Partnerships with parents are extremely strong. Staff get to know each child and their family individually so that everyone feels that they belong. Parents are full of praise for the nursery and understand that the range of experiences their children have ensure they are ready for their next stage. They attend regular parents' evenings with the children and enjoy time learning together in this

special place. One parent summed up the views of many, saying, 'I wish I could attend too.'

- Dedicated and passionate staff want every child to enjoy learning and achieve well. The nursery is thoughtfully organised to promote children's learning, language and independence. Consequently, children flourish. They are curious, highly motivated and genuinely eager to explore and learn. For example, new children are encouraged and supported to climb up to the slide using the tree roots as a ladder. This teaches children to manage risks and keep themselves safe as they explore the forest.
- Children's understanding of the world is impressive. Children have detailed knowledge of the birds and animals who live in the woodland. Their understanding of natural processes, such as growth and decay, is also sophisticated. This is because they are continually talking about the real and meaningful activities they undertake. While eating together, a child welcomed a robin with the phrase, 'Good morning, Mr Robin. How are you today?' On another occasion, the children talked about nocturnal animals.
- Leaders have expert knowledge on how children learn and use this to sequence the curriculum effectively to create a deep and meaningful understanding of life cycles. For example, children visit the owl's nest to count the eggs each year and watch the combine harvester in the field as it harvests the crops.
- The nursery provides many opportunities that support children's wider development and knowledge of the world beyond the forest. Children made a scarecrow for the town's 'Scarecrow Safari' to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee. Recently, they were visited by the neighbours, who joined them in a fire circle and a lunch prepared by the children which was cooked on the wood burner in the yurt. Staff also provide opportunities for families from other countries to share food and music with the children.
- This family-run nursery is led and managed exceptionally well. The manager has a clear and precise vision for the nursery and strives for excellence throughout.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding at the nursery. Staff receive training and regular safeguarding updates and keep a close eye on any local issues. They know what signs to look for if they have concerns about a child and what to do if they are concerned about a child's welfare. The manager makes sure that vulnerable children and families receive the support they need. Leaders ensure that detailed risk assessments are in place and, as a result, staff can use the forest throughout the year.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2550206
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10221562
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	3 to 3
Total number of places	16
Number of children on roll	20
Name of registered person	The Farmyard Nursery Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP551030
Telephone number	01424 893366
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

The Woodyard Nursery registered in 2019. It operates within the grounds of The Farmyard Nursery. It is open from 8.15am to 4.15pm, each weekday, throughout the year. The nursery receives funding to provide free early education for children aged three and four years. There are three members of staff, all of whom hold a relevant level 3 childcare qualification or above.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Jo Gunne

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery 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 nursery.
- The forest school lead and the inspector had a learning walk together and discussed how the curriculum is organised in this unique environment.
- The inspector carried out joint observations with both the manager and forest school lead, taking time to discuss the quality of teaching observed.
- The inspector asked staff questions throughout the inspection to establish their understanding of how to safeguard children and how they assess and plan for children's learning.
- The inspector observed interactions between the staff and children and considered the impact on children's learning.
- The inspector sampled documentation, including staff qualifications and evidence of paediatric first-aid training.

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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