

Inspection of Great Wood Farm Early Years Centre

Greatwood Farm, Ponton Road, Boothby Pagnell, Grantham, Lincs NG33 4DH

Inspection date: 2 May 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

The experience that children get at the setting varies between the different ages. Some younger children do not receive the same quality experience throughout the day. At times, children under two spend time unable to settle and upset as staff are busy completing other daily tasks and do not provide them with the reassurance they may need in a timely manner. That said, children are independent and are keen to try things for themselves.

Older children develop extensive physical skills and determination through the many daily experiences staff provide, such as exploring the forest. Children learn how to keep themselves safe while climbing on different logs and trees and balancing on uneven surfaces. Staff help children to develop their imagination. Children listen carefully to staff as they discuss making a mud cake and confidently share their ideas about it being a birthday cake for a frog. Children giggle as they put sticks in as candles and sing 'Happy Birthday'.

Children have close relationships with staff and develop firm friendships with other children. They share and negotiate the use of resources without needing any support from staff. At snack time, staff praise pre-school children as they pass the jug of milk to each other and make sure there is enough for everyone. Children demonstrate their manners by saying 'thank you' to one another. Young children explore the environment and find different age-appropriate resources to engage with. However, some staff lack the skills to interact with them in a way that helps them to learn and develop the skills and knowledge they could during play.

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

- Staff plan activities based on children's interests, and children show high levels of concentration. Staff play alongside children to find out what skills and knowledge they have. Staff use this information to plan what children need to learn next. They also focus on helping children develop a love of the outdoors and how to respect the environment.
- When children choose their own play, most staff interact in a way that helps them to build on what they know and can do. Staff help children to create different patterns with large magnets and discover how to build towers with them. However, at times, staff who work with the youngest children do not recognise which children need further support to get the most from their play. Therefore, at times, some young children find it hard to engage in play and stand unoccupied.
- Most staff help children to learn through familiar daily routines, such as explaining why children need to wash their hands before eating. However, staff working with the youngest children change the routine without preparing the

children. They take snack outside, but do not position themselves to be able to offer children the support they need or explain to children what they need to do. Children become confused and keep getting up to walk around with their crackers and milk until the manager steps in to support them.

- Staff support children to learn how to keep safe when using equipment. They teach them how to put helmets on to protect themselves when learning to ride a bicycle. Staff encourage children to use cutlery to eat their dinner and discuss with them what makes their meal healthy.
- Staff develop children's love of stories and their confidence in speaking and communicating their thoughts. They encourage children to listen to a variety of books and retell their own story using key words and phrases they learn. Staff support them to use new vocabulary and learn how their spoken words can be written on paper, including different sounds represented by letters. They encourage children to develop their pencil skills by drawing a picture for their story and sharing this with their friends.
- The leadership team reflects together to plan how to improve the setting and experiences for children. Leaders have clear processes for identifying what individual staff need support with and put this into place in a timely manner. However, the quality of leadership at room-leader level is not yet consistent, particularly for less-experienced room leaders. Although all room leaders are provided with training opportunities to develop their leadership skills, this is not yet effective at raising the quality of practice and deployment of staff in some rooms.
- Parents and carers are extremely complimentary about the communication and guidance staff provide. They comment that the setting is incomparable and children are blossoming with staff's support.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff and leaders have a thorough understanding of their responsibilities in keeping children safe. They attend regular training to keep their safeguarding knowledge up to date. Staff and leaders know the families and children very well. They demonstrate a good understanding of the signs and symptoms that a child may be at risk of harm. Staff and leaders are confident in recording and reporting any concerns to the relevant professionals. Leaders have a thorough recruitment procedure and continuously monitor the suitability of all staff. The site is secure and has clear visitor procedures. Staff check the environment regularly to ensure it is a safe place for children to play.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due date
deploy staff to support all children's needs consistently.	05/06/2023

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

- provide staff working with the youngest children with further support to be able to recognise and make the most of learning opportunities
- embed further the professional development that room leaders are provided with to improve the consistency of leadership skills and ability.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY545446
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10284682
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 9
Total number of places	154
Number of children on roll	174
Name of registered person	Great Wood Farm Early Years Centre Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP545445
Telephone number	01476 585584
Date of previous inspection	11 June 2019

Information about this early years setting

Great Wood Farm Early Years Centre registered in 2017 and is located in Boothby Pagnell, Grantham. The nursery employs 47 members of childcare staff. Of these, 29 hold at least a level 3 qualification, including the manager, who has early years professional status. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm, all year round. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It has adopted the forest school ethos.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lora Teague

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 manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the nursery.
- The manager and the inspector conducted a learning walk together, discussing the learning intention for children and how the environment is arranged.
- The manager and the inspector observed and evaluated an activity.
- The inspector observed staff and children of all ages throughout the nursery.
- The inspector held discussions with staff and leaders regularly during the inspection.
- Parents' and carers' views were taken into consideration.
- A sample of documents was reviewed, including paediatric first-aid certificates, suitability checks, and safeguarding policies and procedures.

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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