Inspection of Filthy Squirrels Woodland Nursery

The Threshing Barn, Manor Farm, Fifield Bavant, Broad Chalke, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP5 5HT

Inspection date: 9 May 2023

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 show immense levels of excitement as they arrive. Highly enthusiastic and nurturing staff welcome them. Children flourish as they embrace the enriching and ambitious curriculum that has their emotional development at its heart. Expert staff know children extremely well. They have high expectations for every child.

Children's ideas and voices are valued. Staff deliver a vast range of learning opportunities led by children's imaginations. For example, children's current fascination in bees leads to a hunt for hidden bowls of pretend nectar in the forest. Children display exceptional behaviour and cooperation as they work together at this task. They are highly enthused and resilient as they persist at the physical challenge of operating syringes to draw up liquid. When they succeed, they beam with pride and teach others how to manipulate the syringes. Children transport the liquid to measuring containers. Here, they independently measure it, developing their mathematical skills. Children demonstrate their extraordinary vocabulary as they use language such as 'I am a nectar detector and pollinator,' as part of their imaginary play. They make rapid progress in all areas of their development in this exceptional setting, and they are making the best possible start in their education.

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

- Children learn to be imaginative with creative staff as their role models. Children announce, 'This is special pollen; it turns you into a bee!' The forest echoes with laughter and happiness as staff play along, pretending to be bees.
- The manager maintains an inspiring setting for all. Staff remark on their high levels of morale. The manager values her staff and is attentive to their well-being. She carries out regular supervision sessions and writes staff letters to thank and applaud their ideas and hard work. This massively impacts on the positive atmosphere in the setting for children.
- A sense of belonging among families, children and staff is a priority here. Children are welcoming and inclusive. For example, when preparing for lunch, they count out plates, ensuring that everyone has one. Staff use a range of approaches to foster children's appreciation of themselves as unique and special. Children's photos appear in signs around the setting. Children relish pointing these out and sharing them with others.
- Children are confident communicators and have a thirst to learn. Staff stimulate children's curiosity. Together, they observe how a worm moves. Staff encourage children's thinking through questions, such as 'What do worms help do?' Children confidently answer, demonstrating the knowledge they have retained. Staff use the term 'whopper' to describe the size of the worm. Children check their own understanding of vocabulary as they ask for its definition. Staff praise children's inquisitiveness. As a result, children learn to use questioning as a tool

for their learning.

- Parents report that the setting feels like an 'extended family'. They describe the extraordinary opportunities the staff provide that include them in their children's learning. For example, staff organise home activity packs, parent social meetings, training sessions and family events such as woodwork workshops. Parents share how they delight in receiving information about their children's learning and development in the form of letters addressed to their children. They share that they feel these are written with genuine kindness and love from staff.
- Staff are passionate and committed to continuously advancing their practice. They constantly reflect and take every opportunity possible to evolve. They complete a range of training and use it to better their provision. For example, training in signing has led to the introduction of Makaton and visual aids that all children can use to aid communication and understanding. Training in yoga and how the brain works has helped staff to support children to learn about mindfulness and how to regulate their emotions.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager is dedicated to the safety and welfare of children in her setting. Staff are extremely vigilant, ensuring the environment is safe and secure. Children learn to risk assess for themselves. Staff provide clear messages around how to keep safe. Staff complete forest school first-aid and safeguarding training to ensure their knowledge is up to date. Staff have effective knowledge of how to safeguard children. They know how to identify signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect. They know the relevant agencies to report to if they have concerns.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2627541
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10280950
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 5
Total number of places	12
Number of children on roll	26
Name of registered person	Webb, Hilary
Registered person unique reference number	2627542
Telephone number	07825759551
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Filthy Squirrels Woodland Nursery registered in 2021. It is located in Fifield Bavant, in Wiltshire. It is open all year round, 8.30am until 5pm, Monday to Friday. The nursery provides funded early education for three-, four- and five-year-old children. A team of five staff works directly with the children, including the manager. Of these, one member of staff is a qualified teacher and forest school leader, one holds an appropriate childcare qualification at level 3, one is working towards a forest school leader qualification and one is working towards a childcare qualification.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Catherine Parker-Johns

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 manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the setting and discussed the curriculum.
- Parents, children and staff shared their views with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- A sample of relevant documentation was viewed by the inspector, including staff suitability checks and paediatric first-aid qualifications.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a physical activity with the manager.

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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