

Inspection of Forest Footsteps Childcare - Romsey Abbey

Romsey Abbey C Of E Primary School, Church Lane, Romsey SO51 8EP

Inspection date: 11 July 2023

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 separate from their parents with ease and confidently enter the building. Staff support children to settle and place a strong focus on their happiness. Children learn well, as staff provide a broad, ambitious curriculum and an environment that is inviting. For example, children play cooperatively together. They re-enact Christmas Eve and use accessible resources as 'presents'. Children take on different family roles in their imaginative play.

Children feel safe and secure, and behaviour is good. They understand the boundaries and rules. For example, during the forest school activity, children place cones around the perimeter of the wooded area. They confidently explain they must not go past these, and they can only explore within the enclosed area.

Staff use every opportunity to develop children's communication and language. They plan small groups effectively to focus on this. Staff encourage children to participate in Makaton signing and initiate discussions about holidays. All children take an active role in the groups. Children have access to a variety of books, both inside and out, and access the lending library. Consequently, they have the opportunity to continue to develop their communication and literacy skills with their parents at home.

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

- The manager has a clear vision for the setting, and staff work well together. Staff report that their well-being is good, and they know and understand their roles. Professional development is a key aspect, and staff regularly attend training to enhance their knowledge and skills. For example, some staff are forest school trained, and others are starting their training to enable them to be qualified.
- Staff provide a curriculum that builds on what children know and can do. They constantly review what they provide, based on assessments of children and their interests and needs. Staff encourage children to think for themselves. For example, they ask them how to make brown paint. Children suggest mixing the black and yellow colours, and staff follow the idea. Children confidently recall their experiences of watching a television programme about paint colours. As a result, they were able to share their knowledge with staff.
- Parents speak highly of the setting. Staff work closely with parents to understand, and provide for, their children's individual needs. Parents say they feel very well supported, and staff enhance all aspects of their children's development. They share how they like to look at the photographs on the online portal with their children. This enables them to talk about what they have been doing during the day.

- The manager and staff work in partnership with local schools and pre-schools. This helps to support children's ongoing development and transitions to the next stage of learning. They work closely with other professionals to target help effectively. Staff use funding well to support children and their families. As a result, all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, have their needs met well. All children make good progress from their starting points.
- Children's personal development is secure. They understand how to keep themselves healthy and are confident in the daily routines. For example, children regularly access the 'snuffle station', complete with mirror, tissues, and bin. Children understand the importance of washing their hands after blowing their noses. They also wash hands after playing outside, using the toilet, and before mealtimes. This helps children to understand the importance of personal hygiene.
- Children demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. For example, during forest school, they persevere in their quest to find bugs. Staff encourage children to view these closely under the magnifying glasses and talk about what they have found.
- There are clear routines throughout the day. However, occasionally, transitions between playtime and lunchtime are not fully effective. Staff sit all children down for story time, which creates a large group. Some children struggle to engage and do not show enjoyment in the story.
- Overall, children's creativity is well developed. They have access to outdoor play and to a variety of resources and activities. However, on occasion, staff do not offer encouragement to children to develop their own ideas during drawing activities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff recognise the possible signs and symptoms that indicate children may be at risk of harm or abuse. They know the procedures to report child protection concerns or allegations made against any adult working with children. Safeguarding is included on the agenda for team meetings, and staff undertake regular training. This helps to ensure their knowledge is current. The building is secure, and risk assessments are in place to support children's safety. Most staff hold paediatric first-aid certificates, which helps to ensure they know the procedures to follow in the event of an accident.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- improve the less effective elements of the daily routine to better support

children to engage in story times

- support staff in providing suitable creative activities that allow children to independently explore their own ideas.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2685075
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10300864
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 5
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	36
Name of registered person	Cuffley, Erin Christiane
Registered person unique reference number	RP551544
Telephone number	
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Forest Footsteps Childcare - Romsey Abbey registered in March 2022. It is based in Romsey Abbey School and is open from 8am to 4pm, term time only. It provides funded early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are eight staff working with the children. Of these, one holds an early years teacher qualification, one has early years professional status, one has a level 4 qualification, three hold a level 3 qualification, and one is unqualified.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lindsay Osman

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.
- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the setting and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of a group activity with the manager.
- 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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