

# Inspection of Keepers Gate Forest School

Field off Wentwood Drive, Weston super Mare, North Somerset BS24 9ND

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Inspection date: 21 September 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
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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 thrive in this exemplary outdoor setting. On arrival, they quickly become absorbed in activities that encourage creativity and curiosity. They investigate natural objects and raw vegetables to invent mud kitchen recipes. Children thoroughly enjoy their time here. They are extremely happy and their behaviour is exceptional. Children's emotional security is paramount. Staff have a skilful and sensitive approach to fostering children's self-esteem and pride. They are attentive and patient. Staff prioritise getting to know children and forming strong relationships with them. The atmosphere is exceptionally nurturing and inclusive. Children learn to celebrate their differences. Around the campfire, children and staff engage in group discussions. Children listen well to each other and show genuine kindness and consideration. Staff respond to children with respect and give them time to process language.

Children flourish through the carefully planned and ambitious curriculum. They embrace the awe and wonder of nature with support from highly knowledgeable staff. Children relish the adventure as they explore the forest with staff. They quickly develop confidence and their physical abilities to manoeuvre around the terrain. Children have a can-do attitude and learn to take safe risks. They embrace opportunities to solve problems. Children follow staff's example by helping and encouraging their friends to overcome obstacles and challenges. Children make extensive progress in their personal, social and emotional development from their starting points.

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

- Managers and staff implement high-quality visual group times. They use puppets and props to teach children about sharing. This captures children's attention and they focus intently. Staff carefully select stories and songs that incorporate valuable learning. They present these with passion and excitement. Children demonstrate that they are retaining learning. They confidently raise their hands to proudly answer questions. Children are extremely well prepared for their future learning and moving on to school.
- Managers provide extensive support for all children and their families throughout their time at the setting. This includes children who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff give close attention to children's non-verbal cues. They provide language to validate children's emotions. Managers work closely in partnership with parents and outside agencies to get children the support they need. Staff work tirelessly to support children's transitions from and to other settings. This is to ensure they have smooth transitions with minimal disruption to their learning.
- Staff excel at supporting children to advance their communication and language

development. Staff are mindful of their own use of language and ensure they do not over-question children. They consistently extend children's vocabulary. For example, children delight in finding a caterpillar in the forest. Staff pursue children's interests with enthusiasm. They help children to use technology to research the type of caterpillar. Children begin to take ownership of, and develop positive attitudes towards, their learning.

- Parents are especially praising of the teaching that staff deliver for their children. Parents share that staff recognise their children as individuals. They express that they appreciate the regular feedback on their children's progress. Parents value suggestions for how they can support learning at home. They report that their children fondly recall exciting experiences they have in the setting and that they sleep better after a day in the setting.
- The dedicated managers endeavour to find new ways to improve their already excellent practice. They evaluate what they deliver for their current children and consider how they can support them further. As a result, they have used funding for all staff to complete trauma training and training in autism. Staff are eager to learn and add to their knowledge. From training, they have learned to view behaviour as a form of communication. This has had a direct impact on the quality of their interactions with children.
- Staff report that they are exceedingly happy in their work. They share that they feel empowered working alongside the managers. This creates a culture of mutual respect where morale is high. Staff share that they believe this benefits their professional development. Managers strive to cascade their knowledge and expertise as they work. This enables children to receive the best possible learning experiences.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Managers embed the importance of everyone's role in safeguarding children. They use team meetings to regularly discuss safeguarding scenarios. As a result, staff have a firm knowledge of the signs of abuse. Staff have a robust knowledge of procedures to follow if they have a concern about a child or the conduct of another staff member. Managers use safer recruitment procedures to ensure all staff are suitable to work with children. Managers and staff complete thorough risk assessments to ensure the areas children access in the forest are safe and secure.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	2654452
<b>Local authority</b>	North Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	10308734
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	2 to 11
<b>Total number of places</b>	24
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	24
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Keepers Gate Forest School LTD
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	2654450
<b>Telephone number</b>	07826965258
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable

## Information about this early years setting

Keepers Gate Forest School registered in 2021 and is situated in Weston-super-Mare. It operates from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday term time and during the holidays from 8am to 4.30pm. The setting employs seven staff, who have qualifications ranging from level 3 to level 6. It receives the early education funding for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Catherine Parker-Johns

## Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the managers and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The managers showed the inspector the setting and discussed how safety and suitability are assured.
- The managers and the inspector discussed how the curriculum is implemented and the impact that this has on children's learning.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities and assessed the impact on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke with parents and read written testimonies about their views of the setting.
- The inspector spoke with the children during the inspection.
- The inspector sampled key documentation made available at the inspection.

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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