

Inspection of Little Foxes Forest School

Locklaze Youth & Play Space, Romney Avenue, Bristol BS7 9TD

Inspection date: 12 October 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 are confident, and they settle quickly into their play environment. They know the staff very well and develop close and effective relationships with them. This helps them feel secure, welcome and well cared for. For example, young children comfortably settle on to staff's laps for cuddles, reading books together and talking about their day. Children freely explore and experiment throughout the natural and nurturing play environment. They show that they are confident to extend their physical skills through an abundance of positive experiences.

Children develop good and respectful relationships with their peers, supporting each other's learning by inviting others into their play. Staff celebrate children's uniqueness. For example, they use lots of visual picture prompts to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. Children learn about different festivals and cultures around the world. Staff recognise how each child learns. They provide a stimulating environment to support children to reach their full potential.

Staff are highly responsive and caring towards children. They show they are enthusiastic about providing children with a wealth of experiences that give them the best possible start in life. For example, staff teach children how to use real-life tools and equipment, such as hammers and nails. Children learn about safety and consequences in using tools properly.

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

- The leadership team is passionate about the care it provides. It is highly reflective and evaluates the provision very well. Staff speak highly of the leadership team and say they are very well supported in all aspects of the setting, such as with planning for the children and their professional development.
- Parents speak highly about the setting. They say how committed and friendly the staff are. Staff inform parents regularly about their children's development through regular newsletters, online tracking system and parents' evenings. Staff gather useful information when children start, so they understand children's needs through home visits.
- Staff know the children well. The manager, in partnership with the special educational needs coordinator, is proactive in seeking early help for children when needed. This helps to ensure that children make the best possible progress in relation to their individual starting points.
- Children have ample opportunities to build on core-muscle strength and develop good hand-eye coordination. They learn to balance on logs, walk through uneven surfaces, climb on branches and walk through the meadows. Children

have good opportunity to develop their early writing skills. For example, they use pens, paints and make marks in the play dough. Children develop a good understanding of the wider world as they learn about how to look after the outdoor environment.

- Staff promote healthy lifestyles. Children follow thorough hygiene routines and understand the importance of good handwashing in the woods. Children enjoy healthy hot meals in the woods and learn how to cook using the open fires. Staff teach children about staying safe outdoors. For example, children learn about fire safety and not to eat foliage they find. They dress themselves for outside play with little assistance from staff, developing a range of skills in readiness for starting school.
- Children develop a love of books, as they freely select books during play for staff to share with them. The highly qualified staff are enthusiastic and ask lots of questions during play, adding new vocabulary to develop children's speech and language skills. However, at times, staff do not allow enough time for children to think and consider their responses before asking the next question.
- Staff count objects with children and encourage some mathematical skills, such as counting sides on shapes. However, there is scope for staff to use more mathematical language throughout play to enable children to develop a deeper understanding of mathematical development.
- Children behave well together. They learn to share with each other. Staff adapt play to make sure that all children are included.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The staff ensure that children are safe. They have robust measures in place to ensure that outdoor activities are very well managed and follow strict safety measures. Staff have a good knowledge of the signs and symptoms of abuse. They know what to do if they have concerns about another member of staff. They know who to contact and what steps to take. Recruitment procedures are robust. Children learn to manage their own risk to help keep themselves safe. For example, they quickly learn that red stop hand signs mean they cannot enter and how to safely walk around uneven surfaces in the woods.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support staff to engage in open-ended questions and give children more time to consider their responses to questions before moving on, to enable children to develop their thinking skills and extend their communication skills even further
- introduce more mathematical language during play to enable children to gain a deeper understanding of mathematical skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2652715
Local authority	Bristol City of
Inspection number	10308713
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	59
Number of children on roll	74
Name of registered person	Little Foxes Forest School Partnership
Registered person unique reference number	RP553017
Telephone number	07522264599
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Little Foxes Forest School registered in 2021. It operates from a mobile building and a meadow in Bristol. There are 20 members of childcare staff. Of these, 12 hold an early years qualification at level 6, two hold a level 5 qualification and three hold a qualification in early years at level 3. The setting opens from Monday to Thursday during term-time only. Sessions are from 8am to 5.30pm. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three-, and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Tracey Cook

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 leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The inspector observed staff interactions with the children indoors and outdoors to assess the impact these have on children's development.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager, the staff and the children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at a sample of documents. This included evidence of suitability and training.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day of the inspection and through emails received to the setting.
- The inspector completed a learning walk across all areas of the setting and outside areas to understand how the provision is organised.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager to assess teaching standards.

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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