

Inspection of Outdoor Owls Cobham

Walton Firs Activity Centre, Convent Lane, Cobham KT11 1HB

Inspection date: 15 January 2024

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

The leadership team and staff have the highest aspirations for all children. They provide a highly ambitious curriculum that the knowledgeable and motivating staff implement extremely well. They are highly passionate about ensuring that children are given the best opportunities to develop, flourish as people and become well-balanced and happy individuals. Staff are exceptionally good at nurturing children and encouraging them to learn as they explore, engage and experiment outdoors. Children make excellent progress in their learning and development.

Staff make the most of simple, but enjoyable, activities to develop children's communication, critical thinking and problem-solving skills. For example, staff hang ice shapes with flowers frozen into them from branches. They also place pots of ice around the camp, such as near the fire, near the sitting logs and on a book stand. Staff encourage children to predict which ice might melt first and why. Children receive encouragement to compare ice sizes and locations and consider whether that changes their thoughts. Staff use activities and discussions to build on children's vocabulary and communication as they encourage them to talk through their thoughts. Children share tree names and describe the colours of their bark, and they investigate leaves and are eager to show what they have found with their friends. Staff incorporate a respect for the environment within these activities.

Children demonstrate that they are extremely happy in the company of their friends and the staff. They are highly respectful towards each other and considerate, even from a young age. Their behaviour is excellent, and any minor incidents are sensitively discussed and resolved. Children fully engage in the activities and resources around them, and they eagerly support their friends. For example, while a child climbs and balances on a low branch, he shares with his struggling friend how he could also do this by pointing out a branch to hold onto and how to safely place his feet.

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

- Leaders are inspirational and have an unwavering vision of what they want children to achieve. Children's well-being is at the heart of everything leaders do. They want children to engage, be inquisitive, learn to self-regulate and look fondly back on their childhood memories. Each child is recognised as a unique individual, and staff enthusiastically use their interactions to build on children's learning exceptionally well.
- The staff expertly provide a curriculum that is centred on engaging children in exploration and discovery. There is a strong focus on supporting children to lead their own play from an early age, giving them the tools to assess risks, develop a 'can-do' approach and become resilient. Staff use their knowledge and

interactions, along with books and online reference tools, with children to seamlessly promote all areas of learning. For example, collecting sticks and bark leads to a wealth of new vocabulary, construction projects, imaginative play and creative ways to make marks and draw in the dirt.

- Partnership with parents is exceptionally strong. Leaders clearly share with parents their aim to provide children with excellent outdoor experiences, to give them the best foundations for their future learning. Staff and parents talk daily and have an online app and 'family day' sessions where they talk and share information. Staff share detailed written activity ideas with parents so they can build on their children's learning at home. For example, they send out plans for what parents need for an ice activity, how they can make it, the questions they could ask their children and what learning they gain. They also include ways to extend or adapt the activity, which parents state they appreciate.
- Children skilfully use what they have learned from staff to manage their own risks. For example, on 'adventure walks', they learn to safely explore the natural world, building on their communication, physical and social skills by working together to achieve a goal. They confidently climb, learn to negotiate steep slopes and create their own fun by making 'snow angels' in the leaves. Children's personal experiences, such as snow sledging on holiday, are replicated with a bark sledge and the dirt 'snow' slope, much to their glee. They develop positive attitudes to learning while having fun, with enthusiastic staff facilitating this extremely well.
- Staff deploy themselves highly effectively, keeping in touch by walkie-talkie, to maintain safety and high-quality interactions with the children. Staff motivate children to learn and encourage them to participate in challenging experiences. Children concentrate intently as they cook their crumpets on the fire and then butter them. They share how they must walk behind the seating logs to keep their friends near the fire safe. Children confidently create chutes and share why pine cones move quicker down one chute than the other. Children have extensive opportunities to develop their physical skills as they negotiate obstacle courses, collect twigs and sticks and use scissors to cut leaves to create pictures.
- Staff are excellent role models, and children build exceptionally close bonds with them. Children are very kind and thoughtful and help their friends willingly. All children receive excellent support, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders and staff work very closely with parents and professionals to enable children to have the best experiences and enjoy the environment. Staff precisely identify any delay in development and target their support to close these gaps.
- Leaders continually reflect on the provision they provide and how they can enhance it. Staff receive consistent support and training, and their own professional development and personal well-being are given a high priority.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's

interests first.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2636916
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10304860
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	1 to 7
Total number of places	80
Number of children on roll	48
Name of registered person	Outdoor Owls Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	2555112
Telephone number	07584504320
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Outdoor Owls Cobham is an outdoor nursery based in Cobham, Surrey. It is open from 8am to 5.45pm, Monday to Friday, all year round. The nursery is in receipt of funding for children aged three and four years. There are 14 main staff and four bank staff. Of these, four hold qualified teacher status, one holds early years professional status, two hold a relevant level 6 qualification, one at level 3 and one at level 2. Several staff also hold forest school qualifications.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Anne Nicholson

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 camp and yurts and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children talked with the inspector and discussed their friends and what they like to do when they are at nursery.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with the registered individual about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with the manager.
- Parents shared their views of the nursery with the inspector in person and in written feedback.

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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