Inspection of Diggers Forest School Nursery

South Gardens, South Harting GU31 5QJ

Inspection date:	17 December 2024

Overall effectiveness	**Good**
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are immersed in nature throughout their day. They explore joyfully in the engaging outdoor learning environment. Knowledgeable practitioners warmly welcome children and their families. They begin meaningful conversations, and children explain how excited they are for the day ahead. Practitioners build close relationships with younger children. They provide comfort and support as children settle in. Children demonstrate that they feel comfortable and assured as they eagerly find their friends.

Children learn about the expectations of their behaviour and conduct. They demonstrate excellent knowledge of personal safety on their outings. For example, older children know to stop and wait at the 'stopping snail'. This is because practitioners prepare them with the knowledge they need to understand why boundaries are in place. Children behave well and consistently listen carefully to instructions.

Leaders prepare a curriculum that is ambitious and meaningful. Children benefit from engaging activities that have been thoughtfully prepared with children's interests in mind. For example, children enjoy using natural resources to make 'potions'. Practitioners provide them with fresh flowers and mixing bowls to encourage their creativity. Children use words such as 'beautiful' as they describe the flowers they add to their mixture.

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

- Children benefit from a range of learning experiences. For example, practitioners teach children to tie knots. Children learn this skill and practitioners support them to assemble their own rope swing in the forest. Practitioners are knowledgeable about the curriculum they deliver. They make careful use of assessment to ensure that any gaps in children's learning are promptly identified. Children make good progress.
- Communication is fostered by practitioners, and children readily engage in conversations. For example, children excitedly explain where they have been on their holiday and discuss what they know about volcanoes. Practitioners provide plenty of opportunities for children to explore new language. Children become confident communicators.
- Practitioners promote the development of children's physical skills. Children run, cycle, scoot and jump as they explore the different outside locations they have access to. Practitioners support children to build positive attitudes and resilience. For example, when children struggle to balance on climbing equipment, practitioners provide encouragement and motivate children to keep trying. Children try hard with their learning and are proud of their accomplishments.

- Routines are generally managed well. Older children move between activities with ease and independence. However, at times, practitioners become occupied by routines and other tasks for long periods. Consequently, children become less engaged, and interactions do not consistently focus children's attention on learning.
- Leaders plan a curriculum that increases children's understanding of the local community. For example, they organise visits from the local emergency services. This is to extend children's understanding of people who help us. Furthermore, practitioners share their knowledge about cultural traditions from the countries in which they were born. Children learn about the world around them.
- Practitioners explain how well supported they feel at the setting. They have access to well-being support as well as excellent professional development opportunities. Leaders strive to provide targeted training for practitioners to continually advance teaching practice. Monitoring of practitioners' performance is clear and supportive.
- Leaders build partnerships with other professionals that are involved in children's education. For example, they work closely with many of the schools that they expect children to transition to. This is to create a channel of communication to share information about children's progress and development. Through this, children benefit from a shared approach to their future education.
- Parents are very happy with the experiences their children get to enjoy. They speak highly of the leadership of the setting and know their child's key person well. Parents know where to find information that keeps them updated about children's current learning. Practitioners also invite parents regularly and discuss children's progress. Parent partnerships are strong.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen the organisation of routines to ensure that children consistently benefit from meaningful interactions that focus on learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY491076
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10372296
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	2 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	39
Name of registered person	Diggers Club Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP534729
Telephone number	01730825622 01730 826711
Date of previous inspection	10 April 2019

Information about this early years setting

Diggers Forest School Nursery registered in 2015. It operates from the Scout Hut in South Harting, near Petersfield, Hampshire. The provider employs eight members of staff. Of these, three hold qualifications between level 3 and level 4. One member of staff holds a level 6 qualification. The nursery is open Monday to Friday, from 8am to 5pm, all year round. The provider is registered to provide government funded early education to eligible children between the ages of one and four years old.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Nicola Houston

Inspection activities

- Leaders joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- Children spoke with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with the nominated 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 setting with the inspector.

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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