Inspection of Farm Friends

Home Farm, Condover, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY5 7BT

Inspection date:	16 July 2025

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

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children flourish in this exceptionally warm and welcoming family-run setting. Staff are highly dedicated and responsive to children's individual needs, placing them firmly at the heart of everything they do. From the moment children arrive, staff envelop them in a culture of care, positivity and high expectations. They expertly prioritise emotional well-being and respond with sensitivity and precision to each child's unique needs.

The highly effective curriculum places a strong emphasis on rich, outdoor learning experiences. Staff promote children's natural curiosity, growing independence and developing confidence through imaginative, stimulating and well-sequenced activities. They skilfully plan using children's interests and individual next steps. For example, babies enjoy water play. Staff introduce a variety of containers, enabling babies to develop fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination as they carefully work out how to transfer water from one container to another. Toddlers develop their imaginative and social skills as they role play in the home corner. They develop their emerging language skills as they make 'tea' and serve it to staff and friends. Pre-school children further develop their physical skills as they run and climb in the large, well-equipped outdoor play area. These enriching experiences result in consistently high levels of engagement. Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) receive exceptional support. The setting's inclusive ethos is embedded in all aspects of practice, with staff working closely with families and external professionals to identify needs early and implement effective, individualised strategies. All children make rapid and outstanding progress across all areas of learning and development.

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

- The leadership team shows a deep passion for the care and education children receive. Leaders actively support staff and give them the autonomy to make informed decisions and implement meaningful change. Leaders and staff constantly reflect on their practice and proactively seek ways to improve. The whole setting embraces a culture of continuous improvement. Leaders and staff actively engage in professional development such as a mathematics champion programme to further improve teaching and outcomes for children.
- The quality of teaching is consistently outstanding. Staff take great pride in the rich learning opportunities they provide, consistently designing exciting resources and meaningful experiences. Their interactions ignite children's curiosity, promote investigation and inspire imaginative thinking. Staff skilfully support children as they explore ideas and test their theories. For example, when making play dough, children of all ages receive tailored support. Each age group uses visual instructions suited to their developmental stage. Pre-school

children confidently follow the steps, measure ingredients, experiment with scents and colours and mix the dough to completion. This carefully structured activity builds on prior knowledge and deepens children's understanding through purposeful, hands-on learning.

- Communication and language development are a strength of the setting. Staff consistently engage children in high-quality interactions, modelling rich language, narrating play and asking open-ended questions that promote children's thinking and expand their vocabulary. Children demonstrate their understanding of language during play. For example, toddlers confidently repeat words like 'roll, roll' as they use rolling pins with dough. Throughout the setting, children respond with enthusiasm to songs, stories and rhymes. They eagerly copy actions, participate in storytelling and take great pride as they rehearse songs for an upcoming performance. As a result, children become confident communicators who listen attentively, express themselves clearly and develop a strong foundation for future learning.
- Practitioners support children's early social and emotional development exceptionally well. They consistently model exemplary behaviour and respect. Staff set clear and consistent expectations for all children. As a result, children behave exceptionally well. They feel secure and confident within familiar routines and respond positively to guidance. Staff use calm, positive reinforcement and engaging visual prompts to support children's understanding of behaviour. Children demonstrate a strong sense of responsibility, taking turns, sharing and using manners. These behaviours reflect the deeply embedded culture of respect and care throughout the setting.
- Healthy habits are firmly embedded throughout the daily routine. Children enjoy nutritious, home-cooked meals and healthy snacks. They take part in daily toothbrushing with enthusiasm, supported by songs and playful prompts that reinforce hygiene routines and promote independence. Activities such as dance sessions and regular outdoor play ensure children benefit from fresh air, physical activity and a strong understanding of well-being from an early age. As a result, children develop positive attitudes towards health and well-being and confidently take responsibility for their own self-care.
- Partnerships with parents are exceptionally strong. Families speak highly of the staff, environment and curriculum, often expressing deep appreciation for the care and dedication shown. Parents receive clear and consistent daily communication, both in person and through an online system that shares updates on their child's learning and development, including any home learning opportunities. Parents of children with SEND particularly value the team's commitment, noting that staff go above and beyond to provide tailored support.

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	EY303577
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10399227
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	68
Number of children on roll	90
Name of registered person	Farm Friends Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP910590
Telephone number	01743 874 277
Date of previous inspection	25 November 2019

Information about this early years setting

Farm Friends registered in 2005. The setting opens Monday to Friday from 7.30am until 6pm all year round, except for bank holidays and one week at Christmas. There are 25 members of childcare staff, including three at level 6 and 14 who hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The provider provides early years funding for all eligible children at the setting.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Sue Smith

Inspection activities

- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The deputy manager, trainee manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery 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 group activities with the deputy manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

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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