

Inspection of Forest Footsteps Childcare

2nd Ramalley Scout Headquarters, Ramalley Lane, Chandler's Ford, EASTLEIGH,
Hampshire SO53 1JG

Inspection date: 3 June 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy and content at this nurturing nursery. They receive warm welcomes on arrival from staff who check in with parents for any information they may need to know to support the day ahead. Children are eager to attend and quickly immerse themselves in a variety of activities and play experiences that staff carefully plan. This supports children to be excited and motivated to learn. Overall, staff deliver a broad and well-balanced curriculum. They plan stimulating activities that stretch children's individual learning, incorporating their own fascinations and in-the-moment curiosities. For instance, children excitedly learn about the life cycle of a butterfly, which staff intertwine into other activities. This helps to extend and embed children's learning.

Leaders and staff recognise the importance of developing secure bonds with children. As such, they work hard to get to know each child's unique characteristics, understand their unspoken cues and support their emotional well-being. As a result, all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), confidently seek out staff for support, reassurance and to share their own thoughts, ideas and needs. Staff are responsive and respectful of children. This helps children to feel valued, as they gain a positive sense of belonging.

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

- Passionate leaders understand the importance of developing a knowledgeable staff team. They ensure regular and effective staff supervision sessions are in place and are considerate of staff's personal well-being. Staff access an abundance of training to improve their own personal effectiveness, broaden their knowledge and to specifically support individual children they care for. This continually improves outcomes for all children.
- Overall, staff plan and implement meaningful and appropriately challenging learning experiences for children. The well-balanced curriculum on offer provides children with opportunities to practise and develop their skills in all seven areas of learning. Staff know the children well and precisely plan for their individual next steps. However, on some occasions, quieter children are not always supported to be fully engaged in the learning experiences on offer. This does not always fully support these children to make the best progress they are capable of.
- Children relish their forest school sessions, which support their confidence, resilience and understanding of the world around them. Staff ensure all children have access to these opportunities as well as trips into the local community. These first-hand experiences help children make real-life connections in their learning.

- Children's communication and language are of high importance. Staff skilfully adapt their communication methods dependent on children's personalities, ages and development stages. Younger children have opportunities to hear clearly spoken, repetitive language. Older children develop conversational skills as they confidently share their own thoughts and ideas. These opportunities enable all children to become confident communicators.
- The provision for children with SEND is strong. Staff have a secure understanding of the referral process to ensure children receive timely support when needed. They work closely with a range of external professionals and parents, recognising the importance of collaborative working. Children with SEND benefit from individual education plans to ensure all staff know how to precisely support children to meet their own personalised goals.
- Staff teach children how to keep themselves safe. For instance, when accessing forest school activities, children are taught how to use real tools safely. Staff give gentle reminders such as making sure sticks are held close to the ground so they do not accidentally hurt their friends. Children listen and respond well. Additionally, staff support children to learn about healthy lifestyles and positive self-care routines. However, leaders do not plan opportunities to help children learn about online safety when accessing devices at home. This does not support children's understanding of how to keep themselves safe when accessing the internet.
- Staff have high but appropriate expectations of children's behaviour. They are positive role models and apply a gentle and consistent approach as they help children learn and understand early behavioural expectations. This contributes to children's good behaviour as they play and explore harmoniously together.
- Successful partnership with families is of high importance. Staff ensure parents are well informed about their child's day and progress through a variety of communication methods. Parents are highly complimentary of the care and learning opportunities their children receive.

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 curriculum so it consistently meets the needs of all children, particularly those that are quieter, to ensure their learning is equally as purposeful
- provide opportunities in the curriculum to support children's understanding of

how to keep themselves safe when accessing the internet.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY551545
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10399075
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	30
Number of children on roll	44
Name of registered person	Cuffley, Erin Christiane
Registered person unique reference number	RP551544
Telephone number	07557346782
Date of previous inspection	19 November 2019

Information about this early years setting

Forest Footsteps Childcare registered in 2017. It operates from Ramalley Scout Headquarters in Chandler's Ford, Hampshire. The setting opens all year round, Monday to Thursday from 8am to 4pm and Friday from 8am to 2pm. It provides funded early education for children aged from nine months to four years. It employs 12 members of staff, 10 of whom hold relevant early years qualifications.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Natalie Moir

Inspection activities

- Leaders and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The nursery owner and the inspector carried out joint observations of children taking part in a forest school experience.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- Children spoke to the inspector.
- The inspector observed the interactions between the staff and children.
- Parents shared their views of the nursery 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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