

Inspection of Little Forest Pre-school

Corinthian Sports Club, Gay Dawn Farm, Fawkham, Longfield DA3 8LY

Inspection date: 8 May 2025

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 cared for by an enthusiastic and committed staff team. They are happy and are warmly greeted by friendly staff when they arrive. Staff work together and bring their knowledge of their key children to staff meetings. They identify if a child may need additional support from the outset, and they work very well with families and external agencies to ensure that all children progress in their learning. Staff take care to get to know every child well, including before they start, to ensure that they are fully included in what the nursery has to offer. Staff set high expectations for children's behaviour. Children are kind, helpful and respectful. They learn about feelings, boundaries and how their actions affect others. This fosters a culture of empathy and respect.

Children are curious and keen learners. They make good use of resources in the environment. For example, children take part in group activities using different-sized wooden rods to create a maze. Staff encourage children to compare the size and positioning of the rods. This supports children to widen their understanding of mathematical concepts. Children enjoy their time outside. They improve their physical skills, for instance by riding bikes around the forest area, and they get lots of fresh air and exercise. They also take part in bug hunts, counting how many bugs they see. The children work together to figure out where the bugs might be hiding, and they get excited when they spot bugs like woodlice, wasps and butterflies.

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

- Leaders are highly dedicated. They organise the environment effectively to encourage children to explore play in a natural and hands-on way. For example, children practise transferring liquid using pipettes and jars of water. By repeating these activities, children build their skills and use what they learn in new challenges.
- Children understand early mathematical ideas that match their age and stage. They take part in thoughtful conversations with staff about what they know. They explain their thinking clearly and talk confidently with adults and friends. For example, children complete threading activities that staff provide, demonstrating their ability to solve problems and create patterns.
- Children are given ample opportunities to develop their fine motor skills. Staff provide dough and pouring and filling activities to strengthen children's fine motor skills. However, at times, some staff are unclear how to use activities to support children to achieve the next steps in their learning. Consequently, sometimes, staff are not as confident to stretch children's thinking further during activities. This means children do not always benefit from experiences that build consistently on what they already know and can do.

- Children behave well and respond kindly to the adults who care for them. Staff teach children how to share and play together in a friendly way. Warm and trusting relationships help children feel safe and secure. For example, older children know how to use a sand timer to take turns with popular activities.
- Children choose activities with confidence and know staff are nearby to help. They enjoy a wide range of fun learning experiences that staff plan for them, both indoors and outdoors. For example, in the forest area, there are a variety of natural spaces to explore, such as a mud kitchen, digging areas and challenging terrain for bike riding.
- The pre-school has built strong partnerships with parents. Staff share important updates about children's development and often invite parents to give their views. Parents speak very highly of the pre-school and value the difference it makes to their children. For example, parents share positive comments such as, 'The pre-school has stolen my heart.'
- Staff well-being is given high priority. They work well together as part of a caring team, and they are enthusiastic and motivated. Leaders are committed and passionate about making improvements. They are developing systems to support staff's professional development. However, arrangements to monitor staff practice are not yet fully robust. Leaders do not always identify and address inconsistencies in staff's knowledge and skills swiftly, to help them provide consistently high-quality learning experiences for all children.
- Leaders know how to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. They quickly spot any needs and put helpful support in place. They use funding carefully to help each child, such as by providing sensory toys or physical development equipment.
- Staff place a strong focus on physical development. They give children lots of chances to build strength and coordination through outdoor play. Extra-curricular activities, such as dance sessions, support children's physical growth and help them gain key skills for future learning.

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 planning of activities so there is a sharper focus on the intentions for children's individual next steps in learning
- build on systems for monitoring and developing staff knowledge to support staff in delivering the curriculum even more effectively for all ages.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2723695
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10398412
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 5
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	54
Name of registered person	Little Forest Pre-school Limited
Registered person unique reference number	2723697
Telephone number	07871 142 233
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Little Forest Pre-School has been registered since 2023 and operates from the grounds of a sports club in Fawkham, Kent. The provision is open Monday from 8am to 1pm, and Tuesday to Friday from 8am to 5pm, for 51 weeks of the year for children aged between two and five years. The provider claims funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Laura Hodges

Inspection activities

- Parents provided their feedback about the setting to the inspector.
- The manager and the inspector conducted a learning walk together across all areas of the nursery and discussed the curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of education offered, both indoors and outdoors, and evaluated its impact on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector conducted a collaborative observation during circle time.
- The inspector spoke with staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The special educational needs coordinator and staff shared insights with the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector had a discussion with the leadership team regarding the leadership and management of the nursery.
- The inspector reviewed relevant documentation and assessed evidence regarding the suitability of staff working at the nursery.

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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