

Inspection of First Friends @ Wootey

Wootey Infant School, Wooteys Way, Alton GU34 2JA

Inspection date: 18 January 2022

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 eagerly take part in activities. For example, during the inspection, they developed physical control when they used cooking ladles and tweezers to explore and pick up puffed rice. They enjoyed posting cars down a cardboard tube and learned to identify the different colours of the cars.

Children confidently and enthusiastically initiate their own games. For instance, they thoroughly enjoyed playing hide and seek with their friends and chose to repeat this activity several times. Children develop a good understanding of the world. They dig holes near to the base of trees to create 'toad houses' and cover them with natural materials that they find in the forest. Children enjoy playing with toy animals in water and ice and sort the animals into groups according to the temperature they live in.

There are high expectations for every child. Children feel happy and safe, are familiar with the routines and enjoy being at the nursery. Children behave well. They play together cooperatively and help to tidy up the resources before taking part in large-group activities. Children are observant and considerate of other children's needs. For example, an older child gently asked a younger child who was carrying a box of toys 'do you remember where this goes?'

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

- Staff observe and assess children's development and have a good understanding of what they want them to learn. They help children to develop the skills they need for future learning. Staff focus strongly on supporting children's communication and language, including children who speak English as an additional language. For example, they teach children nursery rhymes and songs with actions. Parents report that their children enjoy singing the songs that they have learned, at home.
- Managers and staff know children and their families well. They work closely with parents and other agencies to meet children's individual needs. The special educational needs coordinator ensures that children receive the support they need to close gaps in their learning and development. Parents report that they feel involved in their children's learning and development.
- Staff adapt the curriculum and the play areas so that all children are safe, included and motivated to learn. For example, they have provided children with special educational needs and/or disabilities with more space to explore and use the resources. There are plans in place to further improve the outdoor learning environment.
- Staff are positive role models for children. They are very attentive to children's individual care needs. They patiently gain children's cooperation and talk with

children in a calm and respectful way. For example, they encourage younger children to sit safely on their chairs at lunchtime.

- Staff join in with children's play. They support children's mathematical development well. For instance, they encouraged children to count in numerical order when they walked across raised stepping stones. Children independently practised counting out loud during other activities, such as hide and seek.
- Staff support children's pre-reading and pre-writing skills well. They provide lots of opportunities for children to gain control of their movements. For example, children use paint brushes and water to make marks and use scissors to cut leaves. Staff often read stories and help children to use books to identify birds that they see during outings in the forest.
- Staff work closely with parents to help children settle and feel secure. They form close relationships with their key children and support them well to develop self-confidence and social skills. Parents report that the staff were 'wonderful' with settling their children into the nursery, particularly children who were born during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Managers support staff training and continuous professional development. Three unqualified staff are currently completing a level 3 childcare qualification. The manager has recently gained a leadership and management qualification. This has given him the confidence to delegate responsibilities to other staff to help develop their skills. However, staff are not coached and supported to consistently challenge and further extend children's learning and development indoors and outdoors. For example, when children play independently, staff do not consistently build on what children already know and can do.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Managers and staff have a good knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities to safeguard children's welfare. They work closely with other agencies and the local school to keep children safe. Staff receive safeguarding training, including for the 'Prevent' duty. They support families well when there are changes in their circumstances. Staff carefully risk assess the premises, activities and outings. For example, during forest-school activities they make sure that children are well supervised at all times. Staff teach children about their own safety. For instance, when together, they light fires and boil water to make hot chocolate.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- coach and support all staff to consistently challenge and further extend children's learning and development indoors and outdoors.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2617108
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10217923
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	1 to 4
Total number of places	39
Number of children on roll	31
Name of registered person	First Friends Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP529252
Telephone number	07775333395
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

First Friends @ Wootey registered in 2020. It is located in Alton, Hampshire. The nursery opens Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm, for 51 weeks a year. The setting receives funding to provide free early education to children aged two, three and four years. There are seven staff employed, including the manager, of whom four have relevant childcare qualifications. Of these, one has early years professional status, one has a level 6 qualification, and two have a level 3 qualification.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Cathy Greenwood

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.
- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The deputy manager and inspector completed a learning walk together.
- The manager and inspector completed a joint observation of a children's activity.
- The inspector talked to children, staff and parents at appropriate times during the inspection and observed activities.

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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