

Inspection of Free Spirits Education

The Cabin, Norman Court, West Tytherely, Hampshire SP5 1NH

Inspection date: 18 June 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	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children form strong attachments to adults in this highly nurturing setting. Staff are attentive to children's needs and model vocabulary around emotions, while giving time for children to think about their feelings. As a result, young children have the confidence and skill to tell adults how they feel before they get too upset. This supports children to feel safe and valued at the setting.

Staff accompany children on daily nature walks, which delve into the heart of the surrounding countryside. Under close supervision, children gleefully play among the bark and bracken, swinging from trees, making friends and building dens. These outdoor experiences foster children's love of nature and provide frequent opportunities for physical exercise and team-building.

Adults provide many opportunities for children to develop a love for art and design. Staff support children to talk in detail about their coloured potions and the spells they have created. Children paint shells with great care and offer these as gifts. Other children show high levels of concentration in activities such as clay modelling. As a result, there is a calm environment in which imagination and creativity are celebrated. In addition, children show they are able to appreciate and praise what others have created while having pride in their own skills.

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

- The committed manager has designed an absorbing curriculum that celebrates spontaneous explorations of the natural world. Outdoor activities are child led and encourage children to read, mark, make, sort, measure, weigh and label a variety of natural resources, developing their early literacy and mathematical skills. Young children consistently interact with much older children. For example, they talk about their artistic creations and work together to uncover a strange brick buried in the earth. As a result, children in the early years benefit from the language and problem-solving skills of children twice their age.
- Staff have high expectations for language learning and continually explore new vocabulary with children. For instance, when a child places a pebble in an 'emotion jar' full of coloured water, children notice the liquid spilling over the side. Staff talk about 'displacement' and use this word again later in the day in a different context. When adults read books to the children, they pause to examine new words, such as 'ponder'. They role play what 'pondering' means, giving children visual examples of this new idea. This focus on giving children new language to describe new experiences supports young children to develop an advanced vocabulary from an early age.
- Family engagement is successful due to staff's frequent and supportive communication with parents. Parents have contributed to the redesign of the

garden with planters for growing fruits and vegetables. Other families have organised events, such as a hedgehog release and trips to local attractions. The involvement of families at a grassroots level has created a community in which children have developed secure relationships and a sense of belonging. Parents report that their children's confidence, self-esteem, emotional literacy and social skills have developed since attending the setting. Parents praise staff's consistent communication and say that they feel their children are valued as individuals.

- The curriculum offers wonderful learning opportunities in and around the natural environment. For instance, there is a focus on local wildlife, growing produce and environmentalism. Even Easter egg hunts are designed so as to help children explore the size of a variety of birds' eggs. Staff also help children to develop some understanding of personal difference and identity, for instance making available books on different cultures. However, these experiences are not yet fully extended to help children learn in greater detail about wider cultural experiences.
- Staff understand their key children very well and make regular observations of what they know and can do. They share information with parents on a termly basis, covering children's progress across all areas of the early years foundation stage. They also offer suggestions for how families can further support their children's development at home. This sharing of information helps children to practise and improve skills they are less confident in.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture of 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 opportunities for children to learn about diversity outside their communities and in the wider world.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2671211
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10347135
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	3 to 11
Total number of places	12
Number of children on roll	20
Name of registered person	Free Spirits Education C. I. C.
Registered person unique reference number	2671212
Telephone number	07753620246
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Free Spirits Education registered in 2022 and is located near West Tytherley, Hampshire. It operates Monday to Thursday, from 9am to 3pm, for most of the year. Free Spirits offers funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. The setting offers a Steiner Waldorf-inspired curriculum.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

David Watkins

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.
- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector spoke to children to find out about their time at the setting.
- 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.

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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024