

Senior Early Years Practitioner



My Little Explorers Forest Nursery

Location: Romsey, Hampshire

Hours: Minimum 32 hours per week, full-time available

Working Days: Monday - Friday

Working Hours: Between 07:45 - 18:00

Salary: Competitive, negotiable depending on experience

About My Little Explorers

My Little Explorers started in 2013 as a Forest School in Farley Mount. In 2022, we opened a second location in Romsey - a Forest Nursery. Both settings are secure natural spaces where children can develop their imagination, take risks and build on social skills.

What makes us different? Our children don't just visit nature - they learn in it, every single day. With the support of qualified Early Years and Forest School practitioners, children have the freedom and space to be themselves: to run and hide, climb and build dens, tell stories and cook on the campfire. Every day brings new discoveries as our outdoor settings transform from season to season, creating unique learning opportunities that simply can't be replicated indoors.

The Role

As a Senior Early Years Practitioner, you'll be at the heart of our nursery, playing a vital role in shaping our unique outdoor learning environment. You'll guide and mentor staff, create inspiring learning experiences in nature, and build strong relationships with children and families who have chosen something different for their child's early years.

This isn't a traditional nursery role. You'll need to embrace working outdoors in all weathers, supporting children to explore, take appropriate risks, and develop confidence through hands-on experiences with the natural world.

What We Offer

Competitive Benefits Package:

- Competitive salary, negotiable based on experience
- Discounted childcare for staff families
- Birthday day off - celebrate your special day!
- Unique working environment unlike any traditional nursery

- Staff family events throughout the year
 - Onsite parking
 - Unique progression opportunities tailored to our outdoor provision
 - Ongoing professional development and training opportunities
 - Supportive team environment
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Essential Requirements

Qualifications & Knowledge:

- NVQ Level 3 or above in Childcare and Education (or equivalent)
- Thorough working knowledge of Ofsted requirements
- Strong understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Welfare Requirements
- Valid Paediatric First Aid certificate (or willingness to obtain before start date)
- Enhanced DBS check (we will support with application)

Experience:

- Minimum 2 years' experience working in an early years setting
- Experience working with children from babies to preschool age
- Demonstrable experience in planning and implementing EYFS curriculum

Personal Qualities:

- Genuine passion for outdoor learning and Forest School philosophy
 - Enthusiasm for working outside in all weather conditions
 - Strong communication and active listening skills
 - Ability to work collaboratively as part of a team
 - Self-motivated with excellent initiative
 - Positive, flexible and adaptable approach
 - Physical fitness suitable for outdoor work (bending, lifting, kneeling, extended periods outdoors)
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Desirable Requirements

- Experience in a senior or supervisory role
 - Experience with outdoor learning or Forest School approaches
 - Knowledge of risk-benefit assessment in outdoor settings
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Key Responsibilities

Leadership & Team Support

- Work closely with the Nursery Manager to support the day-to-day operations Mentor and guide early years practitioners, modelling best practice
- Lead by example in promoting the Forest School ethos
- Support staff development through observations and constructive feedback
- Participate in staff recruitment and induction processes

Childcare & Education

- Ensure all practice and provision meets EYFS requirements and Forest School principles
- Plan and deliver rich, engaging outdoor learning experiences appropriate to children's ages and developmental stages
- Promote high standards across the environment, resources and activities

- Conduct regular observations and assessments of children's learning and development
- Create and maintain detailed learning journeys for key children
- Support smooth transitions between age groups and settings

Safeguarding & Child Protection

- Ensure all children are kept safe at all times
- Maintain thorough knowledge of Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures
- Identify and respond appropriately to any safeguarding concerns
- Ensure all staff understand and follow safeguarding protocols

Partnerships & Inclusion

- Build positive, collaborative relationships with parents and carers
- Communicate effectively about children's progress and daily experiences
- Support the development of inclusive practice for children with SEND
- Liaise with external agencies and other settings as required
- Welcome and engage with visitors to the nursery

Health, Safety & Outdoor Environment

- Conduct daily site checks and risk assessments of the outdoor environment
- Manage outdoor equipment, tools and resources safely
- Ensure campfire safety protocols are followed at all times
- Monitor and respond appropriately to weather conditions
- Maintain awareness of seasonal hazards (wildlife, plants, ground conditions)
- Ensure all staff and visitors follow health and safety procedures
- Be fully aware of emergency and security procedures

Administration & Professional Development

- Maintain accurate, up-to-date records for key children
- Complete required documentation, including observations, assessments and incident reports
- Attend mandatory staff meetings, planning sessions and training
- Stay current with EYFS updates and early years best practice
- Maintain confidentiality in line with GDPR requirements
- Support with general administrative duties as needed

A Day in the Life

Every day is different at My Little Explorers, but you might find yourself:

- Leading morning circle time around the campfire
- Supporting children to use real tools for nature crafts
- Facilitating mud kitchen investigations and mini beast hunts
- Guiding risk-benefit assessments as children climb and explore
- Cooking snacks over the campfire with small groups
- Observing learning moments and documenting children's progress
- Mentoring practitioners in outdoor pedagogy approaches
- Collaborating with colleagues during children's rest time

Application Process

To apply, please send your CV and a covering letter explaining why you're passionate about outdoor learning to admin@mylittleexplorers.co.uk.

In your covering letter, please tell us:

- What draws you to Forest School and outdoor learning
- Your relevant experience working with young children
- What would you bring to our team

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. An enhanced DBS check will be required for this role.

We aim to be an equal opportunity employer and select staff on merit, irrespective of race, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, religion or belief.

Contact Us

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Romsey, SO51 9LN

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Tel: 02380 740310

Website: www.mylittleexplorers.co.uk

"Outside isn't just where we go, it's where we GROW."