

Squirrels Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	30/11/2011
Inspector	Catherine Greenwood
Setting address	Priory Park Pavillion, Priory Street, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 7HX
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Type of setting	Childcare - Non-Domestic

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Squirrels Pre-School is privately owned and registered in 2000. It offers care to pre-school children, after school care and a holiday play scheme to children attending full-time school. The provision operates from the Pavilion building in Priory Park in Farnborough, Hampshire. The premises include a main room used for all activities and a smaller room for out-of-school care, toilet facilities, a kitchen and storage areas. Children have access to an adjacent public playground, park and tennis courts, as well as an outdoor classroom. The provision mostly serves families from the local community. The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is registered for a maximum of 26 children aged between two and five years at any one time. There are currently 40 children on roll in the early years age range. Sessions run from 9am to 11.30pm and on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, children can bring a packed lunch and stay until 12.30pm or until 3pm. The provision is in receipt of funding for free nursery education. The provision employs eight staff, of whom, seven have early years qualifications to at least level 2 and 3. Squirrels after school club is registered for a maximum of 30 children aged from four to under eight years at any one time. It operates between 3.30pm to 6pm, Monday to Friday, term time only. Fun time holiday play scheme is registered for a maximum of 30 children at any one time aged from four years to under 12 years. It operates during all school holidays from 8.30am to 6pm.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff's interaction and communication with children during their play is a key strength of the provision. Their ability to introduce learning within activities in a fun and positive way is excellent. Consequently, children are inspired and make good progress. Partnerships with other providers are in their infancy and children's individual needs are effectively met, overall. The manager consistently reflects on the effectiveness of the provision, consults with staff, parent's and children and introduces numerous changes that improve outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- improve further the outcomes for children who speak or learn English as an additional language by using familiar words or phrases, offering additional visual support and encouraging them to use their home language in their play
- develop partnerships with other early years providers that children attend to

improve consistency in their learning and development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is fully safeguarded because staff have a good knowledge and understanding of child protection. Safeguarding policies and procedures are reviewed, updated and discussed with staff to identify their understanding of how to follow the procedures. This means that all staff know what action to take in the event that the nominated child protection officer being absent. Comprehensive risk assessments include detailed information and are reviewed and updated annually and other times, for example, in relation to the Summer fair. Consequently, children's safety is maintained. There are effective systems in place to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children.

The owner/manager encourages the staff to consistently evaluate all aspects of their practice. They consult with parents, and use a local authority self-evaluation form to make assessments of the quality of the provision. This has recently been adapted to include future objectives which link to development plans for the whole provision. Consequently, most outcomes for children are consistently improved. Since the last inspection, the provision has implemented many changes. For example, a section of the outside area has been enclosed with temporary netting, which enables learning to take place outdoors. Recommendations from the last inspection have been met. Children have good opportunities to choose resources which are made easily accessible both inside and outside the provision. This includes a wide range of creative media which is well organised in low level drawers. Children take part in activities that celebrate different cultural events, for example, Chinese New Year, and they have access to different resources and books that promote positive images. The provision sponsors a child living in Kenya, which helps children to learn about other people's lives and diversity.

There are policies in place to share information about children's learning priorities with other early years provisions that children attend. However, this has not yet been achieved for children who have recently started at the pre-school, which restricts continuity in their learning. Parents are provided with good information about the provision and their children's development, through daily communication, a website and annual progress meetings. Parents' comments show they are happy with the provision. For example, they say "My child loves it and settled in really well, it's very friendly and I like the way they go outside everyday throughout the year".

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Staff are very receptive to children's ideas and support them well in achieving their aims. They are observant of children who are less confident, and gently encourage them to take part in the different activities, which means they are fully included.

The opportunities that children have to make independent choices during their play and the time they are given to achieve their aims, significantly enhances their learning and development. Staff consistently introduce resources that capture children's interest and are very responsive to what children say and do. They encourage children to take the lead in their play and ask questions that extend their learning. Consequently, children show great enthusiasm for everything on offer. Children are extremely well behaved. They receive stickers throughout each session, which help them to feel proud of themselves. Staff quickly intervene when children occasionally find it difficult to share. Clear explanations and the use of a timer promotes children's ability to take turns. Books with photographs of children and members of their family at home, help children to make associations between their own lives and the pre-school. Staff make good use of children's requests and interests to introduce related resources and planned activities. Observations include children's achievements and progress towards the early learning goals.

Most children have a good range of vocabulary and show confidence as they communicate with staff and their friends. Planning for children's individual needs takes into account children who speak and learn English as an additional language. However, staff do not use simple words or phrases in the children's own language to enable them to use their home language in play, and showing that their culture and language is fully recognised and valued.

Children can recognise and find their name, for example, at snack time and their attempts to make patterns and write their name in soapy foam are fully embraced by staff. They respond to individual children's interest in names, by making children their own badges. This inspires children to notice and talk about differences in the length of peoples names. Some children show great interest in number and can count confidently up to twenty and beyond. Children learn about difference in size, as staff measure and compare their height, using a giant tape measure. They observe rates of growth as they plant different types of beans in pots. A range of objects displayed on a low level table are available for children to investigate and explore, such as mirrors magnifying glasses, plastic bugs and spirit levels. Children make good use of the computer and can independently operate age appropriate programmes.

Children have good opportunities to use resources that promote their physical abilities and provide them with sufficient challenge. Consequently, they show enthusiasm for being healthy by playing outdoors, as they use wheeled toys inside adjacent tennis courts. Children are taken for walks in the park and enjoy running freely and taking part in obstacle courses. A public playground provides children with good opportunities to climb, slide and learn to negotiate space. They take part in weekly "stretch and grow" sessions that help them to learn about their bodies and the importance of keeping warm. Children learn about their own safety through talking with staff about strangers and safety in the car park, activities about transport and visits from the local community police officer. Children are provided with a choice of fresh fruit and cheese and develop independence as they pour their own drinks of milk or water. Visual images displayed in the cloakroom reinforce children's understanding of keeping healthy through hand washing procedures and preventing the risk of cross infection.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met