

Squiggles Childcare

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY348921
Inspection date	16 July 2008
Inspector	Joanne Lindsey Caswell
Setting Address	Walker House, London Road, Riverhead, SEVENOAKS, Kent, TN13 2DN
Telephone number	01732 461146
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Registered person	Squiggles Childcare Ltd
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

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

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Squiggles Childcare has been registered since 2007. It is a privately owned nursery which operates from a detached building in Riverhead, near Sevenoaks, Kent. Children are cared for in group rooms on both the ground and first floor. All children have access to a fully enclosed outside play area. The nursery is registered for 93 children from birth to five years and is open from 08:00 until 18.00, Monday to Friday, 51 weeks of the year. Extended hours can be provided by prior arrangement. The nursery is closed for one week over the Christmas period and on bank holidays.

There are currently 100 children, aged from six months to four years, on roll. This includes nine children who receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

A team of 22 staff work with the children. Of these, 16 staff hold recognised early years qualifications. A further three staff are currently working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health and welfare is promoted exceptionally well throughout the nursery. Stringent cleaning routines and scrupulous hygiene measures thoroughly protect children against cross-infection and help to reduce illness. For example, all areas of the nursery are meticulously clean and staff implement exceptional practice during nappy change routines, toileting and in preparing babies' feeds. Thorough sterilising routines ensure feeding equipment, toys and babies' comforters are kept scrupulously clean. Staff have an excellent understanding of the nursery's policy regarding hygiene and are particularly conscientious in protecting children from infection. Comprehensive routines and clear policies ensure all bedding is laundered frequently and all babies have their own cots.

Children develop an excellent understanding of the importance of personal hygiene routines. For example, clear notices displayed at child-height in all the bathrooms remind children of the importance of hand washing routines. The familiar figure of 'Gerry the Germ' is displayed on notices helping children to remember why they must wash their hands after toileting and before eating to help to keep themselves healthy. Staff are conscientious in helping children to adopt good dental routines and encourage children to clean their teeth after meals. This helps children to understand how to keep themselves healthy and to adopt very good hygiene routines.

Children have many opportunities throughout the day to benefit from fresh air and exercise. All children, including the babies, spend time playing outside and enjoy many walks and outings within the local area. The provision for physical play is excellent. Children enjoy extensive physical activities and the nursery garden provides an exciting outside play space. Babies develop their balance and mobility as they play with resources which encourage them to roll over, crawl, sit unaided and begin to walk. Older babies and toddlers use resources for pushing and pulling and enjoy using wheeled toys. There is excellent provision for all children to undertake activities encouraging them to move in different ways, such as balancing, crawling and climbing. Staff utilise all the resources exceptionally well and the inside physical play room is used effectively to provide an additional play space for active, physical games.

Children's dietary needs are met extremely well. The nursery chef provides an extensive range of nourishing, healthy, freshly-prepared meals and snacks. Children enjoy their mealtimes and these are regarded as social occasions where children and staff sit together. This encourages children to develop positive attitudes towards eating. There is excellent provision for addressing the weaning needs of younger babies and for meeting individual children's dietary needs. Drinking water is readily accessible in all nursery rooms, encouraging children to help themselves to drinks whenever they are thirsty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The nursery provides an exceptionally calm and welcoming child-centred environment. For example, very low level windows from nursery rooms into the corridor enable children to see out and wave to other children, staff and their parents. Children's safety is given the highest priority. Access to the provision is closely monitored and the nursery has been designed with the highest levels of security. As a result, all group rooms for children have toilets, hand washing, milk kitchens and nappy change facilities fully integrated, ensuring children are fully supervised

by staff at all times. The outside area is secure and used by all children throughout the day. Telephone access between all rooms and the nursery office ensures staff maintain constant communication with each other, and with the nursery management, providing immediate help and assistance at all times.

Children play with an excellent range of toys, equipment and resources. All furniture is of the highest quality and is obtained from reputable suppliers. Low level storage areas enable children to make independent choices and select from a wide range of high quality materials.

Comprehensive risk assessments ensure children's safety is considered within all areas of the nursery and whilst on outings. For example, when children go for walks or visits away from the nursery, they wear high visibility jackets to ensure they are supervised by staff at all times. Regular emergency evacuation drills ensure all children and staff are totally familiar with relevant procedures. The use of an evacuation cot and evacuation bags help to ensure children's welfare in the event of a real emergency. However, attendance records are not always kept consistently up-to-date and this has an impact on children's safety.

Staff have a secure understanding of their responsibilities regarding safeguarding children. Most staff have attended relevant training and all staff have a thorough knowledge of appropriate procedures. This ensures children's safety and welfare is promoted at all times.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

There is a very happy and fun atmosphere evident throughout the nursery. Children benefit from exceptionally warm relationships with their key workers. Careful planning throughout the day ensures individual care routines for babies are implemented by each child's key worker. For example, babies are held closely for bottle feeding and their nappies are changed by their key worker. In addition, wherever possible, babies are settled to sleep by their own key worker. This ensures constant emotional security and attachment for the babies. All children respond positively to the staff and clearly enjoy very close, loving relationships with them. All babies and children are quickly comforted and pacified by staff and enjoy plenty of cuddles and physical affection.

Staff know each of the children extremely well and provide a very good selection of fun play and learning opportunities. For example, babies in the Yellow Room delight in playing with pots and pans and exploring the textures, sounds and appearance of a foil blanket. Babies gaze at themselves in mirrors and babble and giggle excitedly at the reflection. Staff respond positively to babies' attempts at vocalising and communication with constant repetition of words and by consistently talking to the babies.

Babies in the Orange Room happily enjoy splashing their hands and experimenting with water. Staff respond positively to children's curiosity and willingness to explore, by allowing the babies to sit in the water which the babies thoroughly enjoy. There are many opportunities which capture children's interests and hold their attention. For example, babies use large, soft construction bricks to develop their dexterity and co-ordination. They enjoy using wooden spoons to bang on tins and squeal with excitement as they attempt to chase bubbles.

The Green Room is bright and attractive for babies with many toys and resources for them to explore. For example, babies crawl into a transparent, inflated paddling pool filled with glittered paper, streamers, shredded paper and different materials, enabling them to handle different

textures. Babies snuggle into the cosy areas to look at books and enjoy playing a game of 'Peek-A-Boo' with a staff member as they play with the tunnel.

The toddlers in the Pink Room enjoy investigating their new room and playing with the large range of role-play resources. There are cosy, 'chill-out' areas for the children to sit quietly and many exciting activities and toys for children to play with. For example, the children show interest and enthusiasm for playing with the sand and the space figures. This encourages children's imagination and engages their interests. The children are becoming increasingly aware of their peers and greet their friends when they arrive at nursery excitedly. All children show high levels of security within their new room and benefit from extremely strong, positive relationships with staff.

Staff plan activities in accordance with children's current interests and build on children's existing knowledge. They carry out regular observations of children's learning and development and ensure their knowledge of each child's personal needs is generally extended effectively into planning. Care provision throughout the nursery is very good.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Older children in the Red and Blue group rooms benefit from the effective delivery of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff are experienced early years practitioners, who are skilled in utilising all practical activities to extend children's learning and develop their interests and skills. Staff are led by the children and encourage a good balance of child-initiated play and adult-led activities. Planning is personal to each child with regular summative assessments to identify children's next stages in learning. Although observations are regularly carried out, these are not always sufficiently evaluated and linked into future planning.

Children are very sociable and confident. They enjoy positive relationships with their peers and play co-operatively together, clearly understanding the importance of sharing and taking turns. Staff encourage children to become increasingly independent and to take on responsibility. As a result, children enjoy being the daily 'helper'. All children are highly motivated and show good levels of enthusiasm for all activities and play opportunities.

Children's communication skills are very good. They engage in lengthy discussion with adults and their peers and understand the importance of listening to one another. Children are curious and ask questions and enjoy contributing towards group discussion. There are many examples of printed words, labels and books displayed for children, helping them to become aware that words carry meaning. Well-designed, creative role-play areas encourage children to develop writing for a purpose. For example, in the role-play Post Office, children write letters and post them in the letter box. In the Construction Area, children use paper, pencils and clipboards to design models and develop writing skills. Many practical activities enable children to develop awareness of letters and phonetic sounds.

Children count confidently and show a clear awareness of number value. Practical activities, such as singing number rhymes, help children to add numbers and take numbers away. Children recognise numbers on resources, such as in a raffle ticket book and on telephones and calculators. However, there are few other visual examples of numbers displayed within the nursery rooms, such as on notices. This does not fully utilise opportunities to help children see numbers displayed in the environment. Children develop an understanding of other mathematical concepts, such as shape, colour, size and pattern through many games and daily activities. For

example, children look for shapes around the room and correctly identify the names of different shapes. They make patterns and follow sequences using coloured pegs and talk about size whilst measuring.

Children have a very good understanding of technology. They understand how programmable toys work and use the computer confidently. The current topic of People Who Help Us enables children to recognise the role of others and learn about the local community. Staff utilise every opportunity to extend children's learning away from the nursery. For example, as part of discussions on the Post Office, a visit to the local post office is planned. Recently, children enjoyed a visit to a local farm to pick strawberries. There are many opportunities for children to use different tools and design and create their own models. For example, children use large recycled materials, such as boxes, to make an ambulance in the outside area. Topics on Mini Beasts encourage children to explore nature and understand environmental issues.

The provision for creative activities is very good. Children have freedom to select from a diverse range of materials and art materials enabling them to make their own pictures and models. Displayed art work clearly reflects the children's own work and creativity. Observational drawings to support topic work, show detailed work and good imagination. Role-play areas are particularly well-resourced and planned well to support learning. For example, the Construction Area is equipped with child-sized hard hats, high visibility jackets and building blocks. This makes play areas appealing and attractive to children and inspires their play and imagination.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The nursery takes exceptional steps to ensure all children are treated equally and fairly and are regarded as individuals. Children develop an extremely strong sense of belonging within the nursery as staff are particularly attentive in valuing all children and providing for their personal needs. Sensitive methods are used to help children feel consistently settled and secure. For example, displaying photographs of children's families at low level, enables children to see these clearly and enjoy looking at them during their time at nursery. Meticulous planning throughout the daily routine ensures that babies and children sleep in accordance with their own needs. Parents provide lengthy information when children start at the nursery, detailing each child's care routine, such as comfort measures, likes/dislikes, as well as information on dietary needs, linguistic background and ethnicity.

There are excellent opportunities for children to learn about diversity and respect the needs of others. For example, many pictures, resources and books throughout the nursery reflect positive images of gender, disability and culture. In addition, children celebrate a range of festivals and learn about differing religions and customs. For example, children celebrate Chinese New Year and sample foods from around the world. This ensures children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

The provision for supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very strong. Staff know the children well and identify children's individual needs in planning. Staff have good knowledge of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice and appropriate provision is in place to support all children's personal needs. Staff demonstrate a fully inclusive environment and welcome all children into the nursery and make provision for their personal needs.

Children's behaviour is excellent. Staff use an extremely positive approach towards managing behaviour and encourage a very happy, purposeful and fun atmosphere. Any unacceptable behaviour is dealt with quickly and effectively with children's attention diverted to positive behaviour and action. Children's achievements are fully celebrated and all children enjoy high levels of praise and positive attention. Comprehensive written policies clearly promote age-appropriate, highly effective strategies for helping to encourage sharing, co-operative behaviour and for children to learn to respect the needs of others.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Staff utilise every opportunity to fully involve parents in their children's learning and development. The nursery operates an extremely welcoming atmosphere and displays extensive information for parents regarding the Foundation Stage curriculum and all nursery activities. Parents are fully involved in the assessment procedure and receive regular information from staff regarding their own child's learning and development. Parents' meetings and written reports keep parents informed of children's progress and parents are invited to talk to parents and the nursery management at any time. The nursery management have recently introduced a Parents' Forum, encouraging all parents to become closer involved in sharing ideas and contributing towards the nursery's vision for the future. This reflects the nursery management's commitment towards consulting with parents and acknowledging their comments and feedback. A parents' suggestion box is used effectively, enabling parents to record any ideas, concerns or suggestions, which nursery management respond to, through the monthly newsletters. Extensive written policies and procedures are made freely available to parents, including all contact details for Ofsted.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Robust recruitment procedures ensure that all staff working with children are safe and appropriately vetted. Staff deployment is effective throughout the nursery and provides continuity of care for children. This ensures a particularly effective key worker system is implemented. All staff have a good understanding of the National Standards and are committed to providing high standards of care and early education. The leadership and management are outstanding. The commitment shown by the nursery management towards evaluating and reflecting upon nursery practice is exemplary and the two directors set themselves as positive role models to staff. They operate an 'open door' policy and are fully committed towards providing the highest standards of care and early education and have real vision for the nursery's future. Weaknesses in provision are quickly identified and action plans are implemented to ensure swift improvement. Staff development is given the highest priority and all staff comment on the positive training opportunities they are given. As a result, staff are highly valued and fully motivated.

The daily routine offers an exciting and stimulating day for all babies and children. Excellent attention is given towards promoting children's health and welfare. Comprehensive staff training and induction programmes ensure all staff, particularly new and temporary staff, fully understand the nursery's policies and procedures. This has a positive impact on the smooth and effective organisation of the nursery. A high deployment of fully qualified early years practitioners ensure high standards of care throughout the nursery.

Regulatory documentation is generally maintained effectively. Staff are conscientious in recording all accidents and medication and parents' consent forms ensure formal agreement for all care routines. A record of children's attendance is maintained, although this is not always accurate in all rooms, at all times of the day, particularly when children move to different rooms

for settling visits or sleeps. This has an impact on children's safety. Children's confidentiality is given full consideration and all records and documentation are stored securely. Written policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated and contain all necessary information.

The nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not Applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted which required the provider, or Ofsted, to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- improve the procedures for recording children's attendance to clearly identify when children have moved rooms for different periods during the day

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop the procedures for assessing children's learning to clearly identify how information gained from observation is appropriately evaluated to inform future planning
- improve the provision for mathematical development by increasing the range of visual images of number displayed within the nursery environment

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk