

Squirrels Day Nursery Corby Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY356271
Inspection date	11 July 2008
Inspector	Sarah Measures
Setting Address	Hazelwood Neighbourhood Centre Gainsborough Road, Corby, Northants, NN18 0QF
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Registered person	Squirrels Day Nursery (Corby) 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Squirrels Day Nursery Corby Ltd was first opened in 1995 and undertook a change of name in 2007. It remains under the same management and is a Neighbourhood Nursery. It is based at Hazelwood Neighbourhood Centre in Corby in Northamptonshire. A maximum of 63 children may attend the nursery at any one time, of which 27 may be aged under two years. The nursery is open five days a week for 51 weeks of the year except for Bank Holidays, from 08:00 to 18:00. All children have access to safe, secure outdoor play areas. There are currently 174 children on roll, 51 of whom are in receipt of funded nursery education. The setting support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The nursery employs 21 staff, 14 of whom have appropriate early years qualifications. One staff member has a level four qualification. Five other staff are working towards a qualification. The nursery has achieved a Heartbeat Award for promoting healthy eating and receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean and hygienic setting. Their health is further promoted because staff follow clear hygiene routines, for example when they are changing children and when they are serving food. Staff follow cleaning checklists in order to ensure the premises and equipment are suitable for children to use. All staff have training in first aid in order to ensure children are well protected in the event of an accident. Accidents are recorded with clear detail, however children's health is not fully promoted because medication records are insufficiently detailed.

All children enjoy outdoor play, although a varied choice of outdoor activities is not always available for the older children. Children are well nourished because varied menus are planned that include a range of healthy choices. Secure systems are in place to ensure children's health and dietary needs are met. The needs of the younger children are met because staff have a regard for their individual sleeping and feeding stages and routines. Children learn appropriate personal independence and simple good hygiene routines as they wash their hands before eating and brush their teeth after meals.

Staff plan and provide an appropriate range of activities to promote the physical development for children in receipt of funded nursery education. Children access some challenging physical equipment outdoors. They learn spatial awareness and develop physical strength and control as they take part in group games and use bikes, balls, hoops and balancing equipment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure setting that is well organised to meet their needs. They feel welcome because displays of their work and photographs of themselves at play decorate the setting. Children across the nursery use a varied range of toys and equipment that are safe and well maintained. Good quality equipment is available to meet the needs and promote the independence of the younger children. For example, very young children are safely strapped into low chairs, so they can sit together at meal times.

Thorough written risk assessments are completed across the provision in order to ensure children's safety. Risk assessments are closely monitored by the person responsible for health and safety in order to ensure the provision is always safe for children. Children are well protected in the event of a fire because fire safety is clearly included within the risk assessments and regular fire escapes are practised. Children are well safeguarded because staff are confident in their knowledge of the types and possible indicators of child abuse, they are aware of action to take if they are concerned about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally settled across the nursery and are happy in their groups. Most staff interact with the children in positive and friendly ways in order to foster close relationships. Young children are involved in a range of activities that appropriately encourage all aspects of their development. Babies learn confidence as they explore and take part in a suitable range

of tactile experiences. For example, they enjoy sitting and playing in jelly and custard. Young children have good opportunities to feel involved as they make choices about their play that are displayed on the 'children's choice' board.

The quality of teaching for the nursery education is satisfactory. Staff plan and provide a range of activities across all development areas. However, there are restricted opportunities for children to become involved in purposeful role play and the opportunities for children to select mark-making, writing and creative equipment to work independently are also restricted. Good quality observations are carried out on the children that are effectively used to link to planning in order to help children make individual progress.

Children arrive and are confident and sociable and generally eager to participate. They develop some good friendships amongst themselves. Some group activities help children to work together, however there are missed opportunities for children to socialise and become engaged in purposeful discussions at meal times. Children also have limited access to books and varied reading material in order for them to fully develop a love of books and stories and understand print has meaning. Staff help children to recognise the sounds in their names and encourage them to learn how to form letters correctly.

Children take part in a suitable range of fun games that encourage their understanding of number and key mathematical concepts. They use appropriate mathematical language as they design and use some challenging construction equipment. They have relevant opportunities to follow their own ideas as they construct their own designs and make loud speakers and sweetie machines from junk modelling resources. Children select their favourite programmes to use on the computer which enables them to use information and communication technology to support their learning and gives them opportunity to consolidate other areas of their learning, for example language and literacy. Children use their imagination and express themselves in different ways as they use musical instruments and take part in an appropriate range different tactile and creative activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Equality of opportunity for children is generally well promoted because children play and learn in an environment that reflects diversity well. Displays and resources help to offer a welcome to all children and encourage them to value those that are different from themselves. Children's experiences are broadened as staff include varied cultural and religious ways of life within planning. Secure policies and procedures ensure children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who have English as an additional language are supported. Sound policies and procedures are in place to secure effective working relationships with parents. Good opportunities for parents to be involved in changes within the nursery are offered at monthly meetings, and appropriate written and verbal communications take place between staff and parents in order to ensure continuity of children's care. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are generally well behaved and most staff make sure that they praise and encourage children in order to help them develop confidence and self-esteem and learn patterns of good behaviour. Most staff help children to learn a clear sense of self-discipline by helping them to consider others and look at the consequences of their actions. However, the managing behaviour policy that is based upon the use of positive methods is not consistently implemented by staff

resulting in some children being singled out for their behaviour and risking damage to their self-esteem.

The partnership with parents and carers for children in receipt of funded nursery education is good. Good information regarding how children learn is available within the prospectus and within photographs and displays around the nursery. This helps parents to further encourage the child's learning at home. Well-presented individual records of children's development are shared with parents in order for them to keep up to date with their children's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Policies and procedures appropriately promote children's health, enjoyment, achievement and their ability to make a positive contribution. They promote the safety of the children well. Managers work as a friendly and nurturing team, offering good role models to staff and helping to promote a warm and caring setting for children. Staff make up a well-qualified team who organise themselves in order to ensure children receive suitable support. Children are grouped according to their development stage and are supported by a key worker in order to meet their needs. Suitable systems for keeping children's records are generally maintained and relevant information is accessible to staff in order for them to keep children healthy and safe. Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. Managers show a keen commitment towards improvement and meet regularly to review the strengths and weaknesses of the educational provision for children. However, monitoring systems do not identify weaknesses in the quality of teaching which means that there are missed opportunities within some activities to promote children's learning and development.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

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

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

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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):

- make sure that records for gaining consent to administer medication and to record the administration of medication are clear
- make sure that positive methods for managing children's behaviour are consistently applied across the nursery.

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 monitoring systems to ensure staff make the most of all learning opportunities for children
- improve opportunities for children to be able to select from a range of reading material and improve opportunities for children to become involved in purposeful role play
- further promote the opportunities for children to socialise and develop independence at meal times and ensure children are able to select resources and equipment in order to work independently.

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