



Squirrels Childcare Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | EY308045 |
| Inspection date | 27 October 2005 |
| Inspector | Julie Firth |
| Setting Address | Springhead County Infants School, Cooper Street, Springhead, Oldham, Lancashire, OL4 4QT |
| Telephone number | 0161 628 8452 |
| E-mail | |
| Registered person | Squirrels Childcare Ltd |
| Type of inspection | Childcare |
| Type of care | Out of School 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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Squirrels Childcare Ltd was registered in 1998 and re registered in 2005 when it became a limited company. It operates from the premises of Springhead County Infant and Junior school and provides a service for children attending the infant school and the junior school close by.

Children attend for a variety of sessions. The club opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 07.45 to 09.00 and from 15.10 to 18.00 Monday to Friday during term time and from 07.45 to 18.00 during the school holidays. There are 62 children aged from 3 years to 11 years on roll.

There is a qualified manager and seven members of staff. The staff all hold relevant childcare and play work qualifications. The setting has been accredited with the Quality Kitemark from Oldham Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Daily indoor and outdoor routines include activities to help children develop physical skills and promote a healthy lifestyle. They make good use of the outdoor school playground. Individual children gain confidence and test out their co-ordination and organisation skills in team games such as football, basketball, parachute games and throwing the hoops.

Children are well protected from illness and infection because the staff conscientiously follow current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, however children do not always wash their hands before snacks. There are good routines in place for the cleaning of the premises. Staff are suitably qualified in first aid to enable them to appropriately treat children with minor injuries.

Children understand the importance of having regular drinks to stay hydrated as they help themselves to the jugs of water inside and when outside in the playground. Children enjoy nutritious snacks and are given a variety of fruits, sandwiches and hot pizzas. Snack time provides children with the opportunity to make their own sandwiches and cut up fruit enhancing their independence skills. The children's dietary requirements are met well as staff work with parents in finding out their child's requirements and respectfully follow these.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, stimulating indoor and outdoor environment. Rooms are appropriately organised ensuring a balanced range of activities for children. Children move around in a safe environment where risks are identified and minimised. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the health and safety policies and how to keep children safe. There are tight procedures for signing children in and out of the club ensuring they are accounted for at all times. Children are learning to keep themselves safe and respect boundaries as they have an understanding not to go outside the playground and when walking to the club from the junior school. They demonstrate an understanding of emergency escape procedures and practise fire drills regularly. All children are well protected as there are clear child protection procedures in place.

Children confidently choose from an accessible, wide range of toys and equipment that are age-appropriate. They develop independence as they choose from equipment which is easily accessed on low tables or at floor level around the room. Children confidently ask for toys that are not out. The resources are clean, safe and

well maintained to ensure the children's safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and confident and enjoy being together in the relaxed and friendly environment. They relate well to staff and know each other from school. They relish the time together to relax, play and unwind and talk positively about their experiences in the club. Staff support children and skilfully adapt activities and introduce new ideas such as playing a board game together and reading with them constantly asking questions about the book.

Children confidently play imaginatively in role play and dressing up. They play in the water displaying high levels of concentration. They plan their own designs, make decisions and choose from an interesting range of stimulating activities and resources available such as water play, celebrating Halloween and sewing. They use the large number of computers productively to develop their IT skills. They are given the opportunity to choose from an extensive range of books in the quiet corner encouraging them to read for pleasure. Trips are planned during the holiday club to places of interest to enable children to have experiences of the local community.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed on arrival to the club. Snack time is a well organised and social event and children wait until everyone is seated and are encouraged to say please and thank you. The staff are good role models and have good strategies in place for achieving appropriate behaviour. Children are encouraged to share and play harmoniously and are well behaved. They contribute to the making of ground rules and they are aware that certain rules and respect are required to maintain a safe and fair environment where they can play happily and have fun. Staff promote children's self esteem and confidence as they praise their efforts and make space around the club to display their work.

Children receive good staff support to ensure they all feel included. The wide range of activities encourage children to make choices and take decisions. There are a sufficient range of toys and resources in place that reflect equality of opportunity. The staff work with the children to help them learn about different cultures. This enhances and extends the children's experiences of the world around them.

Staff have built up good relationships with parents and create a welcoming atmosphere. A notice board displays information about day-to-day events within the club. They receive verbal feedback on a daily basis about their child's activities. This effective communication between parents and staff helps to promote children's welfare, safety and developmental progress and provides consistency and care for all children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Effective recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are well protected and cared for by staff. The management are committed to improving the quality of care they provide for children and encourage the staff to attend further training. The manager meets regularly with staff to ensure they are all aware of the children's individual needs and any recent developments. Children are happy and settled in a calm environment and enjoy choosing activities from the interesting options available. The accommodation is divided into areas to ensure the children experience a range of different types of activities. Children follow a structured routine and there is a comprehensive operational plan in place demonstrating that staff regard the well-being of all children. Children are appropriately supervised both indoors and outdoors and staff work well as a team as they access and respond to the children interests.

A comprehensive booklet of policies and procedures are in place which contributes to the safety and well being of children being cared for. These are shared with parents to keep them well informed about their service and their child's activities. All documentation is in place and correctly maintained. Overall, the provision meets the needs of all children.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report. 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

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.

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):

- ensure children wash their hands at all times to avoid cross contamination.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk