

Squirrels Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Deborah Jacqueline Newbury
Setting address	Broadmoor Hospital, Crowthorne, Berkshire, RG45 7EG
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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 Day Nursery opened in 1990. It is part of a chain of nurseries operated by Bright Horizons Family Solutions Limited.

Squirrels Day Nursery operates from a building within the grounds of Broadmoor hospital which is situated in Crowthorne, Berkshire. The nursery is within walking distance of Crowthorne village and has easy access to the surrounding local area, motorways and public transport links. It primarily serves employees of the hospital but is also open to other families.

There are three main rooms used by the children and two enclosed outside areas for outdoor play. All children share use of these. There are appropriate kitchen, sleeping and bathroom facilities on site. The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round, except bank holidays. Hours of opening are 8.00 am to 6.00 pm with specially extended hours as required by hospital shift employees. There are currently 92 children on roll. This includes 22 three and four-year-olds who are in receipt of nursery education funding. The nursery welcomes children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who have English as an additional language.

A total of 20 members of staff work at the setting; of these 13 hold relevant early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children thrive in a nurturing and stimulating environment. They are cared for by a committed and enthusiastic team of practitioners, who are well supported by effective management. The uniqueness of each and every child is valued and the nursery strives to ensure equality and inclusion across all aspects of the provision. Very good use of self-evaluation and reflection by everyone, coupled with a strong desire to build upon existing practice, means that the capacity of this nursery to maintain continuous improvement is good. There are excellent systems in place for working in partnership with parents and carers.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend existing arrangements for the regular two-way flow of information with other providers, such as schools, in respect of those children who attend school each morning and the nursery during the afternoon
- improve children's access to information and communication technology and programmable toys, in particular for the younger age groups
- continue to develop systems for valuing linguistic diversity and opportunities

for children to develop and use their home language in their play and learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are effectively safeguarded and protected because the nursery has good systems in place for identifying and responding to concerns about children's welfare. Senior management have updated their knowledge of safeguarding through advanced training and practitioners display secure understanding of their responsibilities. The nursery is currently in the process of arranging for all practitioners to attend refresher training on this subject. Risk assessments are in place for all areas of the nursery and a daily health and safety check is undertaken. Practitioners complete a separate risk assessment when they take children off site. The premises are secure and use of appropriate safety features help to ensure children stay safe. Practitioners are mostly very vigilant in ensuring children are closely supervised.

Leadership and management are strong, with a clear sense of purpose that is shared by everyone. The manager and staff, supported by the company, work together closely to identify areas for improvement through effective use of self-evaluation and reflection, and to plan how these can be achieved. Most recommendations made at the last inspection have been addressed successfully and have led to improvements in children's overall health and safety, and support their learning. However, arrangements for ensuring the ongoing cleanliness of an extractor fan in the babies' sleep room have been less successful. This is the responsibility of an outside contractor. The manager is a highly visible and integral part of the staff team. Children know her well and approach her freely. Practitioners are positive about the nursery, the support they receive and feel their views matter. Consequently, morale is good. The nursery is staffed by a cohesive team of individuals who work together well as a team. Overall, they are effectively deployed and communicate mostly very well to support individual children and meet their needs. Qualification requirements are met.

All regulatory documentation and other records pertaining to the organisation of the provision are well organised and maintained appropriately. Comprehensive written policies and procedures underpin practice. These are regularly reviewed and updated as necessary and practitioners' understanding of the policies is assessed on an ongoing basis. This ensures that everyone is able to implement them correctly. Systems for recruitment and vetting and to ensure the ongoing suitability of individuals working at the nursery are robust. Practitioners have annual appraisals and are encouraged to undertake further training, both for their own professional development and as a way of improving outcomes for children. Practitioners speak positively about recent courses they have attended and how they are putting the knowledge gained into practice.

The nursery instigates excellent procedures for working in partnership with parents and carers. Comprehensive and well presented corporate information about Bright Horizons settings, its policies and procedures and what parents should expect is

supplemented by more personal information about Squirrels Day Nursery. This is evident through informative newsletters and parental notice boards throughout the setting. The nursery gathers important information about the individual needs of children and their starting points which ensures continuity of care and enables them to make good progress in their learning. Practitioners display their planning and also record specific activities on a daily basis, together with the intended learning outcomes. A weekly memo is emailed to parents to let them know what children will be doing during the week and to notify them of any changes; for instance, if particular staff members are on holiday and who will be covering for them. This means that parents and carers have a clear idea, in advance, of how their children will spend their time and who they can expect to see when they arrive. They can therefore talk to their children about these matters. Daily exchanges of information between parents and practitioners are unhurried, with warm, friendly relationships clearly apparent. Digital photo-frames in each room offer a running slide-show of children at play. Children's learning journeys are organised to be easily accessible to parents and carers. They are encouraged to contribute their knowledge about their child to these and they have the freedom to take the learning journeys home to view at their leisure, if they so wish. A parent/nursery liaison group is used to promote a shared approach to highlighting particular issues for attention and any areas for development. This is supplemented by the issue of parental questionnaires to gauge the views of all parents and carers about the nursery and how their children are supported. Social events also promote opportunities for parents to meet one another and the staff team in an informal environment.

The nursery has established good links with some of the schools that children move on to, which eases the transition from nursery to school life. However, arrangements for ensuring a two-way flow of information about children's care, learning and any other matters in respect of those children who attend school during the morning and nursery during the afternoon are not so well developed.

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

Children are happy in the homely atmosphere of the nursery. They interact positively with their carers and approach them when they are feeling unsettled, demonstrating that secure, trusting relationships have been formed. Children behave well, and respond positively to the praise and encouragement they receive. Practitioners act as good role-models by helping children to understand the need to share and take turns. Consequently they learn to appreciate the needs of others. Practitioners foster children's independence and their personal, social and emotional skills extremely well. There is a real sense of a 'can do' and 'let's have a go' attitude, which helps children become competent and secure in their capabilities. Children pour their drinks and spread butter on their crackers as they become able. Older children take ownership of a variety of different tasks on a daily basis, such as feeding the land snails and fish or laying the table for lunch. Toddlers also help by undertaking small tasks, such as fetching the drinks cups. This approach enables children to make a positive contribution to nursery life. Children are taken off site when ratios permit and outside visitors are invited to the

nursery, which helps children develop a sense of community. There are systems in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are several children attending the nursery who have English as an additional language. The importance of valuing and promoting children's use of home languages has been recognised and whilst practitioners are actively seeking ways of doing this, it is at an early stage of development. For example, labelling does not currently represent all languages within the setting.

Children's base-rooms are attractively presented with examples of their artwork and photographs are clearly visible. Families have been asked to provide photographs of themselves for display to further build links for children between home and nursery. Furniture and equipment are appropriate for the different ages and stages of development of the children attending. Children have access to a very good range of resources overall, with lots of items arranged to aid self-selection. This encourages them to be independent and become active learners as they help themselves to things based on their interests. However, there are few interactive or programmable items available for the younger age groups, which restricts opportunities for them to learn about simple technology at a basic level.

Planning, observation and assessment systems are effective. Each child is supported by a key person and practitioners take account of children's interests and plan for their individual learning needs. Each child has a learning journey which tracks their progress towards the early learning goals; these build into a delightful record of a child's time at the nursery.

Babies become self-assured as practitioners are kind and caring towards them. They enjoy the closeness of cuddles and are included in decisions that affect them; for example practitioners talk to them about the need to change their nappy. Practitioners sit on the floor to play with them, so interaction is at their eye level. Babies do not always remain in the buggies when they go outside; practitioners pick them up so they can look around and see the world at a different level. They use their senses as they explore the interesting contents of the overflowing treasure basket and they enjoy playing with water. Older babies and toddlers have lots of fun as they chase the bubbles from a bubble machine that a practitioner has set up. They explore movement as they dance to music and roll balls along pieces of piping attached to the fence in the outside area. A large piece of chiffon becomes an instant parachute which toddlers love crawling under. They squeal with delight as the chiffon is draped over them. Their learning is extended as counting is introduced into the game and as they are encouraged to think about sound by seeing how quiet or how noisy they can be. Pre-school children display lots of confidence. They get on very well with others and play co-operatively. They communicate their ideas freely, with the support of interested practitioners, who question them effectively and encourage them to think. Children display good mouse control skills when using the computer and they enjoy playing with construction toys. They have a clear idea of what it is they are trying to create. They recognise their written names and explore rhyming words in a fun way, as they join in with the 'silly soup' song. Children's problem solving, reasoning and numeracy skills develop extremely well because practitioners take every opportunity to encourage them to count, explore weight and measure and size. Children frequently use mathematical language in the course of their play; for

instance they independently decide that they will count to a particular number before they jump off a balance beam and they chat about the different sizes and shapes of the cookies they have made.

Children are well supported in gaining understanding about what constitutes a healthy life style. They follow good personal hygiene routines and are encouraged to take responsibility for this when they are able. Outdoor play and exercise is an integral part of the nursery day, with the option of free-flow from indoors to outside available to most children. The provision of all-in-one waterproof suits means that children can play outside in all weathers. The back garden area, in particular, offers some wonderful opportunities for children to investigate all areas of the curriculum. They create interesting obstacle courses and improve control and co-ordination of their bodies as they jump and balance, they dig in the digging area and explore nature and growth, and act out stories as they play in the tent. Older children go into the shed and help themselves to different items to support their play. A new soft safety surface has just been fitted in the front outside area, which adds to children's safety, especially the younger ones. Practitioners are in the process of resourcing this area to create an interesting learning environment. Children enjoy a healthy, nutritious diet, which takes account of individual dietary requirements and parental preferences. Food is supplied in plentiful quantity so children can eat their fill. They sit together to eat, in the company of practitioners, who encourage conversation and good table manners. Children learn how to keep themselves and others safe with the support of practitioners. For instance, they help children understand the need to be gentle with one another and the possible consequences of their actions.

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

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	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	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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