



# Little Squirrels Community Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY235868
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 January 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Lilyanne Taylor
<b>Setting Address</b>	Ryde Business Park, Nicholson Road, Ryde, Isle of Wight, PO33 1BQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01983 615 648
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	KNL Childcare Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Little Squirrels Community Nursery opened in 2003.

It is a privately owned Nursery, which is run as a partnership under the name of KNL Childcare Limited. The Nursery operates from its own purpose built premises, which are situated in the Oakfield area of Ryde on the Isle of Wight. There is a large fully enclosed outdoor play area.

Little Squirrels is open to all families, with priority being given to those families who meet the government's Nursery Initiative criteria. It is their policy to take children from the age of 3 months. A maximum of 43 children may attend the nursery at any one time.

Little Squirrels is open each week day from 08:00 to 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year, closing for one week at Christmas and all Bank Holidays.

Children are able to attend a variety of sessions. There are currently 80 children on roll; of these 24 receive funding for nursery education. The nursery is able to provide care for children with special needs. The Nursery employ 13 staff members; of these, 12 work directly with the children. All staff hold a relevant NVQ level 2 or NVQ level 3 qualification in early years. One member of staff is on training, working towards achieving an NVQ level 3.

The Nursery receive support visits from personnel within the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

The children's health and dietary needs are met, because the staff work well with the parents. They respect the parents' preferences and maintain records of the children's individual needs. The children are provided with healthy and nutritious snacks; they consist of raw vegetables, fruit, toast and breadsticks. The nursery has a policy where no food containing nuts is allowed to be brought in. The children are protected from the spread of illness through the clear policies in place regarding the attendance of sick children. Those children who become sick whilst attending the nursery, are cared for sensitively until their parents arrive. Most children develop an awareness of good personal hygiene practices through everyday routines, such as washing hands prior to snack and meal times and after toileting. However, this practice is not followed by the staff with babies under 2. The babies' individual sleeping and feeding routines are met. Sleeping children are monitored and all bedding is kept unique to each child and laundered on a daily basis. Equipment such as babies' high chairs, feeding utensils and dummies are sterilised after use. However, toys such as teething rings and hand held rattles are not, which means the babies are not fully protected from the spread of germs and infection. The children develop a positive attitude towards physical exercise. They benefit from outside play at regular intervals throughout the day and from walks around the local environment. The children show a good sense of space and move around confidently with control in a variety of ways, including running and jumping. They competently use a wide range of small and large equipment. For example, they ride on bikes and scooters and hit a ball using a bat. They show good co-ordination and balancing skills, when using the balancing bars and climbing equipment.

## **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in a clean, well maintained environment, which is effectively organised to enable them to move around freely and safely. The children access available resources independently from trays and boxes, which are stored at child height. All toys and equipment are appropriate for the age range of children and maintained in a good condition. The premises are kept secure and the systems in place ensure only authorised persons gain entry. Effective arrangements for the collection and non-collection of children contribute to ensuring the children's safety. All visitors are requested to sign in and out. In addition, records of children and staff's attendance are maintained to show who is present. Daily risk assessments are carried out both inside and outside the premises, which ensures risks to children are minimised. The children are protected from possible abuse or neglect. The staff have a good understanding of the procedures they are required to follow with any concerns they may have. They are fully aware of the types of abuse and the signs to look for. Also, they keep records of the injuries the children come in with and share them with the parents. Systems and procedures in place ensure appropriate action is taken, if an allegation of abuse were to be made against a member of staff.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

The children settle quickly on arrival, as they are met at the door by the staff. The children are encouraged to hang up their coats and bags, increasing their independence, while the staff and the parents ensure the younger children are assisted as necessary. The children are happy and they laugh and giggle throughout the activities; for example when they sing their favourite nursery rhymes or play with corn flour which has been mixed with water. The children share conversations with the staff, who readily listen to them and take an interest in what they have to say.

The children feel secure as they are cared for by a consistent staff team; they each have a member of staff who is their key worker. The staff working with children under 3 are beginning to plan activities using the Birth to three framework. They use suggested ideas and link these to the children's observations, to ensure experiences are appropriate for them and help them make progress. The children make friendships with other children and play well alongside one another.

## **Nursery education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. All children are making good progress towards the early learning goals, given their capabilities and starting points. All staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. They plan a stimulating well-balanced programme of activities, which cover the six areas of learning. Observations of the children's progress are ongoing and staff collate this information to inform the curriculum, ensuring all children's needs are met. Activities are closely linked with the stepping stones, to ensure the children's progress can be monitored. The challenges set for the children are aimed

at each child's level and stage of development. The staff know the children well. However, they do not always ensure the knowledge they have of the children is recorded. Consequently, the children's written progress records do not always reflect the actual stage of learning they are at. Daily routines are balanced and allow opportunities for the children to focus on one-to-one tasks and in large and small group activities. Some parts of the session are structured; others allow the children to make their own choices.

The children's social skills are developing well; they are making friendships with other children and relate well to the staff. The children's confidence and self-esteem is raised through the constant praise they receive in recognition of their achievements and the encouragement they receive from the staff. Although the children are beginning to show good levels of independence in caring for themselves and their own personal hygiene, they are not always encouraged to be independent. Most children are able to pour their own drinks and put on their own coats and aprons. However, during snack time, the children are not encouraged to prepare their own snacks, for example by peeling or slicing the fruit. The children's behaviour most of the time is very good. However, because they are not fully occupied during snack time, their behaviour deteriorates whilst they are waiting and they become bored and restless.

The staff make good use of incidental learning opportunities, as well as planned activities, to introduce the children to all aspects of mathematics. The children are encouraged to count how many are present and, during song time, how many currant buns there are in the shop and how many are left when one is taken away. They count and sort animals into sizes, comparing whether they are small, medium or big and how many of each size they have. They are able to correctly identify shapes. For example, they know rectangular and square boxes hold their toys and their snacks are served on a round plate, which is a circle.

The children are becoming aware that print carries meaning and many children are beginning to recognise their own name. They practice their emergent writing skills in a variety of ways, for example through mark making activities such as painting and drawing, using various writing tools and paint brushes.

The children are becoming confident communicators. They talk about the activities they are doing, their families and things they have at home. The children enjoy looking at books both alone and in small groups. They listen attentively to stories being read and are able to recall what they have heard. The children confidently use a range of small equipment. For example, they use scissors to cut around drawn objects and hold a sticky tape dispenser with one hand whilst pulling the tape on to the cutter with their other hand. The children learn about the world around them through various topics and visitors to the nursery. They learn that different media can be combined and discuss the changes that occur. For example, they mix corn flour with water. Various wall displays and models show that the children have many opportunities to be creative and express themselves, using a wide range of recycled materials and media. The children use their imagination well and enjoy making up their own role play situations. For example, they pretend to be working in a Chinese restaurant, use a wok to cook rice, peppers and noodles and when it is ready they serve it into a bowl and attempt to eat it using chopsticks.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

The children enjoy having responsibilities and willingly offer to help the staff pack away the toys, vacuum the floor after messy play and hand out and collect the cups at snack time. All children are valued as individuals and respected. They respond well to the praise and encouragement they are given.

There are effective arrangements in place for caring for children with special education needs and all children's individual needs are well met. The nursery has two members of staff who are the named Special Education Needs Co-ordinators. Both have attended training and they liaise closely with parents, other professionals and outside agencies to ensure the children's specific needs are met and appropriately supported. The children have opportunities to celebrate festivals, try food from other cultures and use a range of resources which show positive images of wider society. The children are developing an awareness of the needs of others. For example, during their harvest festival celebrations, they bring in items of food from home which they then deliver to people in the community. The children's behaviour overall is generally good.

They play well together, learn how to share and take turns and are beginning to accept the needs of others. They begin to understand right and wrong through consistent boundaries and age appropriate methods, used by the staff to manage behaviour, including explanation and distraction. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is good. The children benefit from the good relationship the staff build with the parents. The parents receive good information about the nursery and the Foundation Stage in the form of a prospectus, newsletters and a well stocked information board at the entrance to the nursery. Good settling in procedures are offered to all children; they are able to attend pre-visits with their parents prior to attending. This provides them with the opportunity to become familiar with the staff and the surroundings in which they will be cared for. The parents have the opportunity to discuss any specific care arrangements or individual needs their children may have. As a result, the children are provided with appropriate care. The parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning in pre-school. They are invited in to share their professions, skills or cultural background with the children. Information is exchanged daily regarding the care that has been provided for babies and children under the age of 2, and the progress all children are making. The parents are able to view their child's written progress records at any time. However, these are not updated on a regular basis to reflect the good knowledge the staff have of the children. Consequently, the information available to parents does not always provide an accurate picture of the stage of development and learning their child is at, or what their next steps in learning are. This inhibits the support they can provide for their children, if they wish to continue their learning at home.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The nursery has a strong commitment towards providing an environment in the community, where children are nurtured and supported to develop. The children's care and learning is enhanced by the implementation of the operational plan and effective key worker system. Procedures for the recruitment of staff ensure all new staff are suitable to work with children under 8 and that they have appropriate qualifications and experience for the positions they hold. Procedures to ensure the ongoing suitability of staff are being developed. The children enjoy their time at nursery, because the staff have clearly identified roles and responsibilities and their deployment is effective. The staff work well together as a team. Detailed policies and procedures are known and implemented effectively, to successfully promote most children's care and well being.

The nursery is organised well. Separate areas are provided for children of differing ages; the children have the maximum space to engage in a variety of activities. Most of the time the children are grouped appropriately. However, the organisation of some daily routine activities does not meet the needs of all 3 and 4 year old children. Consequently, this has an impact on the type of behaviour they display and the learning they gain from such activities.

Leadership and management are good. The nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide. Secure and effective systems are in place, to monitor teaching and identify strengths and areas for development in individual performance. Management work closely with the children's key workers, to ensure all aspects of the curriculum are covered and all children have regular opportunities to participate in the full range of activities and experiences offered. However, they do not monitor the children's assessment records to ensure they are updated on a regular basis. As a result, this has an impact on the quality of the written information that is readily available for parents to view, regarding their children's progress.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection, the nursery were asked to improve: the staff's knowledge of the temperature required for the safe storage and re-cooking of food; the details recorded for children's attendance and the contact details given to parents who may wish to make a complaint.

All food is now stored in a refrigerator and a temperature probe is used. This ensures all meals children are provided with are stored and re-cooked to the correct temperature. The recording of children's attendance has been reviewed and now includes the times children arrive and depart, so the staff are always aware of who is present. Parents receive information of whom to contact if they wish to make a complaint, so they are able to express any views or concerns they may have.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection. 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**

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 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 hygiene practices in the babies department with regards to the frequency of hand washing of children and the cleaning of some toys.

#### **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):

- review the organisation of snack time so children are able to further develop their independence and the time they have to wait is minimised.
- ensure children's records of progress are updated on a regular basis so parents can see the progress their child is making through the stepping stones of the Foundation Stage.

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