



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 131562

DfES Number: 521081

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	03/11/2004
Inspector Name	Lisa Jane Cupples

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Squirrels Corner Pre-School
Setting Address	Townhill Way West End Southampton Hampshire SO18 3NU

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	The Committee of Squirrels Corner Pre-School
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Squirrels Corner Pre-School
Address	Townhill Way West End Southampton Hampshire SO18 3NU

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

Squirrels Corner Pre-school provides full day care and is run by a parents management committee. It opened in 1998 and operates in Moorlands Community Centre in the West End of Southampton. The premises include a main hall, kitchen, toilets, entrance hall and an enclosed outside play area. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open Monday, Tuesday and Friday 09:00 to 15:00 and on Wednesday and Thursday from 09:00 to 11:30. Children attend a variety of sessions.

There are currently 41 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on the roll. Of these, 23 children receive funding for nursery education. It is the settings normal practice to accept children from 2 years and 9 months. Children attend from the local community and surrounding areas. The pre-school supports children with special needs and English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs 7 staff who work directly with the children. There are 4 staff who hold early years qualifications and 2 members of staff are working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from the Early Education and Childcare Unit and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

How good is the Day Care?

Squirrels Corner Pre-school provides good quality care for children. The environment is warm and welcoming and the children settle quickly on arrival. The daily routines and activities are organised effectively. Staff deployment is very good and the sessions run smoothly. Staff provide an interesting and stimulating environment for the children. All paperwork is detailed and well-maintained. Most parental signatures of acknowledgement are in place.

The pre-school provides a very safe environment for all children. Good hygiene practice is promoted throughout the setting and children are encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times, helping to protect them from illness and infection. Staff who are qualified in first aid are on site during every session, however the

contents of the first aid box needs to be updated. The setting provides a wide range of healthy and nutritious snacks, developing the children's understanding of staying healthy. Staff have a sound understanding of equal opportunities and child protection procedures.

Staff have a very good understanding of the developmental needs of children. This enables them to provide a varied selection of resources and activities. The group special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) liaises extremely well with parents, staff and other agencies to support children who have special needs. Staff manage behaviour effectively. Children behave well and know what is expected of them. They have good levels of self-esteem and confidence.

Partnership with parents is strong. All policies and procedures are shared openly. The children's keyworkers are available at the end of each session to discuss their individual needs and progress. Parents have access to their children's records on request and are able to contribute about their children's home learning. Staff build good relationships with the families and provide a caring and supportive environment.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable

What is being done well?

- The staff team interact extremely well with the children, providing high levels of support and supervision. They listen actively to the children and respond quickly to their needs. For example, by providing additional resources and encouragement to enable the children to develop their ideas and extend their activities.
- The extensive range of play materials and resources are planned and organised effectively to ensure the children are fully occupied and interested during the sessions. Staff differentiate each activity well, enabling all children to reach their full potential and develop confidently in all areas. Children are able to self-select the resources encouraging high levels of independence.
- The canteen-style snack routines are well organised and provide ample opportunities for the children to develop their social skills and independence. Staff sit with the children, encouraging good conversation and manners. The snack menu's are displayed for parents information and all allergies, medical and cultural needs are discussed and recorded in detail. This enables the staff to respect the wishes of parents at all times.
- The staff take the time to get to know each child and their families well. The children's needs are discussed and activities are planned to ensure their individual needs are being met. All children are given the time, opportunity and encouragement to participate fully. They have access to a good selection of multi-cultural resources and take part in activities, helping to develop their understanding of the world around them.

- The staff team implement the behaviour management policies consistently and with a relaxed approach. Clear rules and boundaries are in place and children respond well to the staff's high expectations. The staff are positive role models. Good behaviour is recognised and rewarded with praise and encouragement, helping children to gain a good sense of right and wrong.

What needs to be improved?

- the procedures to ensure parents are kept informed about all medication administered by staff
- the system for ensuring the contents of the first aid box is up-to-date.

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

Since April 2004 Ofsted have not received any complaints about this provider.

Outcome of the inspection

Good

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
7	Ensure parents sign to acknowledge all medication administered by staff.
7	Update the contents of the first aid box.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

Squirrels Corner Pre-school offers children acceptable nursery education of high quality. Children are making very good progress in all six areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff have an extremely good understanding of the Foundation Stage. They know exactly what the children are expected to gain from each activity. The curriculum planning is detailed and well organised, although it does not cover the use of the outdoor play area. Key workers observe the children's progress during each session and record their achievements. Staff use this information to ensure all children's needs are met, activities are differentiated and the resources selected appropriately challenge the children. Staff interact with children exceptionally well, effectively questioning them to extend and support their learning. The setting supports children with special needs and the SENCO liaises well with the parents, staff and other agencies.

The leadership and management of the setting is very good. The enthusiastic and active committee provide a stable working environment. The well-established staff team are organised and have clear roles and responsibilities. The setting effectively evaluates and monitors its own strengths and weaknesses and has identified information technology as an area for improvement. Practice is continually adapted to ensure the group provides the best possible care and education for all children.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents receive a detailed prospectus which includes information about the six areas of learning. This helps the parents to understand the settings aims. Key workers are available for daily discussions and the parents have access to their children's records at any time. Parents are encouraged to share what they know about their children, they can attend key worker meetings and make written contributions about their children's learning at home.

What is being done well?

- Staff have a sound understanding of what they want the children to gain from each activity. They make good use of opportunities that arise during the session to reinforce the children's learning and understanding. Staff develop the play and extend the children's vocabulary at every opportunity, for example, the children are playing with cars and buses in the sand tray, staff talk about position, asking where the children would choose to sit on the bus, introducing mathematical language and new words, such as centre, middle, forward and backwards. Children then begin to use these words later in the session. 'My cup is in the centre of the table'.
- Children are making very good progress in personal, social and emotional development. They are extremely confident and show high levels of

independence. Children are active in their learning and show curiosity, examining resources, asking questions and trying new activities to learn more.

- Children are developing an interest and showing enjoyment from stories. Staff read books exceptionally well, using character voices and facial expressions to bring the stories to life. Children retell narratives during free-play and role-play. They use characters from their favourite stories during practical activities, for example, taking the bear to the park because he likes the sunshine, or helping Spot's mum to find Spot during role-play.
- Staff develop strong relationships with parents. Communication is clear and detailed information is shared regarding the settings aims and objectives. Parents have access to their children's records and are actively encouraged to become involved in their children's learning. They are able to discuss the children's needs, make written comments about their learning and attend meetings with the keyworkers, to ensure they are fully informed about their children's education and learning.

What needs to be improved?

- the opportunities for children to access and use a wide variety of programmable toys to extend and support their learning
- the curriculum planning, to include the use of the outdoor play area, to ensure a well-balanced programme is provided.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the setting was asked to address the following:

develop and refine planning to include provision for meeting the needs of specific groups, such as older and more able children. Include whole group activities and outside play in the planning to ensure effective and varied learning opportunities at these times;

extend use of the DfEE's Code of Practice, for example, by making individual educational plans, for those children about whom there are minor concerns;

develop the provision for promoting children's awareness of letters and letter sounds and for helping children to identify the sounds in words such as the initial sound of a word.

Progress since the last inspection has been very good.

Planning and activities provided are detailed and include the staff's role and differentiation of activities. The grouping of children and use of resources is identified in the planning to ensure staff awareness and effective implementation of the programme. The outside area has not yet been included and this has been raised as a point for consideration.

The group Senco has a good understanding of the Code of Practice and individual education plans are drawn up in partnership with parents, staff and other agencies to support each child's learning, development and inclusion in the group.

Children's progress in communication, language and literacy is very good. Children are able to recognise the shapes and sounds of letters during a wide range of appropriate practical activities. The resources used reflect the age and understanding of the children. Older children are beginning to recognise initial sounds of words during free-play and when using the book corner independently.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are keen and interested to learn. They participate enthusiastically in a wide range of activities. Children are confident and form good relationships with adults and their peers. They have high levels of independence and self-care. Children behave well, are polite and are beginning to show consideration for others. They are able to work together well in large and small groups, sharing and taking turns with ease.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident speakers in a variety of situations. They can express their ideas and explain their needs clearly. Children enjoy listening to stories and retelling narratives during free-play. They recognise the shapes and sounds of letters and identify the initial sounds of words when reading. Children can write their names and practice emergent writing in many situations for a variety of purposes.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children can count confidently up to and sometimes above 15. They recognise numerals up to 10 during practical activities and free-play. Children are beginning to use simple number operations, adding and subtracting with groups of objects. Children can recognise and recreate patterns. They are beginning to problem solve during activities. Children use mathematical language to describe shape, size, position, weight and quantity.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children are interested in the activities and resources. They show curiosity and ask questions to learn more. Children recognise the changes around them, for example, the changing colours of leaves. Children build and construct their own ideas using a range of materials. They use some programmable toys during activities. Children have a good sense of time and place. They are beginning to understand about other cultures and beliefs through topics, themes and a wide range of activities.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children move confidently around the setting from one activity to another. They move with imagination and control during physical activities. Children have good hand-eye co-ordination when completing puzzles and playing ball games. They have very good spatial awareness during large group activities. Children use large and small pieces of equipment with confidence and ease. They are able to manipulate a wide range of tools and objects with increasing control.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children recognise and identify a good selection of shapes and colours during practical activities. They are able to sing a wide range of songs from memory, independently and in groups. Children confidently match actions to rhymes and enjoy using props to act out stories and songs. Children play a variety of musical instruments and are beginning to recognise simple sound patterns. They use their imaginations well during role-play, art and craft and musical activities.	
Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.	

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- There are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to the following:
- provide more opportunities for children to use programmable toys to extend and support their learning
- extend the detailed curriculum planning to include the use of the outside play area to ensure a balanced programme is provided.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.