



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 117226

DfES Number: 517031

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	06/07/2004
Inspector Name	Nikki Whinton

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Squirrels (Honicknowle) Pre-School
Setting Address	St Francis of Assisi Church Little Dock Lane Plymouth Devon PL5 2LP

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Squirrels (Honicknowle) Pre-School 1038927
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Squirrels (Honicknowle) Pre-School
Address	Church of St Francis of Assisi 53 Little Dock Lane, Honicknowle Plymouth Devon PL5 2LP

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 (Honicknowle) Pre-School opened in September 2000. The group were previously known as Woodland Fort Pre-School which opened in 1968. Since 2000 the group operates from the church hall of St. Francis of Assisi in Honicknowle, near Plymouth. The pre-school serves the local area.

There are currently 33 children from two to five years on roll. This includes 14 funded three-year-olds and 12 funded-four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently five children attending with special needs. There are no children attending who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens four mornings a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.30 to 12.00. The group is also open Tuesday afternoons from 12.15 to 14.45.

Three part-time and two full-time staff work with the children. Three have early years qualifications and two are currently attending training.

How good is the Day Care?

Squirrels (Honicknowle) Pre-School offers satisfactory care for children. Staff are currently undertaking appropriate professional qualifications. Good staffing ratios are maintained, although children's attendance is not always recorded accurately. Effective use is made of the available play space. The premises are suitably clean and maintained, warm and welcoming to parents and children. Staff offer children a suitable variety of age appropriate equipment and play resources.

The premises are secure. Staff have a good understanding of their fire safety responsibilities. However, measures to promote children's good health are unsatisfactory. Food and drink provided does not always meet children's specific requirements. Staff have valuable experience of caring for children with a variety of additional needs. Staff do not have a full understanding of their role in the protection of children.

Staff offer a suitable range of activities and play opportunities to support children's development and welfare. However, staff do not have a good understanding of effective ways to manage children's behaviour.

Staff have suitable procedures in place to keep parents advised about care issues. Most required regulatory documentation is securely stored and easily accessible.

What has improved since the last inspection?

As a result of the last inspection, the group was requested to complete the following actions;

- . ensure the system for registering children and staff attendance shows times of arrival and departure
- . confirm in the operational plan how the group plan the acceptance of rising three's, review the complaints and admissions policies, produce a confidentiality procedure, a special needs policy, a behaviour management statement, child protection policies and procedures. Ensure all staff are aware of the policies and procedures
- . produce a policy in the event of a child being lost or not collected
- . complete a risk assessment of the premises
- . ensure fire drill procedures comply with fire safety regulations and that drills are recorded
- . obtain written parental permission at the time of placement for the seeking of emergency medical advice or treatment
- . maintain records of medicines administered to children.

The group's operational plan now includes suitable policies regarding rising three's, fire drill procedures, administration of medication, non collected children, complaints, admissions, confidentiality, special needs, behaviour management and child protection. Risk assessments and emergency evacuation drills are regularly undertaken,

However, staff do not have a good understanding of child protection procedures, there is no procedure in the event of a child being lost, children's attendance is not accurately recorded. Written parental permission has not been obtained for the seeking of emergency medical treatment or advice.

What is being done well?

- The playleader, deputy and staff are currently undertaking professional childcare qualifications. They have the experience and ability to offer appropriate care to children. There are satisfactory procedures in place to protect children from unvetted adults.

- The premises are secure, clean, suitably maintained and of an appropriate temperature for the care of children. There is sufficient space for the number of children currently permitted to attend. Staff offer parents, carers and children a warm and welcoming environment.
- Staff offer children a range of activities and play opportunities to help promote their welfare and development. Children are confident and independent. They are building positive relationships with adults and peers.
- Staff have a good understanding of how to support children attending the setting who have a range of additional needs. The group's Special Educational Needs Coordinator has undertaken appropriate professional training. Good liaison is maintained with health professionals. All staff have attended training to support them in producing and maintaining children's individual educational plans. Children are cared for within an environment which supports their welfare and development.
- Staff ensure required regulatory documentation is securely stored and easily accessible for inspection. Staff have a good understanding of confidentiality issues regarding children's records.

What needs to be improved?

- the staff's procedures for promoting children's good health and hygiene, their arrangements to ensure staff take positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and their systems to make sure appropriate measures are taken when children are ill
- the staff's arrangements to ensure children are regularly provided with nutritious food and drink in sufficient quantity to meet their needs and to comply with their dietary requirements
- the staff's knowledge and understanding of effective ways to manage children's behaviour, which actively promote their welfare, safety and development
- the documentation, to ensure there is a written procedure in place in the event of a child being lost and the daily register accurately records children's attendance
- the staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues.

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

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 must take the following actions by the date shown

Std	Action	Date
7	Make sure children's emergency contact details are available, request written parental permission for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment, ensure good hygiene practices are in place regarding hand washing, ensure a suitable first aid box is kept and ensure parents sign the record book to acknowledge when accidents have occurred to children.	16/07/2004
8	Ensure information regarding children's allergies and dietary needs is shared with staff, make sure children are provided with regular drinks and nutritious food in adequate quantities to meet their needs.	16/07/2004

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

Std	Recommendation
2	Ensure the daily attendance of staff, children and visitors is accurately recorded and there is a policy in place in the event of a child being lost.
11	Develop staff's awareness and understanding of effective ways to manage children's behaviour, taking into account their age and stage of development. Ensure procedures used actively promote children's safety and welfare.
13	Develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Squirrels Pre-School offers acceptable provision, but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses in the provision.

Teaching has significant weaknesses. Staff are enthusiastic and well motivated. They support children in developing their independence. However, they have a limited understanding of the foundation stage and do not use assessment effectively to plan for children's future learning. Staff are not always well deployed and do not consistently manage children's behaviour effectively. Staff plan and provide a variety of activities to help support children's development and learning. However, opportunities do not always offer sufficient challenge and children have limited chances to self select resources. Staff offer valuable support to children with special educational needs.

Leadership and management has significant weaknesses. Staff are aware of areas for development and are putting strategies in place to support improvement. The management committee does not have a full understanding of the group's weaknesses. Staff and management do not work effectively in partnership to monitor or evaluate the provision. Nevertheless, the committee and staff are committed to developing the quality of the care and education offered to the children.

The partnership with parents has significant weaknesses. They are not kept well informed about their child's educational achievements and are not encouraged to contribute to assessment. They have few chances to be involved in their child's learning. However, they are provided with good quality information about the setting when their child starts in the group and receive informative newsletters.

What is being done well?

- Children enjoy books. They spontaneously explore books, both with peers and adults. They enthusiastically take part in regularly planned whole group story time sessions.
- Children use their imagination to initiate and develop their own ideas whilst taking part in sustained role play. They use language well to express and communicate their ideas, cooperate well with others and use resources effectively to enhance their play.

What needs to be improved?

- staff's knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage and early learning goals

- staff's provision of a stimulating range of child centred activities to promote children's learning across all areas of development and which offer sufficient challenge to meet the needs of older and more able children
- staff's programme for assessment and planning, to ensure regular observations and assessments are undertaken on children across all areas of development and cluster groupings. Use the information, together with parental observations, to plan for individual children's future learning
- staff's partnership with parents, to ensure parents are kept well informed about their child's progress and achievements, are encouraged to contribute to assessments and are invited to become actively involved in their child's learning
- leadership and management, to ensure the group work effectively as a team to monitor, evaluate and develop the quality of the educational provision offered to the children

What has improved since the last inspection?

The group have made limited progress since the last inspection.

As a result of the last inspection, the setting was given the following key issues;

- . group the four-year-olds and more able children for short structured sessions to undertake more challenging tasks related to communication, language and literacy and mathematics. Involve more work on letter sounds.
- . plan and use the time more effectively for teaching opportunities mid-morning, during tidying up time, toileting and snack time.
- . provide daily physical activity, including more frequent opportunities for vigorous activity, to promote healthy bodies and develop physical skills. Fully utilise the large hall.
- . organise and label resources so that they are more easily accessed by staff.

Staff have developed the toileting and snack routines, to make better use of the available time. Children have regular planned and free choice opportunities to promote their large muscle development. Resources are easily accessible to staff.

However, older and more able children have limited opportunities to undertake activities to promote their communication, language and literacy or mathematical development. They have few chances to develop their letter sound awareness. Activities offered to support children's large muscle development do not provide sufficient challenge to meet the needs of older and more able children.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are confident, independent and have good self esteem. They use their initiative well to develop their ideas. Children are increasing their social skills. They are developing their awareness of the need to share and take turns. They are building positive relationships with staff and peers. However, children do not always behave appropriately and they are not consistently well occupied in purposeful play activities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children use language confidently when talking to peers and adults. They use speech well to express and develop their ideas. Children enjoy exploring books spontaneously with peers and staff and take part in regularly planned story time sessions. However, children have few chances to develop their awareness of letter sounds or how to link sounds and letters. They rarely take part in early writing activities which offer sufficient challenge to older and more able children.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Poor
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Children have some chances to count and recognise numbers as labels. However, they rarely take part in activities to develop their understanding of calculation, shape, space or measure. The opportunities provided do not offer sufficient challenge to meet the needs of older and more able children.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Children regularly design and build using a variety of construction materials. They discuss significant events in their lives with peers and adults. However, children rarely explore the local environment or have chances to find out more about the area in which they live. They have very limited opportunities to develop their awareness of a range of cultures and beliefs or to use information and communication technology to support their play and learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children move confidently and safely within the provision, showing good spatial awareness. They safely use a range of equipment, tools and materials, with developing coordination and control. However, staff do not effectively raise children's awareness of healthy eating or good hygiene practices. Activities provided to promote children's large muscle development do not offer sufficient challenge to meet the needs of older and more able children.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
Children have opportunities to explore colour, texture, shape, form and space in two and three dimensions. They enjoy using their imagination whilst engaged in role play. However, children have few chances to take part in child centred and initiated art and craft activities, which enable them to use their imagination, develop their own ideas, or self select resources. Children rarely take part in activities which allow them to develop their awareness of music or investigate musical instruments.	

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The next inspection will take place in one to two years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- improve staff's knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage and early learning goals
- plan and provide a stimulating range of child centred activities which help to promote children's learning across all areas of development and which offer sufficient challenge to meet the needs of older and more able children
- develop the programme for assessment and planning, to ensure regular observations and assessments are undertaken on children across all areas of development and cluster groupings. Use the information, together with parental observations, to plan for individual children's future learning
- develop the partnership with parents, to ensure parents are kept well informed about their child's progress and achievements, are encouraged to contribute to assessments and are invited to become actively involved in their child's learning
- improve the leadership and management of the setting, to ensure the group work effectively as a team to monitor, evaluate and develop the quality of the education offered to the children.

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.