



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 511345

DfES Number: 514618

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	07/01/2005
Inspector Name	Marilyn Joy

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Squirrels Pre-school
Setting Address	West Totton Community Centre Hazel Farm Road Totton Hampshire SO40 8WU

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Squirrels Pre-School 1025265
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Squirrels Pre-School
Address	West Totton Community Centre Hazel Farm Road Totton Hampshire SO40 8WU

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public 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 Preschool is managed by a voluntary committee of parents and opened in 1989. It operates from West Totton Community Centre and the Community Room (belong to the Centre) within Hazelwood School. The pre-school has access to the school playground. It serves the local community.

There are 78 children on roll and of these 69 receive funding for nursery education. The group currently supports children who have special educational needs. Children attend for a number of sessions a week. It is the pre-school's aim to provide at least one session a week on the school site prior to the children going into school.

TIMES AND DAYS OF OPENING

Main Hall - West Totton Community Centre

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 09:30-12:00 and 12:45-15:15

Wednesday 12:45-15:15

Community Room - Hazelwood School

Wednesday 09:15 - 11:45

Thursday and Friday 09:15-11:45 and 12:45-15:15

There are 10 members of staff who work with the children. There are 5 qualified members of staff and 3 who are working towards relevant qualifications. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Squirrels Pre-school provides good quality nursery education overall which enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Provision for physical development is very good.

The quality of teaching is generally good. A well-planned curriculum offers a stimulating range of activities to promote children's development in all areas. Most staff are qualified and experienced and present activities in an interesting and lively manner. Generally they make good use of plans and the stepping stones when implementing the programme and recording children's achievements. Sometimes written planning is not differentiated to enable staff to fully support individual children through all sessions. The wide range of resources is efficiently rotated and organised to support children's learning. Staff form easy and trusting relationships with children. They have a good understanding of behaviour management and provide positive role models. They provide an inviting and supportive environment where children develop confidence and a positive disposition towards learning. There is good support for children with special educational needs.

Leadership and Management is generally good. There are clear systems in place to ensure effective communication between leaders, staff and committee. Staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and work well together. There is a strong commitment towards providing good quality care and encouraging further training. There are some systems for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the provision, although not all areas identified have been fully addressed.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are provided with a wide range of information and are well-informed about their child's achievements and progress. They are encouraged to be involved in the pre-school. Regular newsletters keep them up-to-date and offer suggestions on supporting learning at home.

What is being done well?

- Partnership with parents is given a high priority. Staff regularly exchange information with parents and build on their very good settling-in routines. Parents value the good communication and relationships with staff.
- Children are given time and space to develop their physical skills. Resources are rotated daily to ensure children can practise using a wide range of small and large equipment.
- Staff use effective strategies to promote positive behaviour. They provide children with clear and consistent boundaries and help them understand what is expected of them. They set a good example and children respond well.
- Staff recognise the importance of promoting children's personal, social and emotional development to enable them to flourish in other areas of learning.

They value children's contributions and encourage conversations.

What needs to be improved?

- some aspects of the planning and assessment
- regular opportunities for children to develop number and problem solving skills
- opportunities for children to select resources and express themselves creatively.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Generally good progress has been achieved since the last inspection. The pre-school was asked to extend the use of familiar words on displays and equipment. Displays and some resources are clearly labelled although children's attention is not always drawn to them.

They were asked to continue development of the records of progress to show what staff intend children to learn in each area of learning. Clear learning intentions are included in the planning although this does not include differentiation for individual children. Some records do not accurately reflect progress in all aspects in each area of learning.

The pre-school was asked to ensure that appropriate record-keeping systems are in place to support children with special educational needs. Staff have attended training and suitable records are maintained and reviewed.

The pre-school was asked to extend the range of factual and story books to support the programme for language and literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world. Additional books have been obtained and are available for children to use. They include a selection of reference, dual language, and story books.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are developing confidence and an interest in learning. They are enthusiastic and demonstrate increasing concentration for example when threading. They play co-operatively and are learning to share and take turns. They know what is expected and behave well. Children are developing independence in caring for themselves but have few opportunities to select their own resources. Children are learning to respect each other and form friendly relationships with others.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are keen to communicate through talk and gesture. At circle time they listen attentively to stories and each other. Many respond to questions and talk about their experiences. They join in with familiar rhymes. There is a good range of books and children handle them well. Many can find their names although some opportunities are missed to recognise familiar sounds and letters or notice print around the room. Children use a variety of tools to practise pre-writing skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children enjoy mathematical games and activities. They join in with number rhymes and some count how many are left. They receive individual support to sort, match and sequence. Many children identify colours, shape and size. They explore physical shapes when constructing with different size bricks or making puzzles. Well-planned focus activities introduce numbers and problem solving, however opportunities are missed to reinforce during everyday routines.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
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An exciting range of activities are planned to stimulate children's interest in the world around them. They observe changes when melting ice or making vegetable soup. They compare old and new and talk about the past when looking at baby photos. They find out about living things during topics such as mini-beasts and the seasons. Children build models from construction sets although rarely select craft materials to create their own design. They have some opportunities to operate simple equipment.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children skilfully use the climbing frame. They experiment with different ways of climbing up, down and through. Many move with confidence and control. They are becoming aware of their own and each other's space when moving around or engrossed in tasks. They use a range of small and large equipment to develop their hand-eye co-ordination. They concentrate and develop their skills with practise, for example when cutting, drawing or using tongs to pick up their snack.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children enjoy craft activities which are well presented. They explore textures and experiment with different paint effects. Many identify colours and some are beginning to differentiate between shades. Few opportunities are available for children to select craft materials and initiate their own designs. Children enthusiastically join in with familiar songs. They regularly play musical instruments and explore sounds. They use their imaginations and create their own storylines.	
Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.	

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally 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: THE KEY ISSUES

- continue to develop planning and assessment to ensure equal emphasis is given to each aspect in all areas of learning and activities are presented at the right level for all children
- increase opportunities for children to count, recognise numerals and solve simple problems during everyday activities
- provide opportunities for children to develop independence in selecting resources and express themselves creatively.

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.