

# Squiggles Childcare

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY348921  
**Inspection date** 09/05/2011  
**Inspector** Claire Parnell

**Setting address** Walker House, London Road, Riverhead, SEVENOAKS,  
Kent, TN13 2DN

**Telephone number** 01732 461146

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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

Squiggles Childcare has been registered since 2007. It is a privately owned nursery which operates from a detached building in Riverhead, near Sevenoaks, Kent. Children are cared for in group rooms on both the ground and first floor. All children have access to a fully enclosed outside play area. The nursery is registered for 93 children within the early years age range and is open from 08:00 until 18.00, Monday to Friday, 51 weeks of the year. Extended hours can be provided by prior arrangement. The nursery is closed for one week over the Christmas period and on bank holidays. The nursery is registered on the Early Years register and the compulsory and voluntary Childcare register.

There are currently 163 children on roll. This includes 44 children who receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

A team of 35 staff work with the children. Of these, 26 staff hold recognised early years qualifications to level two, three and four. Staff are currently working towards further qualification.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Practitioners competently promote the unique needs of each child and effectively meet their learning and welfare needs, although some additional resources are required to fully promote equality and diversity. Children feel safe because there are good systems in place to safeguard their welfare along with effective deployment of staff. Children make good progress in their learning and development towards the early learning goals, with some aspects of learning and assessment needing further development to fully enhance children's development. The strong engagement with parents ensures continuity of care for children is given high priority. The setting has developed successful liaisons with other settings and local schools too. Regular and effective self evaluation helps staff to review and reflect practices and identify areas in the setting for improvements. Therefore demonstrating a strong capacity to improve.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- provide consistent system to track individual children's stages of development through planning and observations linked to the areas of learning
- extend the use of problem solving, numeracy and reasoning concepts within

- everyday routine situations
- make further resources accessible to children to positively reflect equality and diversity

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Children are safeguarded well through the effective policies, procedures and practices implemented by staff. Children are kept safe and secure within the setting. For example, no one is able to enter the setting or individual rooms without using an intercom system. Training updates for safeguarding have been undertaken and continuously reviewed so that all staff fully understand child protection issues and how to refer to concerns. Fire drills are successfully implemented to ensure children have a growing understanding of what to do in an emergency. Risk assessments are carried out on a formal level by management and on a daily basis by all staff in the rooms, using a checklist and observation skills to ensure a strong commitment to the children's safety. Very effective recruitment procedures are in place when employing new staff. For example, references are followed up, criminal record checks are carried out and qualifications are verified to prove the staff's suitability. All visitors to the setting are recorded and supervised to promote children's welfare. Children feel safe and secure due to the familiar and welcoming staff as well as a bright and stimulating environment. Staff ensure all accidents and incidents are recorded and reviewed and parents are informed to promote children's ongoing care.

The management team are good motivators for all staff, who demonstrate their commitment and dedication to the ongoing improvements of the setting. Staff regularly review their practices and identify changes needed to improve the outcomes for children by using a continuous evaluation system. The staff work closely as a team to cascade new strategies and skills that they have learnt through regular external training. In house training also ensures consistent approaches are promoted throughout the nursery. The setting has taken into consideration the three recommendations given to them at their last inspection. Two of the three have been successfully met with additional development needed to fulfil the third recommendation with regard to assessment systems for children's progress. The setting also takes into consideration any advice and support offered through the local authority. The setting has an ambitious drive towards their continuous development.

Children have access to a good range of activities, resources and equipment, both indoors and outdoors. Some are pre-selected by staff which are linked to focussed planned adult led activities. The majority are self selected by children to allow them to lead their own play and initiate learning situations themselves. Therefore children locate, identify and choose their preferred activity. For example, a toddling baby helps himself to two bricks in the shelving system at his height and continues to take more and more out of the box until he has emptied the box, he then progressed onto putting the bricks back in. The resources throughout the nursery promotes learning for all ages and stages of development and promotes all areas of learning within the Early Years Foundation stage. This ensures inclusive

practices, encouraging all children to participate in the setting's activities. Children's background and family information is gained at the point of entry to establish a care programme to meet their individual needs. This includes home language, religion and ethnicity. However, the limited resources promoting positive images of today's society are not always accessible to children at all times. Therefore children are not gaining a full understanding about the celebration and respect for differences within the nursery and their wider community. Staff actively use information gained from training courses as a resource to implement new practices within the session.

The setting works well with other providers and other professionals. The setting, especially the pre-school, has links with local primary schools and regularly invites reception teachers to the setting to meet the children they are going to teach, discuss children's likes, dislikes and interests and learn about how children learn and their progress so far. The setting has worked with other professionals in the past to support children's behaviour and emotional needs. Therefore consistent approaches are shared and implemented with home, other professionals and the setting to offer continuous care for children. The setting works with other providers who offer shared care for children by liaising closely through communication systems. This keeps each other informed about children's interests and particular achievements they have made in each setting.

The setting demonstrates a strong commitment to engaging parents/ carers to promote continuity of care for children. Staff build confident relationships with parents on a daily basis, welcoming them into the nursery, talking about home life and discussing their children's progress and care needs. As a result most children settle quickly and are happy in the setting. Parents receive high levels of visual and verbal information relating to the setting as a whole and about their individual children. Parents are actively encouraged to update their key person with information about the children's changing needs and routines, especially the younger children. Parents have access to information about all the staff in the nursery regarding their role and their qualifications. Celebrations are shared through a regular newsletters such as staff who have recently gained further qualifications and news about forthcoming new babies. Parents are well informed about their children's development and receive daily feedback about what their children have been doing, who they have been playing with and what they have achieved. Parents are happy and confident about the care their children receive and make positive comments about the relationships that they have with all the staff in the nursery. Parents are encouraged to play an active part in the nursery such as being a parent representative, meeting regularly to discuss development that they would like to see implemented. For example, many parents attended a first aid course on a Saturday which was initiated through the parents forum. Parents meet formally with their key people on a regular basis through open evenings, to look at their children's development records, talk about their child's progress and plan for their next steps for development.

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

Children are very settled and happy in their environment. They are familiar with the routine and the layout of the nursery due to the continuous practices and familiar staff. Children are supported well as they have access to a good range of interesting and challenging materials and equipment relating to their age and stage of development. Children move around their rooms freely making decisions for themselves about what to engage with and what meets their interests and needs. Staff react to children quickly to ensure they are consistently engaged and participating in a good balance of child initiated and adult led activities. Children have planned and routine opportunities for twice daily outside play. Children enjoy the freedom to move, extend their physical skills by climbing the humps and bumps and exploring the sand pit on all occasions.

Staff stimulate children's interest in all areas of learning, most of the time, both inside and outside, through discussion and explanations. Staff know the children well and gain genuine close and affectionate relationships with the children. Children are inquisitive thinkers, constantly exploring their surroundings and eager to participate in the activities that staff provide for them. The babies revel in the delight of shaving foam, squeezing the foam between their fingers, smelling the foam and discovering the texture of the foam on the tray. Older children explore mixing colours in an adult led focus activity which encourages children to experiment, ask questions about what colour they can make next and what colours they need to make that colour. Pre-school children are intrigued by visitors and willingly invite them into their play by exploring the creative workshop and malleable materials such as jelly and water. Children are confident to ask questions and are eager to share their achievements with all. Children gain good dexterity skills to enable mark making and pre-writing skills through malleable materials such as play dough, shaving foam and cooking. Young children take it in turns to use a spoon to mix a cake mixture and spoon the correct amounts into cases, helping to develop the skills for writing in the future. Older children make attempts to label their own work and use clear labelled trays with their names and named and pictorial place mats to associate letters with their names as well as objects that start with the same letter. Children enjoy looking at books, turning the pages from an early age and following a story and events through pictures. They listen intently to their peers who talk about the story and share in their discoveries. Children thrive in a world of discovery and exploration. Young children are intrigued by the disappearing ball in the helter skelter, looking to see where it has gone, learning that through repetition, the ball rolls out of the bottom after they have put it in the top. Staff talk about where the ball has gone and how it got to the bottom, making children think about cause and effect. Children have access to activities to promote problem solving, numeracy and reasoning. However, children's understanding and use of mathematical language is sometimes limited throughout the setting, as staff do not always talk about counting, numerals, shape, size and calculations in every day situations within the setting such as meal times and circle time. Through all these experiences, children are developing skills for the future.

The staff plan for children's individual learning through a system used throughout the nursery. However, this system is not consistently used in the same way in the different rooms. Most rooms identify activities relating to children's development, targeting individual children's developmental needs and progress. However, these plans and the snap shot spontaneous observations made throughout the time at the setting are not linked to the areas, aspects and stages of children's learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage to enable other staff, other professionals or other settings in the future, to track and monitor children's progressive development. Staff do know the children well at source, giving them experiences and challenges to progress in every area of learning but these are not always used to actively plan for their next steps of development.

Children have a very clear and confident understanding of keeping healthy and promoting good hygiene practices. Every child's health is highly promoted due to the procedures in place to protect children from illnesses and spread of infection as well as teaching children to keep themselves healthy. They all have outside play in all weathers every day to gain fresh air and exercise. Along with this, children take part in physical activities within their rooms, either dancing to music or using physical activities. The staff ensure windows are opened on hot days and that children are able to access drinks of fresh water throughout the day, mostly at snack and meal times. Children are given healthy options at both snack and meal times, taking into consideration their dietary requirements that are specifically met by the cook. Staff always ensure the kitchen is kept up to date with children's changing dietary needs, especially with regard to weaning babies. Children are encouraged to make choices from the foods offered to them, helping to serve themselves and decide their portion size. They are actively invited to have more once they have finished. Children are constantly reminded of positive hygiene procedures and by the time they are upstairs with the older children they take full responsibility for their hygiene, clearly explaining why they wash their hands, asking for the soap and cleaning their teeth appropriately. They remind each other to dry their hands properly and place the towels in the bin afterwards. Older children can openly explain the importance of sun protection, stating that the sun will hurt their eyes without glasses and that they need to wear sun cream so that they don't burn.

Children demonstrate a good understanding about keeping themselves safe. Very young children tell staff that knives are sharp when they are using plastic cutters for dough, although staff reassure them that the cutters are not sharp and that they are safe to use. Children remind others about safety, having listened to staff telling others to blow their food in case it is hot, they tell others to do the same, explaining that it might burn their tongue. Older children demonstrate how to use the stairs to the garden safely when leaving the pre-school room stating that they must hold the rail so that they don't fall. Children show a very caring attitude towards others from a very early age. Young children cuddle up together on the bean bags to look at the books, putting their arms around each other in a tender and sensitive fashion. Children understand the importance of boundaries and eagerly remind others about rules within the nursery. For example, older children remind their peers to be quiet when staff are reading stories to them "I cant hear when you are talking". Staff intervene quickly when inappropriate behaviour is observed. They sensitively talk to the children involved about the impact that their



actions have on the other children around them, helping them to understand how their behaviour makes others feel.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	3
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	2

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	1
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