

The Squirrels Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Jameel Hassan

Setting address	Meadow Croft School, Little Green Lane, Chertsey, Surrey, KT16 9PT
Telephone number	01932 561419
Email	eric.hatchwell@ntlworld.com
Type of setting	Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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

The Squirrels Pre-School opened in 2000 and operates from a classroom in Meadowcroft Infant School in Chertsey, Surrey. There are suitable toilet and kitchen facilities available, and children have access to a fully enclosed outside play area. The pre-school is also able to use the school hall and grounds. Children come from the local area of Chertsey, Addlestone and Ottershaw. The pre-school operates each weekday during term-time only. Opening times are from 9am to 3pm on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, and 9am to 12.30pm on Wednesdays and Fridays. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. Children may attend on a sessional or whole day basis. There are currently 45 children on roll, aged from two to under five years. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education for three- and four-year-olds. The pre-school welcomes children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. A total of nine adults work with the children; of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications. The registered owner of the pre-school has achieved the Foundation Degree and the BA Honours degree in Early Years and is currently working towards an MA in Early Years. Two practitioners have Early Years Professional Status. The pre-school has achieved the Surrey Early Years Quality Assurance Scheme.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Overall the quality of provision is good. The Squirrels Pre-school provides a welcoming and stimulating environment for young children. The children know how to keep themselves clean, healthy and safe. Since the last inspection, staff have worked successfully to make significant changes to aspects of the pre-school, particularly the outdoor play area and appropriate reading resources, thereby greatly improving outcomes for children. Self- evaluation is strong and the assessment and tracking of children's progress is generally good. The motivated staff have good capacity to ensure continuous improvement in order to promote good outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- implement more robust procedures for tracking the progress of particular groups of children to enable staff to address any differences
- increase the consistency with which children's individual progress is recorded

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The pre-school is very well organised. Staff have the knowledge and information to enable them to protect children, should they be concerned about their care. Children's safety is protected by effective procedures. All required documentation is up to date, accurate, and contributes well to the safety of children, including a mobile phone policy. Staff are thoroughly vetted, and a concise organised record is kept of their Criminal Records Bureau checks and appropriate qualifications.

All the staff work well together, sharing responsibilities for the smooth running of the sessions. They contribute to the planning and the pre-school's on-going self-evaluation. Adults are very well qualified, and attend appropriate courses which directly benefit the children. For example, as a result of training they have introduced a speech and language programme, which is greatly improving children's vocabulary and language development and therefore children are making good progress from their starting points.

The pre-school is committed to inclusive practice. Staff devise activities specifically to meet the needs of children who speak English as an additional language, and incorporate them into their planning. For example the pre-school celebrated Korean New Year's Day with a child who came from Korea. There are attractive displays, including a visual timetable which children can point to and convey their needs or wishes. Excellent resources are available to support children's understanding of their own and the wider community. There are a number of books, dressing-up clothes and art work in the pre-school, depicting a positive image of people from a range of countries, faiths and cultures, which help children to learn about the wider world. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported, with appropriate involvement from other local agencies and professionals.

Since the last inspection, The Squirrels has made enormous improvements to the outside area and resources, demonstrating a good ability to develop and enhance outcomes for children. Accurate self-evaluation enables staff to have a realistic view of the pre-school's strengths in order to build on these. Plans for the future are well targeted to improve outcomes for children, although there is not enough emphasis on analysing how well specific groups of children are progressing in order to eradicate any differences. Children's key persons form excellent relationships with parents. Consequently, parents feel well informed about their children's well-being and progress and are very aware that staff plan from their child's interests. This is evident when they attend the parents' evening and their child's progress is shared. The setting is working hard to drive further improvements. The management take great care to listen to parents and as a result of the parental questionnaire, changes have been made. For example, staff have placed notice boards inside and outside the pre-school and have organised a 'Dads Day' for fathers to share their child's learning. Parents believe that the staff really care for their child and support their needs too, addressing any concerns that may arise. They appreciate the friendliness, support and commitment of staff.

Excellent and innovative systems are in place to keep parents informed using new information technologies.

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

The needs and interests of children are incorporated in the planning through the use of parental information and observation of the children. For example, the use of dressing-up clothes brought to, life a book that one child had read. Other dressing-up clothes are used to celebrate children's traditions, such as children dressing up in Asian costume for the celebration of Divali.

Children have a good understanding about a healthy lifestyle. They have good health and personal hygiene practices, acting independently to wash their hands before eating and after going to the toilet. One child even reminded herself and another that they forgot to wash their hands after going to the toilet and dutifully went back and washed them. Children are encouraged to eat healthily and explain how important it is to eat fruit. Packed lunch information is given to parents to ensure children get the appropriate diet and the lunches reflect this.

Staff are attentive to the children's needs and form strong relationships with them, which help children to feel exceptionally safe within the pre-school. The children have an excellent knowledge of how to keep safe. For example a child reminded staff that the gate needed to be locked after the parents took their children home at lunchtime. Children put on their coats before going out to play because they want to keep warm. Children's behaviour is outstanding. They care for each other and take a concentrated interest in both the activities they develop themselves and also those directed by adults. Parachute games are used well to enhance the learning of colours and numbers, thereby reinforcing and improving children's basic number and literacy skills. A science activity gave the children a sense of fascination and awe and an opportunity to predict what might happen, amongst the screams of excitement and joy.

Self-esteem is high. Children take responsibility for themselves and others. Each morning children self-register using the interactive white board. They pour their own drinks and cut their own food, sometimes with support from staff if needed.

During the session they use materials which require cutting, doing this independently and safely with relevant resources. Children use computers and cameras capably which contributes wonderfully to the displays of their work. They are encouraged to put away items they have used during the day in the easily accessible resource equipment boxes. Children negotiate and resolve independently issues that may arise between themselves. They are excellent at sharing the available resources, allowing all to have great fun when playing and learning in groups.

Children's individual records show that learning is at the heart of all that the pre-school does and shows the impact of the planned activities on individual children. Staff make regular observations of each child, although there are inconsistencies in

the way children's achievements and their progress are recorded.

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

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
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	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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