

Squirrels Corner Pre-School

Townhill Way, West End, Southampton, Hampshire, SO18 3NU

Inspection date

06/03/2014

Previous inspection date

26/11/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

2

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend 2

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children 2

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision 2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Staff provide an extensive range of activities and experiences to effectively promote children's understanding of the world.
- The safeguarding procedures are robust and effective to promote the welfare of all children.
- Staff support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities effectively and strong interagency partnerships ensure they meet children's individual needs successfully.
- Staff provide all children with high quality outdoor learning experiences.

It is not yet outstanding because

- A small part of the session is not well organised to ensure all children are actively engaged throughout the day.
- Parents and children are not actively involved in the evaluation of the setting to contribute to improvements in the quality of the provision.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities inside and outside.
- The inspector spent time talking with the pre-school manager, administrative manager, parents, staff and children.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation including children's records, safeguarding procedures, risk assessments, policies and procedures.

Inspector

Lisa Cupples

Full report

Information about the setting

Squirrels Corner Pre-school opened in 1991 and registered in 1998. It operates from Moorlands Community Centre in the West End of Southampton. The pre-school operates from one room and there is an enclosed outdoor play area.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. There are currently 37 children in the early years age group on roll. The pre-school provides free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The pre-school is open each weekday from 9am to 3.30pm during school term times. Children attend from the local community and surrounding areas. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who learn English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs five members of staff. All five hold appropriate early years qualifications and three are working towards higher qualifications.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- improve the organisation of the session just prior to lunch time to ensure all children remain engaged in purposeful activities
- develop the evaluation process to include the views of parents and children to further drive improvement within the setting.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Staff have a good understanding of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and its requirements. They implement the educational programmes successfully to promote the children's learning in all areas. Consequently, children are making good progress in their learning and development. Staff spend time observing what the children can do and record the information clearly in the children's individual learning folders. Staff effectively use the information alongside the children's interests and different learning styles to identify and plan for the children's next learning steps. This information is displayed in the hall for all staff to see, ensuring children's learning is extended at every opportunity. The children's key people gather information about their starting points from parents before the children attend. This enables staff to begin to plan activities and experiences to interest the children and help them to settle on arrival.

All staff demonstrate good quality teaching skills and they sit with the children at their level, engaging them in purposeful conversation. Children recall past events and share personal experiences, such as talking about what they did at the weekend. Staff are interested in what the children say and respond well, extending their vocabulary at every opportunity. Staff also encourage children to complete tasks they have started. As a result, children maintain their focus on activities for an extended time, which develops their concentration skills in preparation for future learning. Staff support the children to solve problems independently by encouraging them to think about different ways to achieve their own goals. For example, children work out how to fill the sand pit, transporting and emptying the heavy bag of sand, working as a team.

Staff plan a range of adult-led activities alongside the continuous provision which means children enjoy a good selection of learning opportunities throughout the day. They work in small and large groups and benefit from one-to-one activities with staff. This promotes the children's social skills effectively, building their confidence and self-esteem successfully. Consequently, children are confident in all situations and openly share their ideas and thoughts. Staff ensure the learning environment is rich with text and numerals both inside and outside. As a result, children count at every opportunity and recognise numerals during activities, such as organising the stackable cake into numerical order and then making patterns. They make marks for a variety of purposes as they practise their early writing skills in different situations.

Children are developing an exceptionally good understanding of the world around them. They celebrate a range of international festivals and enjoy creating art work and listening to stories. This promotes the children's awareness of people who help them and further develops their interest in the local community. Staff plan an extensive range of planting and growing activities and they ensure all areas of learning are covered outside. They use bug boxes to hunt for mini beasts in the earth and enjoy science experiments as they water the daffodils with different coloured water to see what happens. Children study life cycles through practical activities, such as caring for tadpoles and observing caterpillars. Children also care for some giant African land snails at the pre-school and enjoy feeding and handling them. Staff organise the home corner well to attract the children's attention. As a result, this area is used frequently and children are able to express themselves freely as they act out personal experiences. For example, children go shopping 'like mummy' and they ask staff to write lists, so they do not forget anything.

The pre-school has established good procedures to support children during their move to school. Children are introduced to their new teachers and visit the local schools. Staff have developed a school handbook with photographs of the school and school uniforms to familiarise the children with the changes they will be facing. Staff meet with local reception class staff and, with parental consent, they share key information to ensure the children's move to school goes smoothly. The special needs coordinator meets with the school coordinator to ensure children with any special educational needs are fully supported through the changes. Consequently, all children gain the skills they need to be ready for school or their next stage of learning.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

All children are happy and settled during their time at the pre-school. The staff team spend time getting to know the children well. Consequently, children's individual welfare, learning and developmental needs are being met. Children chat openly with staff and visitors as they share their ideas. This demonstrates that children feel safe and secure and are relaxed in their pre-school environment. Staff gather a wealth of information from parents about their children's individual needs before they attend, as they are settling in and as an ongoing part of communication and building positive and trusting relationships. As a result, children's individual needs are being met, including health, dietary and cultural requirements and preferences. The organisation of the session runs smoothly overall. However, for a short time immediately before lunch some children lose focus and are not engaged in purposeful activities, as they are during the rest of the session.

The pre-school staff provide a healthy snack, consisting of fresh fruit or vegetables and a form of carbohydrate to maintain the children's sugar levels throughout the sessions. Snack time is a social event and children decide when they would like to eat. They chat with each other and staff about the types of food that are good for them. All children have access to the secure outside learning environment where they experience an extensive range of activities. Outside play covers all areas of the curriculum and children say they 'really like digging and planting in the mud and dirt'. Children have many opportunities to practise their physical skills, both inside and outside as they learn about the importance of regular exercise. The outdoor area is a true reflection of the indoor quality of activities and is organised exceptionally well to promote children's learning in a variety of different ways.

All children behave well because staff implement the clear rules and boundaries consistently. Staff actively recognise the children's efforts and achievements and take time to praise and encourage them. This builds the children's confidence effectively and helps them to develop a strong sense of right and wrong from an early age. Staff are all positive role models and consequently, children know what is expected of them and are polite and well mannered. Children are beginning to show consideration for each other during activities. For example, children move their chairs over so other children can join in, they work together to achieve specific tasks and ask if others are all right.

All children learn about the importance of keeping themselves safe through daily discussions and routines. Children often remind others of the safety rules, such as not running inside the building, holding scissors safely and picking up toys and resources that have fallen on the floor. All children and staff practise regular fire drills. Some older children are able to describe exactly what happens during a drill, demonstrating a clear understanding of how to evacuate the building safely in an emergency.

All children benefit from the open communication and two-way flow of information between the pre-school staff and their parents. Parents are able to speak with staff at any time and they know who their children's key people are. They have access to their children's records on request and are able to make written contributions about their children's learning. The parents spoken to during the inspection were very pleased with

the progress their children are making at the pre-school.

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

The inspection was brought forward following a notification from the provider. The concerns were linked to safeguarding practice and policies, general suitability matters, training, support and skills, managing behaviour and changes that must be notified to Ofsted. As a result, Ofsted carried out an unannounced visit on 8 January 2014. During the investigation, it was found that the provider had failed to meet three welfare requirements and three Notices to Improve were issued by Ofsted to rectify the breaches. The provider was required to have effective systems in place to ensure that practitioners, and any other person who is likely to have regular contact with children are suitable. To ensure the safeguarding policy covers the use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting. To ensure that children are adequately supervised at all times and staff deployment meets children's needs and safety. The provider was also issued with a warning letter because they failed to notify Ofsted of significant events. Action has been taken by the provider to rectify the breaches. All staff now have personnel files to evidence their suitability. The safeguarding policy includes the use of mobile phones and cameras. Staff are deployed effectively with senior staff both inside and outside to make sure ratios are met and children are supervised.

The pre-school procedures for safeguarding are comprehensive and effective. All staff understand the safeguarding procedures and know how to implement them to promote the welfare of the children in their care. The manager displays the Local Safeguarding Children Board's contact details and procedures for staff, parents and visitors' information. Staff discuss all safeguarding policies with parents to ensure they are aware of the pre-school's child protection responsibilities. All parents have access to hard copy policies and there are copies of all policies on display for them to read at any time. All children benefit from a safe and secure play and learning environment because staff carry out full written risk assessments covering all areas the children come into contact with. The managers and the committee implement robust and rigorous recruitment and vetting systems consistently to ensure all adults in the pre-school are suitable to work with children. Visitors are required to sign in and out of the premises and must show their identification on arrival.

The manager and staff implement rigorous self-evaluation procedures to identify priorities for further development to raise standards in the pre-school. As a result of continual evaluation and reflective practice of staff, many changes have been put in place to improve the outcomes for children and drive improvement across the pre-school. For example, staff have improved the layout of the hall by making the coat stand easily accessible to children when they are preparing to go outside and the children's progress records and curriculum planning has been reviewed and changed to reflect the children's individual interests. All staff are included in the evaluation process. However, the management team do not currently seek the views of parents and children when evaluating the setting. This means that the views of all users are not being valued at this

time to further drive improvement.

Effective performance management and induction systems ensure all staff, volunteers and students are confident in their roles within the pre-school. Management are fully aware of the changes that must be notified to Ofsted in line with requirements. The manager carries out continual monitoring of staff practice, identifies training needs and reviews all paperwork to ensure it is maintained to a good standard. The manager monitors the quality of activities and experiences provided for the children. All staff complete regular training to ensure their personal skills and professional development continue to grow. As a result, staff are keen to improve the outcomes for all children who attend.

The nursery has excellent links with an extensive variety of external agencies to ensure all children's individual needs are met in the best possible way. Well-established and rigorous systems are in place to identify and support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities as soon as possible. The special needs coordinator is extremely knowledgeable and works very closely in partnership with the parents to address any concerns. She implements individual strategies, agreed with parents, to ensure a consistent approach both at home and in the pre-school for the children.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	131562
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	953704
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	37
Name of provider	Squirrels Corner Pre-School Committee
Date of previous inspection	26/11/2010
Telephone number	07808 436313

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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