

Shawbury Squirrels Early Years

RAF Shawbury, Shawbury, SHREWSBURY, Shropshire, SY4 4DZ

Inspection date

13/10/2014

Previous inspection date

19/04/2011

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

- Teaching is good. Staff use a range of teaching methods to provide vibrant activities based on children's interests. Children are making good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and communication skills.
- Children's behaviour is good. Staff use clear routines to ensure children understand what is expected and to reinforce their understanding of safety issues.
- The environments, both inside and outside, are exciting and stimulating. Children develop a healthy attitude to exercise and have free access to outside play during a good proportion of the day. Staff skilfully weave learning into fun activities which means all children, including those who are less confident, are supported to extend their skills.
- All staff help to plan improvements to the nursery. They are passionate about providing a high quality service and implement enhancements with positivity and energy. Managers nurture staff's professional development. This improves teaching and learning. Safeguarding children is also given high priority by all staff.
- Parents feel welcomed and well supported to help their children learn at home. They are delighted with the range of activities and the care staff show to their children.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Recent changes to track children's progress and to obtain more details from parents about their child's learning at home have not been fully implemented into practice. Therefore, not all children are fully benefiting from these strategies.

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 in the main playrooms and outside play areas.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager of the setting and undertook a joint observation with her.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation and a selection of policies and children's records.
- The inspector reviewed evidence of the suitability checks and qualifications for staff working with the children.
- The inspector took account of the nursery's self-evaluation and improvement plan.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Sarah Rhodes

Full report

Information about the setting

Shawbury Squirrels Early Years registered at its current premises in 1997 and is on the Early Years Register. It is situated in a single storey building on an RAF base in Shawbury, Shropshire. The nursery is managed by a voluntary committee. It serves the local area and is accessible to all children, both from civilian and service families. The nursery operates from four rooms and there are two enclosed areas available for outdoor play. It employs 13 members of childcare staff. Of these, 12 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including one with Early Years Professional Status. The nursery also employs support staff, including a kitchen assistant and a setting administrator. The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 59 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- ensure the recently introduced tracking system is fully embedded, for all children, so that every child's progress is swiftly assessed and any areas for development are promptly addressed
- further explore ways to obtain information from parents about their children's learning at home, to ensure a complete picture of all children's abilities is obtained and used to provide an even sharper focus to promote best possible progress.

Inspection judgements

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

The nursery promotes children's learning and development well because the staff have high levels of qualification and ongoing training and mentoring. This means that they are continually improving the methods they use in their teaching and their assessment of children learning. For example, recently, staff have reviewed their methods of recording assessments of children's abilities and introduced a tracker document, which allows them to more easily identify areas of learning that need more support. The implementation of this system still requires some consolidation, and not all children currently have a completed tracker document in place. Consequently, there is a need to fully imbed this into practice to ensure all children benefit. Staff work with parents as soon as children start to attend. They gather information about the child's abilities, to build a picture of the starting points in their development for all seven areas of learning. Once children start

attending, observations are undertaken to ensure staff quickly establish their own assessments of children's abilities. These are recorded in a six week starting point summary called a learning story. Ongoing observations are used to plan for the next steps in children's learning, and these feed into day to day planning of activities. Parents have recently been encouraged to provide information about what their child can do at home. This is intended to support staff's ongoing assessments of children's progress. However, this also requires embedding into practice. Staff are continuing, therefore, to look at ways to further engage all parents. Summaries record children's progress every six weeks and provide a good overview of children's abilities. When children move rooms, or require an assessment for their progress check between the ages of two and three years, a more detailed assessment is produced. These records ensure staff, parents and other professionals are kept well informed of children's development throughout the child's time in the nursery.

Through careful observation of children's abilities staff are able to identify any issues that need to be addressed with the help of external agencies. These issues are shared with parents and the staff provide any support parents need to access further advice. All parents are encouraged to share information about issues that may affect their child's ability to learn, for example, recent illness or tiredness. The nursery provides a wide range of information to parents about how they can support their child's learning at home. For example, parents explain how staff make suggestions about games they can play which link into their child's interests or suggest how they can help build their toddler's vocabulary whilst playing with a range of toys. The learning stories and daily diaries provide opportunities for staff to write down suggestions for parents who may not collect their children from nursery themselves. Parents feel very well supported by staff and very well informed of their child's progress.

Children are helped to develop the skills required for the move into reception class at school as they take part in activities which become increasingly more focused and that develop their self-care skills. For example, the older children take it in turns to help prepare the morning snack with the kitchen staff. They also learn to work as part of a small group, follow instructions and respect the ideas of their friends. Children with English as an additional language are well supported. Key persons work in partnership with parents to identify key words and routines which support children's understanding and confidence. This provides children with opportunities to make connections between their home language and English and supports their learning in preparation for the transition to school. The calm, but industrious environment that staff develop provides children with interesting and extensive activities, both indoors and outside, which cover all areas of learning. The quality of teaching is good. Staff make regular use of small group times to extend children's ability to think and plan and encourage children to develop good communication skills. Younger children are provided with a sense of time as staff use pictures to support discussions about what is happening now and what will happen next. Story times in all rooms are well executed, with staff reading in a dynamic and interesting way, which engages the children and fosters an interest in books. Staff ask children questions which gets them to reflect on what they have heard. Children giggle with delight at the twists and turns of the tale which shows they are really following what is being said. They demonstrate a growing vocabulary and a confidence to express their ideas. For example, they use their listening skills in a sound game and make suggestions about what

the sounds may be. The staff use children's interests or the time of year to plan for 'buzz activities'. These activities are linked to a cultural festival or shared interest. For example, harvest time provides opportunities to talk about food and collect items to be shared with others through local charities. Children also have lots of fun as they enjoy creating a scarecrow. The story of Diwali leads to craft work. Children draw round their own hands, cut out the outline and decorating them with real concentration. Where children are less confident in completing the task, staff are very encouraging and give the minimal amount of help, so the child succeeds but has a great sense of their own achievement. Staff use craft activities as an opportunity to expand children's mathematical skills. For example, they discuss how many fingers they have, which hands are the biggest, as well as looking at colour and shape. Consequently, children develop a wide range of skills through fun and engaging activities. As a result, their progress towards the early learning goals is good.

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

The processes to help children settle into the nursery are highly effective. Staff are sensitive and supportive of both children and their parents, when children start to attend and when they are moving between rooms or changing key person. Staff understand the importance of the key person relationship in ensuring children are feeling secure enough to access learning opportunities. Where children are unsettled they ensure that they are supported by staff that they feel particularly safe with. Staff are patient and gentle as they encourage children to engage with the activities provided. Babies enjoy cuddles and warm interactions with the staff responding quickly to their needs. Older children are confident in the routines and know the staff well. This means children are ready to explore and learn because staff address any issues about their emotional well-being promptly.

Older children are prepared for the transfer on to school as they develop their independence. For example, they are encouraged to serve themselves at lunchtime. Staff ensure all schools that children transfer to receive invitations to visit the nursery and a final summary of children's attainment is also prepared for them. Children's behaviour is very good. Staff help children think about other people's feelings and they learn to negotiate and share equipment with their playmates. They use a timer with younger children to help them understand about taking turns on equipment, such as tricycles. Staff also warn children when activities are coming to an end, so they have time to complete their task. Where this is not possible, children save their work and continue with their activity later. This ensures children have opportunities to complete their tasks and reduces incidences of frustration.

All children, including the babies, develop healthy lifestyles. They are able to enjoy and explore the natural environment in the outdoor provision. They have ample opportunity to enjoy exercise in the fresh air. Staff develop an attitude in children that exercise outside is a normal activity for any time of year, whatever the weather. This is helped by the provision of a large covered area. This means children eagerly go outside even in the rain. Children's dietary needs are met through the freshly prepared meals and the dedicated cook ensures they are well balanced and attractively presented. Older children take it in turns to lovingly prepare the dining tables for the toddler and preschool children with

flowers and other decorations, before the lunch is served. All children are supported by staff to understand that mealtimes are social occasions. Staff are very aware of children with food allergies and processes are in place to ensure children are kept safe. All children develop self-care skills as they are encouraged to develop their ability to manage their hygiene needs, such as washing their hands before meals. Babies understand that they use the flannels to ensure their hands are clean. The layout of the rooms allows children to make choices for themselves from a range of equipment in low-level containers. Children are encouraged to keep themselves safe through discussions and activities. Staff ensure children understand the safety rules when using equipment, such as scissors, or discuss how to safely cross roads before taking trips onto the wider RAF base.

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

The children benefit from a nursery which has a strong management team who are committed to providing a high quality service. There is a constant drive to continually improve. Robust recruitment procedures and induction processes ensure staff's suitability is established when they are first employed and this is reviewed regularly. All staff are qualified and most have completed first-aid training. Children are safeguarded well through the implementation of clear policies and procedures. These ensure staff can identify child protection concerns and take appropriate action to protect children. Their knowledge is refreshed continually by frequent team discussions to keep them alert to safeguarding issues. Clear policies are implemented which cover the use of mobile telephones and cameras as well as the safe use of computers and social media. Staff have a clear understanding of risks. Health and safety concerns are promptly addressed, while still allowing children to learn to manage some risks for themselves. The building and grounds are exceptionally secure because of its location on a Royal Air Force base, and this is something parents find reassuring. Staff manage the entry of parents and visitors which ensures that children cannot leave unaccompanied.

Ongoing appraisals and interim supervision meetings are undertaken with all staff members, to help drive improvement in teaching and identify training requirements. The management team pro-actively monitor the quality of care and teaching. The manager tracks the progress of all children and ensures no one group is developing less favourably than the others. They have supported all staff to undertake peer observations to ensure they continue to develop the very best skills in reflecting on their own and others teaching practice. High levels of qualification and frequent ongoing in-house training have a positive effect on the quality of the learning experience for children. The manager also encourages all staff to be involved in the action plan for improvement, so they can draw on everyone's ideas about how to enhance the provision further.

Partnerships with parents and carers are good because staff use a number of strategies to help them feel comfortable and welcomed. Parents exchange information with staff at the beginning and end of the day. They also have parents' notice boards, regular letters and questionnaires. Parent evenings allow them to visit the nursery at a more relaxed pace and learn more about their child's learning environment at a time which suits them. The progress check between the ages of two and three years also accurately informs them of

their child's progress. Partnerships in the wider context are used to develop the quality of education. The nursery is well aware of the importance of developing links with the other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage where children attend more than one setting. Staff also form links with schools and other nurseries to support the exchange of information to meet children's needs and facilitate children's transfer to other provisions.

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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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	224187
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	866145
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	52
Number of children on roll	59
Name of provider	Shawbury Squirrels Early Years Committee
Date of previous inspection	19/04/2011
Telephone number	01939 250351ext 7282

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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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