

Squirrel Lodge Nursery

The Meads Community Centre, Emerald Crescent, Sittingbourne ME10 5JL



Inspection date	24 October 2018
Previous inspection date	Not applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Not applicable	
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

The provision is good

- The manager monitors the progress of different groups of children effectively and takes prompt action to address any gaps in their learning.
- Staff are sensitive to children's individual needs. They give praise and encouragement to promote children's emotional well-being.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Parents comment positively on the support they receive from staff and the good progress their children are making.
- Staff help all children, including those who speak English as an additional language, to develop their communication and language skills. For example, staff teach colours in children's home languages.
- Staff gather information about what children can already do on entry to the nursery and use this to help them assess children's starting points accurately.
- Children benefit from many opportunities to use their imagination and to be creative. For example, they pretend to make each other cups of tea in the home corner and create pictures using leaves collected from the garden.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Occasionally, staff do not make the best use of opportunities to help children practise their early writing skills.
- Information sharing with other settings that children attend is not fully developed for all children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- provide more opportunities for children to practise their early writing skills
- strengthen information sharing with other settings that children attend to ensure continuity of learning for all children.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching and the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation, including children's assessment records, policies and procedures, and evidence of staff suitability.
- The inspector completed a joint observation of an activity with the manager.
- The inspector held discussions with parents, staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector held a leadership and management meeting with the manager.

Inspector

Michaela Borland

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

Safeguarding is effective. Staff have a secure knowledge of child protection issues and know the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child's welfare. The manager completes thorough checks of staff to ensure they are suitable to work with children. She supports staff well. Staff take part in regular supervision meetings and attend training to enhance their practice. This helps to raise the quality of teaching and ensure children continue to make good progress. The manager evaluates the provision well and includes the views of parents, staff and children. For example, parents complete questionnaires and children have recently helped to plan some changes to the layout of the play area.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff use information gained from observations to accurately assess children's level of development and to plan for future learning. Staff encourage children to make their own choices. For example, children choose the colours they wish to use when making play dough. This helps to develop children's decision-making skills. Overall, staff make good use of opportunities to extend children's learning. For example, children explore the concepts of 'heavy' and 'light' while moving objects around the garden. Staff know children well and use their in-depth knowledge of children's interests to plan a varied and stimulating learning environment. For example, children who enjoy learning outdoors build obstacle courses with tyres and planks of wood.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Staff are good role models for children. They are polite and remind children about using manners. There is a strong emphasis on teaching children to be healthy. For example, staff encourage children to drink water throughout the day and explain how this keeps their bodies working properly. Staff have clear expectations of children's behaviour. Children are encouraged to share resources and take turns. Children have strong bonds with staff. This helps them to feel safe and secure. Children have lots of opportunities to be physically active and to play outdoors. Staff help to develop children's independence. For example, children hang up their coats when they arrive and self-register by adding their name card to the registration board.

Outcomes for children are good

All children, including those who have special education needs and/or disabilities, make progress from their starting points. Children confidently explore and investigate in their play. For example, they enjoy looking for hidden objects in a tub filled with leaves. Children benefit from opportunities to develop early mathematical language. For example, they learn the names of shapes as they model with play dough. Children behave well and enjoy playing together. All children are learning the necessary skills they need for future learning, including moving on to school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY499277
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10057131
Type of provision	Full day care
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	42
Name of registered person	Elliott-Hare, Claire Adele
Registered person unique reference number	RP904294
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	07842441237

Squirrel Lodge Nursery registered in 2016. It is located in Sittingbourne, Kent. The nursery is open from 7.30am to 6.30pm, Monday to Friday, all year round. The nursery employs 10 members of staff. Of these, two are qualified at level 6, two at level 4, three at level 3, one at level 2 and two are unqualified. Additionally, two staff are qualified forest school leaders. One member of staff also holds qualified teacher status. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early years education for two-, three- and four-year-old children, in addition to the early years pupil premium. The nursery follows the Reggio Emilia educational philosophy.

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