

# Inspection of Squirrels Nurseries (Welwyn)

Oak Tree Children's Centre, Holwell Road, WELWYN GARDEN CITY, Hertfordshire  
AL7 3RP

---

Inspection date: 13 December 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
The quality of education	<b>Outstanding</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

## **What is it like to attend this early years setting?**

### **The provision is outstanding**

All children make exceptional progress throughout the nursery. They are extremely well equipped to move on to the next stage of their learning. The oldest children move seamlessly between the nursery and the attached school nursery that they also attend. Staff liaise daily with teachers at the school nursery regarding children's progress and well-being. This provides children with excellent consistency between the two settings.

Children's behaviour is exemplary across the nursery. Children form strong bonds with their friends and staff. They actively participate in selecting their key person. Staff learn key vocabulary in children's home languages. As a result, they communicate effectively with children who speak English as an additional language. This helps all children to settle rapidly and feel safe and secure.

Children become independent from a very young age. Babies quickly learn to feed themselves with spoons. Toddlers confidently persevere as they cut their food using knives and forks. Mealtimes provide strong opportunities for children to socialise and communicate with others. The oldest children excitedly share news with their friends and staff. They eat in a dining hall together, which helps to prepare them for their move to school.

## **What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?**

- Children challenge themselves during meticulously planned activities. They concentrate and persevere as they develop their hand-to-eye coordination. Toddlers choose to hang baubles on hooks. Once they master this skill, they move on to hanging the baubles on a Christmas tree. The most-able toddlers hold pencils correctly and practise writing, giving meaning to the marks they make. For example, they make marks in Christmas cards. They confidently explain to staff that they are writing cards to their families.
- Parents feel exceptionally well supported by the dedicated manager and staff team. They speak positively about the homely feel the nursery has. Staff provide them with inspirational ideas to try at home. They keep parents well informed through daily feedback and online progress reports. Parents keenly add to their children's online learning records, sharing children's achievements and experiences from home. Staff use this information to build on children's learning even further.
- Staff embrace opportunities to develop their already strong professional knowledge further. The manager keenly shares her expertise with the wider professional community. For instance, she works closely with the local authority to support all children to make the best progress possible. She prioritises staff's well-being. For example, staff enjoy activities, such as kick-boxing, during staff

training days. Staff are highly involved in the running of the nursery, such as when the manager introduces new planning systems. Staff trial these systems and actively participate in shaping the service that they provide. This leads to staff feeling highly valued and supported within their roles.

- Children become deeply engaged and lead their own learning. They remain highly focused as they investigate enthusiastically. Staff recognise when children need support to move their learning forward. For example, they demonstrate to children how to combine paint powder and water together. They give children clear instructions to follow. Staff use questioning effectively to check children's understanding, such as when children compare their paint mixture to a volcano. Children confidently share their thoughts and ideas. Staff extend children's vocabulary by introducing language, such as 'lava'. Children use this new-found vocabulary appropriately as they speak to their friends about what they are doing.
- Children develop a strong awareness of what makes them unique. They proudly share their cultural experiences with their friends. For instance, children bring chopsticks to nursery and teach their friends how to use them to eat. Children enjoy a variety of outings. Staff skilfully link these to children's learning. For example, children choose to make pizzas. Staff take them to buy ingredients. They visit a pizza shop and children learn how to make dough. They collect boxes to take their pizzas home in.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff place children's welfare at the heart of their practice. They have all completed relevant training to ensure that their knowledge is up to date. The manager regularly checks their knowledge. Staff can identify the possible signs of abuse and neglect. They are aware of wider issues, such as identifying children who may be at risk of exposure to extreme views and behaviour. Staff are confident in the processes to follow should they need to raise concerns regarding children. They know how to report concerns about their colleagues and recognise the importance of doing this should they need to.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY276945
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10127351
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	84
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	136
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Squirrels Day Nurseries (Welwyn)
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP903405
<b>Telephone number</b>	01707 391797
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	26 May 2016

## Information about this early years setting

Squirrels Nurseries (Welwyn) registered in 2003. The nursery employs 24 members of staff. Of these, 12 staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and three staff are qualified at level 6, including one with early years professional status. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday for 48 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Jennifer Hardy

## Inspection activities

- The inspector was given an in-depth tour of the nursery by the manager. They discussed the curriculum on offer and how this is delivered.
- The inspector held multiple discussions with parents who keenly discussed their views and opinions. The inspector also spoke to professionals from other settings children attend. The inspector took these views into consideration.
- The inspector spoke to staff and children throughout the inspection at appropriate times.
- The inspector and manager jointly observed teaching. They discussed the impact of this teaching on children's learning.
- The inspector looked at a small sample of documentation, including staff's suitability documents.

We carried out this inspection 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk)

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2019