

Inspection of The Square School

18 Holland Park Avenue, LONDON W11 3QU

Inspection date: 22 April 2022

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
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| The quality of education | Good |
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| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
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| Personal development | Good |
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| Leadership and management | Good |
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| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Outstanding |
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children arrive at The Square School full of enthusiasm and ready to begin their day. There is an effective key-person system, which supports children's emotional security extremely well. For example, staff visit children in their homes before they join the setting. This helps them to develop strong bonds with children and their families right from the start. Children feel safe and secure. They confidently make choices from the resources and enjoy playing together. Staff want all children to achieve highly and to be well prepared for school and later life. Children learn useful life skills, such as how to cook, and grow plants. They are kind and respectful to others and behave well.

Children enjoy being outdoors and have great fun as they play in the school's garden. They are motivated to develop their physical skills as they learn to ride scooters and pedal tricycles. They relish the encouragement and praise from staff, which helps them to keep on trying. Children show a strong sense of belonging and take care of the toys and resources. They enjoy being helpful as they help staff to weed the flower beds. Children recall what they have learned previously, as they comment that plants need sunshine and water to help them grow.

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

- The manager speaks passionately about her commitment to children and staff. She reflects upon the provision frequently and makes positive developments. For instance, she has reduced the time that children spend using computers, as parents say they have enough opportunities for this learning at home.
- Staff speak with enthusiasm about the opportunities for professional progression and describe the impact on their practice. For example, following training, staff have become more skilled at helping children to express feelings and emotions.
- In general, children benefit from a well-planned and ambitious curriculum. For example, they develop a wide range of mathematics skills, such as how to count, recognise shapes and compare sizes. However, the curriculum for literacy is less well organised. For instance, staff do not always successfully adapt writing activities, to capture children's interests. In addition, staff do not ensure that all children have consistent opportunities to explore and practise making marks in their own way.
- Staff know what they want children to learn and the quality of education is, generally, high. For instance, staff play board games with children, to help them count, take turns and cooperate. However, at times, staff do not display the skills needed to extend children's interests during their self-initiated play, to raise their learning to a higher level.
- Staff support children's language development very well. They talk with children throughout the day and encourage them to share their ideas. Staff know that it

is important to sing with children often, to help them practise speech sounds and learn new words. They use a visual display of children's favourite songs to prompt spontaneous and joyful 'sing-alongs'. Children, including those who speak English as an additional language, display good communication skills.

- Staff value and celebrate each child's uniqueness. The environment and activities reflect families' diverse cultural heritages. Parents come into the school regularly, to offer children a range of new experiences. For instance, they cook family recipes with children and teach them simple yoga movements. Children also benefit from extra-curricular activities, including sports, music and Spanish language sessions. These further enrich the curriculum.
- Staff provide meaningful experiences, to help children understand and respect others. For instance, children learn that some people in the community are less advantaged. They visit a local charity shop to donate items from home. Children also created their own charity shop, where they sold their artwork to raise funds for 'Red Nose Day'. Children make regular visits to the local shops, library and park, which helps them learn about their own place in the world.
- Parents describe a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere where they feel 'part of the family'. They speak of the strong focus on children's personal skills. Parents say children quickly learn how to be independent with their care needs and tell them 'I can do it by myself'. They appreciate staff's support with issues, such as 'fussy eating', and say their children learn the importance of good health and hygiene.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff demonstrate a secure understanding of a wide range of safeguarding issues. This includes the risks children may face from online abuse or radicalisation. They know how to identify signs of abuse and the procedures to follow if they become concerned about a child's welfare. The manager and staff understand how to respond if there is an allegation or concern about an adult working with children. The manager carries out robust checks on staff, to help ensure they are suitable for their roles. Staff assess risks and follow nursery procedures to maintain a safe and secure environment.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- review and strengthen the curriculum for literacy, especially relating to writing, to ensure all children have consistent and enjoyable opportunities to develop a broad range of skills
- support staff to make effective use of spontaneous learning opportunities for children.

Setting details

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| Unique reference number | EY410039 |
| Local authority | Kensington and Chelsea |
| Inspection number | 10138058 |
| Type of provision | Childcare on non-domestic premises |
| Registers | Early Years Register |
| Day care type | Full day care |
| Age range of children at time of inspection | 2 to 4 |
| Total number of places | 18 |
| Number of children on roll | 16 |
| Name of registered person | The Square School Limited |
| Registered person unique reference number | RP910950 |
| Telephone number | 02072216004 |
| Date of previous inspection | 21 April 2016 |

Information about this early years setting

The Square School started in 1969 and registered in 2001. The nursery is in the London Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. The nursery is open each weekday from 9am to 4pm during school term times. There are five staff employed to work with children. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications. One staff member holds qualified teacher status and one has a level 6 qualification, other staff are qualified at level 3. The nursery is registered to provide funded early education for children aged three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Sarah Crawford

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider has received, since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken this into account in her evaluation of the provider.
- The manager showed the inspector around the nursery premises, she explained how they organise the environment and curriculum for children.
- The inspector observed activities and interactions between children and staff, to evaluate the quality of education. This includes a joint observation with the manager.
- Parents, staff and children shared their views and experiences with the inspector at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector met with the manager to discuss leadership issues, such as the recruitment, training and support for staff.
- The inspector looked at some of the nursery's documents, staff suitability checks and paediatric first-aid certificates.

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.

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