

Inspection of Little Squirrels Play Forest

Little Squirrels Play Forest, 70a Castle Quarter, Norwich NR1 3DD

Inspection date: 20 June 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children learn to explore their environment and develop their curious and creative nature at this nursery. When it rains, there are plenty of resources that they select and use as they splash in puddles, collect water in containers and experiment with it. During older children's spontaneous play, staff introduce them to information about mathematics and literacy. This supports children to build their knowledge ready for the future stages of their education. Babies receive kind and sensitive care from staff who engage them in play.

The knowledgeable and enthusiastic staff give children practical and emotional support. They promote children's thinking by sharing information and posing carefully considered questions. Children develop confidence to share their thoughts. They have lots of ideas and suggestions to make. Staff value the way each individual child learns. At times, when children feel unsettled or upset, staff comfort them and acknowledge their feelings. This helps children to build trusting bonds with the staff and to feel safe and secure. Daily routines are very flexible to meet children's individual needs. For example, children are able to attend snack and mealtimes when they are ready and feel hungry. This allows them to follow through their play until a point of satisfactory completion.

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

- Leaders and managers strive to offer children care and education based on their strong understanding of evidence and research. They explain how they and staff encourage children to explore, create and develop their individuality and a positive sense of themselves.
- Children benefit from a language-rich environment. Staff give children plenty of opportunities to develop their speech and language skills. Children frequently share stories which staff read with skill and enthusiasm. Consequently, children become skilled communicators.
- Leaders prioritise staff training and support. Staff explain how inspired they are by the approaches leaders teach them to use. Staff show that they understand how children learn and use this knowledge well in their daily practice.
- Staff quickly identify any concerns about children's development. They work with parents and other professionals to put in place appropriate help and support. This helps children with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make progress in their learning.
- Relationships between staff and children demonstrate high levels of respect. Staff gently help children to learn how to manage their own feelings and to cooperate with others. When children struggle to share, staff help them to resolve their own conflicts.
- Staff provide plenty of opportunities for children to be active and to develop

their strength and stamina. Children have spaces to move, climb and balance, both indoors and outdoors. Children develop their understanding of healthy eating, for example, as they make fruit kebabs with staff.

- Parents value the effort that staff put into knowing their individual children. Many parents speak of the unique activities that staff design based around their children's individual interests. They explain how keen their children are to go to nursery each day. Leaders and staff provide information to help parents understand how they can make the biggest impact on their children's development at home. Leaders work to resolve any minor issues or concerns that parents raise.
- Children develop their independence. For example, they serve their own healthy meals and learn to manage their own self-care, such as toileting. However, staff do not give children enough guidance or information for them to understand how they can contribute to maintaining a sufficiently organised learning environment for all to enjoy. For example, staff tend to tidy up after children. They rearrange the shoes which are left strewn on the floor.
- A settling-in procedure is in place for new children. This allows children to begin to become familiar with the nursery and staff to get to know them and their individual needs. Despite this, new children sometimes struggle to settle with ease. Staff give them emotional support. However, this detracts from staff being able to fully deliver effective teaching to other children. When this happens, the noise level indoors increases. This affects children's ability to focus and engage comfortably at these times.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand how to recognise and respond to indicators that a child may be at risk of abuse. They also know the procedures to follow if they have concerns about another adult working with the children. Where there are any concerns about a child, those with key responsibilities work closely with parents and other agencies to ensure that children are not at risk of further harm. Information is shared with other agencies promptly and appropriately in order to work together to safeguard children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- develop strategies to help children to understand what they can do to ensure that their play environment remains safe and inviting for all
- review the arrangements for settling new children in to the nursery to ensure that staff consistently have sufficient time available to sustain high levels of interactions and support for all children's learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY543579
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10298909
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	34
Number of children on roll	70
Name of registered person	Little Squirrels Play Forest Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP543578
Telephone number	01603633550
Date of previous inspection	22 March 2019

Information about this early years setting

Little Squirrels Play Forest registered in 2017 and is situated in Norwich. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 8am to 6pm. The nursery employs 18 members of childcare staff. Of these, 12 hold appropriate early years qualifications at levels 2, 3, 5 and 6, including two with early years teacher status. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Kate Hipperson

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The inspector discussed the curriculum in place for children with the nominated individual, who is also the nursery manager.
- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- Children spoke with the inspector and talked about what they like doing at nursery.
- Staff spoke to the inspector at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector viewed evidence of staff suitability and first-aid qualifications.

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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