

Inspection of Squirrels Pre-School

Priory Park Pavillion, Priory Street, Farnborough, Hampshire GU14 7HX

Inspection date: 18 July 2023

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	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy, safe and well cared for. They benefit from the staff's focus on supporting their personal, social and emotional well-being. Children develop strong, trusting relationships with staff and their friends. Staff teach children the importance of kindness and respect, modelling this with children and embedding consistent behaviour expectations. Consequently, children learn to take turns, to use good manners and behave well. For instance, as children tidy away toys, they ask their friends for help and say 'thank you' as they work together to put toys onto the shelves.

Staff have high expectations for children's learning. The curriculum is created to focus on priorities for children's learning. Leaders have a good understanding of what they want children to know or to be able to do next. Children benefit from activities which excite and engage them in learning. For instance, children relish opportunities to make 'potions'. They learn how to tip and pour coloured liquids and add stars, glitter and label their mixtures. Staff support children's hand-eye coordination and encourage them to count and measure mixtures. Children listen intently and become absorbed in activities as staff skilfully weave learning into these experiences. All children, including those in receipt of additional funding, make good progress from their starting points.

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

- Leaders and the staff team are passionate about providing children with the best start to their early education. They work well together, and their shared vision of continuous improvement enables children to benefit from a wide range of learning experiences. For instance, staff have reflected and improved how they celebrate the important events in children's lives. They help children learn about their own cultures and those of their friends, throughout the year. This helps to build children's awareness of other people and communities to prepare them for life in modern Britain
- Staff teach children the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. Children enjoy plentiful opportunities to be physically active. For instance, they push themselves along on ride-on bicycles and practise using hula hoops, developing their good coordination skills. Staff encourage children to take age-appropriate risks as they play. For example, children think about how they can cross low-level planks between the tepees as staff encourage and praise them. Children develop a positive attitude to trying new activities and gain confidence in their growing abilities.
- Leaders support their staff well. Staff say that they enjoy working at the pre-school and feel well supported. They have regular supervision sessions and meetings to discuss their well-being and to develop staff knowledge and skills.

However, although staff benefit from a broad range of training opportunities, leaders do not focus staff professional development to refine and enhance staff's good teaching skills.

- Children benefit from good opportunities to develop their mathematical knowledge. Staff focus on this area of learning well. For instance, children learn how many pieces of fruit they can choose at snack time. Staff provide written numbers and encourage children to count out the pieces. Opportunities for children to learn about numbers, shapes, size and weight are a constant theme in their learning experiences. Children learn how to be confident in using mathematics purposefully in their play.
- Staff work well with parents and other professionals involved in children's care. They share a range of information regularly, to reflect children's interests and unique needs. This helps to ensure that all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, benefit from a shared and consistent approach to their care and development. Staff devise targeted plans of support for each child. This ensures that all children who need extra help receive the support they need.
- Overall, children's communication and language skills are supported well. Staff use opportunities to introduce new language to build on children's growing vocabulary skills. For instance, staff teach younger children the names of colours as they teach them about the red and yellow hoops. Children listen well and gain good attention skills. However, where some children need additional help to communicate their wants, needs and wishes, staff are yet to embed techniques to consistently support this area of their communication.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe. They make good use of training to keep their knowledge of safeguarding up to date. Staff know how to recognise signs and indicators of abuse or neglect and how to report and escalate these concerns, to keep children safe. Staff complete daily risk assessments to identify and minimise hazards to children. They supervise children well, indoors and outside, to ensure that they remain safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- target staff professional development opportunities in order to help to refine and enhance teaching skills more precisely
- develop the use of techniques that encourage and support children to communicate their wants, needs and ideas more consistently.

Setting details

Unique reference number	511276
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10303324
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	2 to 11
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	150
Name of registered person	Squirrels Educare Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP531077
Telephone number	07702 202921
Date of previous inspection	5 November 2018

Information about this early years setting

Squirrels Pre-School registered in 2000 and is located in Farnborough, Hampshire. It offers care to pre-school children and a holiday playscheme. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. Pre-school sessions run from 8.30am to 4pm, Monday to Friday. The holiday playscheme runs during school holidays from 8am to 4.30pm. There are 10 staff working directly with the children, eight of whom hold appropriate qualifications from level 2 to level 6.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Tara Naylor

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 viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The nominated individual joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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.

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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