

Inspection of Squirrels Day Nursery

Broxbourne Centre, High Road, Turnford, Broxbourne, Hertfordshire EN10 6AE

Inspection date: 25 January 2024

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

Staff provide a loving and caring environment for children, who look to staff for reassurance and cuddle up to them for comfort. Staff's expectations and boundaries at the nursery are clear and consistent. Children behave well and show care and respect for others. For example, when children bump into each other, they apologise and check that their friends are okay. They demonstrate a clear understanding of staff's expectations and share this with friends by reminding them to sit down during group time. Children take responsibility for their own behaviour and support peers to do the same.

Staff teach children how to keep their bodies safe and healthy. From a young age, they encourage children to make choices and develop their independence. As children get older, staff teach them how to look after themselves. For example, children learn about the weather and what they may need to wear outdoors. They recognise that it is cold and cloudy and discuss what clothing they may need before getting ready to go outdoors. Children independently find their outdoor clothing and put it on. This provides children with a sense of belonging and pride and gives them strong foundations for when they transition to school.

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

- Staff place focus on reading to develop children's communication and language skills. They encourage children to choose books that interest them and take time to sit with children and read stories. Babies explore the range of books on offer and sit independently. They turn the pages themselves and look at the pictures. Staff choose relevant books for each age group. Younger children are provided with interactive books to hold their attention and books are displayed over each room based on children's likes and interests. Older children enjoy listening to staff read in larger groups. They develop their understanding as staff introduce new words and give the meaning, as well as sharing ideas about what might happen next. Children develop a love of reading and enjoy sharing books at home from the library.
- When children begin at the nursery, staff provide many opportunities for parents to visit and spend time with their child's allocated key person. Staff focus on building partnerships with parents and work collaboratively to ensure that children feel safe and settle quickly. The key person supports children's transitions within the nursery very well and shares information with staff and parents. They support children's personal and emotional development throughout, by attending various visits with them, as well as helping to build new relationships.
- All children have access to a huge outdoor space that focuses on developing children's physical strength. Children explore the outdoor area throughout each

day and have opportunities to climb, run, experiment and negotiate space around them. The area is carefully planned, with hills and obstacles to challenge children and develop core strength and balance. As children grow, staff introduce further opportunities to develop their physical development, such as play dough and mark-making experiences, to support their fine motor skills.

- Staff plan exciting, adult-led activities for children. For example, children enjoy 'tinkering' as they practise using a range of tools and tightening and loosening bolts and nuts. However, staff do not always maintain children's attention due to the timings of some activities. This means children become distracted and find it difficult to focus their attention. Furthermore, children wait for extended periods for their meals and become restless, limiting their social interaction experience.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make excellent progress. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) works closely with children and families to identify children's needs early and put in place a plan to support them. Staff are given extra training to enable them to support children in their care. This gives them a better understanding of children's needs and development. Referrals are made to other professionals to ensure that children receive the best care and support. Therefore, expectations are high, and children make good progress.
- The management team prioritises staff's well-being, providing support and guidance when needed. Staff report of excellent working relationships and benefit from an open-door policy. They say they feel valued and enjoy working at the nursery. The management team provides ongoing supervision for all staff, observing practice and offering advice for improvement when needed. This means that staff's practice continues to improve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support staff to consider how to help children maintain their focus during group times so that they get the most out of the learning experiences on offer
- review the organisation of mealtimes and help staff to provide children with a sociable experience that raises the quality of their interactions with adults and each other.

Setting details

Unique reference number	404885
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10307846
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	84
Number of children on roll	114
Name of registered person	Squirrels Day Nurseries (Broxbourne) Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP521130
Telephone number	01992 845485
Date of previous inspection	5 March 2018

Information about this early years setting

Squirrels Day Nursery registered in 2001. It is managed by a private company. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, from 8am to 6pm. It employs 19 members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level two or above. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Vikki Reynolds

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 deputy manager, manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- 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 nursery with the inspector.
- The SENCo spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.

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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