

Inspection of Little Squirrels - Community Nursery

Froebel House, 100 Granby Street, Plymouth PL1 4BN

Inspection date: 12 January 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 and enjoy their time at the nursery. They arrive full of excitement, and staff warmly welcome them with smiles. Children thrive from close attachments with kind staff and feel valued. Children receive cuddles when they need reassurance or when they look sad. They show a sense of security and belonging due to the strong bonds staff form with them. They are confident to welcome visitors, engage them in conversations and invite them to play.

Children are supported to behave well. They revel in the praise they receive. Staff quickly manage any unwanted behaviour and ask children to think about how other children feel. Children learn about the effects of their actions on others and are beginning to manage their own feelings.

Children are keen to play outside. This promotes their muscle development, and they benefit from the fresh air. They enjoy playing games alongside adults and their friends, such as skittles and throwing beanbags into hoops. Children work together to make up rules and are excited to take part in the activities. They remind each other that 'we need to take turns' and stay engaged and focused during their play.

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

- The manager and staff create an ambitious curriculum based on precise assessments of the children. Staff meet daily to discuss children's learning and care needs. They have a good knowledge of what children need to learn next and how to support them.
- Staff feel supported by the manager. They receive regular feedback and guidance and are helped to develop their teaching skills. This means the quality of teaching is consistently good across the nursery.
- Staff develop children's independence well. They teach simple skills to children, such as putting on their own coats and pouring drinks by themselves. Children show high levels of independence and confidence.
- The manager and staff work hard to provide cultural experiences that disadvantaged children may not encounter outside the nursery. For instance, children benefit from bus journeys to local museums and the local library, where they learn about the wider world.
- Children learn about the importance of healthy lifestyles and good oral hygiene. They enjoy nutritious snacks and learn how to brush their teeth.
- Staff prioritise children's communication and language development. They introduce new words and encourage children to answer questions. However, staff do not always challenge older children to construct their own thoughts and provide longer answers.

- Staff build good relationships with parents and carers. They ask for information about children before they start at the nursery and share daily updates. Parents feel well informed about their child's development and speak highly of the nursery and the staff.
- The nursery focuses on promoting a love of reading. It offers a home library and invites parents to reading sessions. Parents learn how to support their child's reading development at home.
- Overall, the manager and staff support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. They identify gaps in children's learning and development and put interventions in place. They use additional funding effectively to meet the learning and development needs of the children. This helps children with SEND to make good progress. However, on occasion, staff miss opportunities to progress the speech of children who speak English as an additional language, which means their progress is not as rapid as it could be.
- Adults and children show respect for each other. Children play together nicely. They react positively to their peers. For example, a child says, 'That's okay, accidents happen,' when another child breaks part of a house they have built, and they work together to rebuild it.
- Staff support children's mathematical development effectively. They count regularly with children and introduce numbers to daily routines. Children display good levels of number recognition and early mathematics skills. Older children work out how many more skittles they have to knock over and count them to check their answers. Younger children match numbers to amounts to complete puzzles, and they recognise numbers up to 10.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leadership and management implement effective recruitment and induction procedures. They ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children and check their ongoing suitability each year. Staff complete training in child protection to ensure that they recognise the signs of abuse. This is updated regularly, and staff learn about less-common signs for concern. They are aware of their responsibility to keep children safe and how to pass on concerns about children's welfare. Staff teach children how to keep themselves safe. For example, they teach children how to cut safely with scissors.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- provide consistent support for children who speak English as an additional language so they have more opportunities to practise their developing speech and language skills

- make better use of questions so that older children are encouraged to think and give more detailed responses, to further develop their communication skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY498093
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	10264256
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 4
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	61
Name of registered person	KCP Keystone CIC
Registered person unique reference number	RP901727
Telephone number	01752 551502
Date of previous inspection	8 June 2017

Information about this early years setting

Little Squirrels - Community Nursery is part of the Keystone Nursery Group and registered in 2016. It operates in the Devonport area of Plymouth and is open from 9am to 5pm Monday to Thursday, and 9am to 12.45pm on Fridays. It is open all year round, except for two weeks at Christmas. The nursery employs eight members of staff. Of these, five staff hold early years qualifications at level 3, and two at level 2. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Rebecca Martin

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 observed the staff's interactions with the children, indoors and outdoors, and the impact of these on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Discussions were held with the manager, staff and nominated person during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation, including checking evidence of the suitability of the staff.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager, staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection. She held a short meeting with the manager and nominated individual to discuss aspects of leadership and management.

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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