

# Little Squirrels

Burlington Junior School, Burlington Road, New Malden, Surrey, KT3 4LT

## Inspection date

Previous inspection date

27/02/2014

Not Applicable

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This inspection:

2

### Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children	1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision	2

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision is good

- The nursery, both indoors and outside, is exceptionally well designed and resourced to inspire children's independence, creativity and thinking skills, and to provide them with physical challenge.
- Children make exceptional progress in their personal, social and emotional development because staff are so effective in securing trusting relationships with their key children. Staff have high expectations of children and are extremely successful in developing children's confidence and self-esteem.
- Staff make very effective use of observation and assessment to identify children's starting points for learning and how best to support their progress in all areas. Staff fully involve parents in these processes.
- The new leadership team is strong, enthusiastic and very committed to driving continuous improvement.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- Self-evaluation processes are not fully developed to provide staff with maximum opportunity to reflect on the quality of their teaching practice, and to fully identify priorities for improvement and training needs.

## Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children's play and staff interactions in the classroom and outdoor play area.
- The inspector held a meeting with the head teacher and discussions with all members of the management team and staff.  
The inspector sampled a range of records and documentation including those
- relating to staff suitability, safeguarding, children's progress and development, and the nursery's self-evaluation processes.
- The inspector spoke to a number of parents, taking account of their views.

## Inspector

Amanda Tyson

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Little Squirrels registered in 2013 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It provides eight places in the morning and eight in the afternoon for children aged two years, who are funded through the Early Education Entitlement. The provision operates from within the nursery class at Burlington Infant and Nursery School, which caters for children age three and four years. The provision is situated in New Malden, Surrey. The premises consist of a large Early Years Foundation Stage classroom, which has direct access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The provision for two year-olds operates Monday to Friday during term time between 8.30am and 11.30am, and 12.30pm and 3.30pm. Children attend for five morning or afternoon sessions per week. Little Squirrels supports children learning English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are currently 13 children on roll. Two full-time staff are employed to work with the two-year-old children; one has a foundation degree and the other a level 3 qualification in early years. One part-time member of staff holds a teaching assistant qualification. Six other staff are employed to work within the nursery; two have Qualified Teacher Status, two have a level 3 early years qualification, one has an early years degree and one is a teaching assistant.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance systems for identifying strengths and areas for improvement in teaching practice and planning, for example by providing time for staff to observe each other's practice (peer observations).

## Inspection judgements

### How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

The provision has only been operating since September and many of the children only started in January. All children are making good progress in their learning and development and are being well prepared for school. In some aspects of learning and development, children's progress is outstanding, even in this short period of time. Children are allocated one of the two full-time designated staff as their key person. Both staff are experienced and knowledgeable about the areas of learning and what children are expected to achieve for their age. They have high expectations of themselves and of children's potential. On entry, staff identify children's starting points for learning, using information gathered from parents, external agencies already involved with children and their own observations. Staff put in place a development plan for each individual child and carefully track children's progress through ongoing, astute observation and precise

assessment. Staff fully involve parents in this process, which for children learning English as an additional language is crucial in determining whether or not children are achieving expectations for communication and language in their home language. Gaps in achievement are promptly identified and action is taken to secure early intervention for children who need it. Staff complete individual development plans for children. For example, to help children develop the necessary hand skills for pencil control, they encourage children to use dough, sand and mud. Children are given long, looped-handle scissors and easy materials, such as straw, to make cutting easy for little hands.

Parents are informed about the nursery theme. This is always very broad to ensure it is of interest to all children. For example, 'on the move' includes emergency vehicles, air, sea and road transport, and the different ways humans, animals, sea creatures, dinosaurs and reptiles move. Children learn that elephants stomp, frogs jump and snakes slither. They learn how babies grow and develop mobility. Parents are asked to write on 'an acorn' what children's experience or interest is in relation to these topics. Staff use this information to inform and guide their planning, so that activities are meaningful to children.

Children thoroughly enjoy their play and learning. The environment is incredibly inviting, particularly the outdoor play area. For example, young children are inspired by the older nursery children who make bridges using wooden planks and separate water using large pebbles in the shallow stream. As they experiment with real, but child-sized, brooms, children discover that as fast as they brush away water, it comes back. Staff observe children closely, making sure they support, but do not disrupt play and learning. For example, staff watch children as they pick up a pair of binoculars and then ask 'what can you see?' This prompts children to look up at the sky and conversation evolves.

The environment is full of photographs of people, places, activities and discoveries. These encourage children to talk. Staff consistently engage children in conversation and repeat words really clearly to children, so that they learn the correct pronunciation. The two main languages spoken in the nursery are English and Korean. Korean children confidently combine use of their home language with English. This is really beneficial because it means children are able to express their imaginative thoughts more easily and so engage in more dynamic play. Children enjoy listening to stories, and singing action rhymes and number songs, especially when staff use props and tell them in an animated way. Sometimes though circle time is a little too long for the youngest children who lose concentration. The nursery is well equipped with dual language books and audio tapes of stories and songs in the languages spoken by the children. Children learn to recognise their names as they are displayed for different reasons around the nursery.

### **The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children**

Children thrive, physically and emotionally, in this nurturing and happy environment. They demonstrate a delightful 'have a go' attitude. Children are first introduced to their key person in the security of their own home. Then they visit the nursery for play sessions with parents before they start to stay for increasing periods without them. The process is individually tailored to take account of children's varying levels of parent separation

anxiety. Children have an exceptionally strong relationship with their key person, who they frequently seek out amongst other nursery staff. Children attempt considerable physical challenges because they trust their key person. For example, they climb to the top of the fortress and come down the slide because staff playfully do this with them. Children feel safe because they are seated between staff's legs. They smile broadly as they whizz down, with staff making exhilarating 'wheee' sounds. Staff teach children how to use the climbing wall safely, using the rungs and alternate leg movements. For very young, shy and slight children who are learning English as an additional language, this is a mammoth achievement. It is truly inspiring to see such young children set and achieve their own goals. This is well demonstrated when, for instance, a child finally manages to get to the top of the steep, little hill after weeks of practice and shouts out for everyone to hear, 'I did it, I did it, I did it'.

Children are developing a strong preference for being outdoors, exploring nature and engaging in physically active play. Even children who dislike getting dirty or are wary about tripping over take part because they are protected by all-weather suits and boots. The nursery operates a snack cafe, which nursery children access independently when they feel ready to take a break. Two-year-olds are introduced to this by their key person who goes with them at least for the first term, if not longer. Children are helped to register their attendance and choose what they want for their snack from a picture menu. Staff talk to children about the fruits they select, encouraging their awareness of healthy food. Children are given real knives that are designed for young children and are taught how to cut their own fruit. Staff encourage children to engage in sociable conversation and to integrate with the older children.

Children show a strong sense of belonging to their environment as they go straight to their designated cosy area when they arrive, to greet their special friends. Children return to this area throughout the session, for instance to snuggle on the cushions to look at books. Staff are skilled in helping children understand and adopt positive behaviour. They plan specific activities to demonstrate turn-taking and give parents ideas to further support this at home. The older nursery children are incredibly kind and supportive towards each other and the younger children. They are brilliant role models for younger children. For example, older children help younger children put their boots on the right feet and offer children an arm to steady themselves. Given their age and stage of development, children are exceptionally well behaved. Squabbles are rare because play resources are in plentiful supply, activities provide challenge and staff step in to divert situations before they escalate.

### **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision**

The management team demonstrates clear knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The environment is exceptionally well resourced and maintained. Staff use risk assessments effectively to help to ensure the premises are secure, safe and suitable for young children. For example, since registration a little bench has been added to the mud pit to enable

young children to get in and out independently. A low-level sink with automatic taps has been installed in the classroom to enable children's independence. Safety procedures, such as for carrying out regular fire evacuation practice, are well implemented. The appointed designated staff are experienced in caring for vulnerable young children and are highly committed to closing the gaps in achievement for all children, in readiness for school. There are rigorous safeguarding procedures in place. Leadership and staff understand their individual roles and responsibilities to act on any concerns about children's welfare, which they closely monitor. There are rigorous recruitment, vetting and induction procedures in place. Staff do not start working with the children until their Disclosure and Barring Service checks are completed, and these are updated every three years. All staff complete child protection training. Individuals with designated roles and responsibilities, such as for safeguarding and special educational needs and disabilities, complete regular specialist training.

Management has suitable procedures in place for managing staff performance. These are generally well used to improve teaching practice and the outcomes for children. There is a staff appraisal system in place and management is beginning to make use of local authority early years training workshops and courses to develop staff's skills and practice. Senior management complete observations of teaching practice to help inform staffs yearly appraisal. Management also welcome feedback from the local authority early years advisors, who observe and evaluate the quality of teaching practice when they visit. However, staff are always working alongside each other and directly with the children. This means that they do not have the time to observe and evaluate each other's practice. Opportunities, therefore, for staff to learn from each other's strengths, such as the way that they engage children in an animated and playful way, are missed. Staff do not always fully recognise why activities, such as small group time, have been less successful. This is because there is no one to give them objective feedback on a regular basis. The nursery improvement plans include introducing a nursery newsletter and parenting workshops, for example on supporting children's communication and language, and dealing with toilet training and challenging behaviour. Since registration management and key staff have visited two highly successful provisions for two-year-olds, to gain ideas for further developing this provision.

The nursery's partnership with parents is good and rapidly developing. Parents describe how staff help them find solutions to problems, such as with children's sleep patterns, behaviour and toilet training. They say that children frequently amaze them with newly learned skills, such as being able to pour water steadily from a jug into a glass, and by their keenness to tidy away their toys at home. Parents are impressed by staff's use of positive language to encourage good behaviour and the way they use actions and signs to communicate with children. The nursery team seeks parents' views through the use of a questionnaire. Ideas, such as for displaying more photographs of the two-year-olds in the nursery, are proactively addressed by staff. The team works closely with a range of external agencies to support children and families, and to secure any necessary intervention. This is a rapidly developing provision with a strong capacity for sustaining ongoing improvement.

### **The Childcare Register**

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

## What inspection judgements mean

### Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

## Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY463342
<b>Local authority</b>	Kingston upon Thames
<b>Inspection number</b>	931050
<b>Type of provision</b>	Sessional provision
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	2 - 3
<b>Total number of places</b>	16
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	14
<b>Name of provider</b>	Burlington Infant and Nursery School
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	not applicable
<b>Telephone number</b>	0208 942 1586

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## Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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