

Inspection of Little Squirrels @ Shrawley

Walnut Cottage Nursery, School House, Worcester WR6 6TT

Inspection date: 1 August 2025

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

Staff greet parents and children with smiles and welcome them into the setting. Home visits enable children to get to know staff before they join the nursery. This helps children feel safe and secure. Key persons support transitions between rooms and other settings and share information about children's needs and development. This provides continuity of care and learning for children.

Staff plan the curriculum around children's interests. Babies explore tummy time activities and develop their mobility. Toddlers negotiate low-level climbing frames that build their confidence and strength, while pre-school children develop their physical skills as they join in with engaging yoga sessions. Staff encourage children to use their imagination as they pretend to travel across Africa in hot air balloons. They balance like flamingos on one leg and curl and stretch like coiled snakes. Yoga sessions end with the option of a gentle head massage to help children relax after a busy morning learning through play. Staff promote healthy eating. All children enjoy healthy snacks of fresh fruit and vegetables. Children learn about where food comes from as they grow and harvest food in the nursery garden.

Staff promote children's communication and language skills with songs, stories and conversations supported with sign language. Every child is assessed using a screening tool to identify gaps in learning. Children behave well. Staff use praise to encourage positive behaviour. They promote fundamental British values, encouraging children to listen, share and take turns with their peers. Staff model good manners and teach children the skills to form respectful relationships with others.

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

- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. Staff complete assessments to identify if children are meeting expected developmental milestones. They work in partnership with parents and make referrals to specialist services. This ensures children receive the timely support they need and helps prepare them for the next stage of their education.
- Staff support children to develop a positive sense of self. Babies point to family photos and talk about their families. Staff support toddlers to talk about how they are feeling and place their photos next to characters from the 'The Colour Monster' story. Parents share children's home learning experiences and staff build on this. For example, following a visit to a local regatta, staff provide resources for children to make boats. Children test whether they float or sink.
- Staff promote a love of books. Babies enjoy story time cuddles with their key persons and pre-school children vote for their favourite story. Children listen intently and join in with animated story time sessions led by staff. This helps to

develop children's communication and language skills and build a broader vocabulary.

- Children spend extended periods of the day playing outside in the fresh air. They explore nature on local woodland walks. Leaders and managers have plans to redevelop the outdoor space and create an additional area for babies, alongside the toddler and pre-school garden. However, staff do not always provide opportunities for children to learn about other communities and cultures beyond their own.
- Parent partnerships are strong. Staff share children's learning during daily conversations and termly parents evenings. Leaders recognise the challenges of modern day life for families. They provide key information for parents and signpost them to support services. Home learning bags are available to support areas, such as tooth brushing, dummy dropping and the arrival of a new baby. Parents say staff celebrate children's individuality and provide loving care in a homely environment. They state staff prioritise children's emotional development and nurture their fascination for learning.
- Leaders complete regular observations of staff to identify strengths and training needs. This, along with peer observations, enables staff to further develop their teaching skills. Leaders support staff mental health and well-being. Staff have non-contact time to reflect on children's learning and complete assessments of their key children. Leaders seek staff views of what makes them feel happy and fulfilled in their role. This helps staff feel valued and supported and creates a positive ethos among the staff team.

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:

- help children to develop an awareness of other cultures to prepare them for life in modern day Britain.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY489584
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10397792
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	44
Name of registered person	Little Squirrels Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP533545
Telephone number	01905620498
Date of previous inspection	24 October 2019

Information about this early years setting

Little Squirrels @ Shrawley registered in July 2015. The nursery opens Monday to Friday from 8am until 6pm, all year round and is closed for bank holidays and Christmas. The nursery employs 13 members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds a level 6 qualification, eleven hold appropriate level 3 early years qualifications and one holds a level 2 qualification. The nursery provides funded early education for eligible early years children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Sharon Wilcox

Inspection activities

- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager and deputy manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- Children spoke with the inspector during the inspection.
- 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 and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and the children.
- The inspector and the manager and deputy manager carried out a joint observation of a communication and language activity.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the setting.

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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