



Rocking Horse Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	206286
Inspection date	15 June 2006
Inspector	Lynn Dent
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Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Rocking Horse Day Nursery is one of a group of nine family owned nurseries. It opened in 1990 and operates from four rooms in a converted house. It is situated in the town of Ilkeston. A maximum of 36 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 8.00 to 18.00 for 52 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 60 children from 8 months to under 8 years on roll. Of these, 10

children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area, as most of their parents travel to work in and around Ilkeston. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties. The nursery employs 8 staff. Of these, 5 hold appropriate early years qualifications and 3 are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children clearly enjoy their meals as they often ask for more. They are nourished because practitioners provide a nutritious, varied diet which incorporates foods from different cultures, for example, curry, spaghetti and pizza. Therefore, children are encouraged to try different foods. Meals are freshly cooked and include a dedicated menu for children who eat a vegetarian diet, allowing them to make appropriate choices. Older children develop independence as they take some responsibility for serving themselves. During meal times practitioners eat with the children and discuss the benefits of healthy food. Consequently, children learn to develop good table manners and social interaction is promoted. Children's dietary needs are discussed with parents and detailed on children's records. Menus are adapted to take good account of this. Feeding, rest and sleep routines for babies are met as practitioners work closely with parents to maintain this and provide a quiet area to ensure they are not disturbed.

Children learn about healthy living and clearly understand how to promote their growth and development during daily routines. They know why they wash their hands and understand which foods are good for them. Practitioners effectively use topic themes, story times and leading questions to help children develop an understanding of their personal needs, for example visiting the dentist. Consequently, children can explain why too many sweets are not good for their teeth. Children are positively encouraged to manage their personal needs. A child is currently potty training. Practitioners encourage her to do this independently and praise her when she is successful. Therefore, the child's confidence is enhanced.

Children enjoy good health because practitioners effectively implement a comprehensive range of policies and procedures which promote this. Premises and resources are regularly cleaned and practitioners wear disposable aprons when serving and eating meals. This is extended to also wearing gloves when changing nappies and dealing with bodily fluids. The changing areas, tables, floors and feeding chairs are cleaned after use. Therefore, the spread of germs is minimised. Practitioners successfully implement clear procedures to contain illness and minimise the risk of infection. Children do not attend the nursery for set periods of time during and after infectious illness. Parents have clear information about this and practitioners hold discussions with parents and children when they return to ensure they are well enough to attend. Children receive appropriate care following accidents as practitioners are trained in first aid. Consequently, the risk of further injury is minimised.

Children's physical development is good. They competently move over a range of surfaces, for example safety surfaces, grass and bark chipping in the outdoor play area. Children receive a good range of stimulating opportunities to participate in developmentally appropriate experiences to explore and reinforce their physical capabilities. Children confidently use ladders and nets to access slides. They can move over, under and through equipment. Children show good balance and spatial awareness as they move with accuracy and skill when running, jumping and pedalling wheeled toys. Children's hand/eye coordination and finer skills are enhanced by using and manipulating toys and equipment. Children have a strong preference to use their left or right hand as they accurately use one handed tools, for example, scissors, paint brushes and pencils and can manipulate computer equipment well. They enjoy and carefully fill containers by pouring sand and water during play and to access drinks. At meal times children show developmentally appropriate skill when using knives and forks. Younger children have access to a range of developmentally appropriate toys which effectively supports their overall physical development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

A very comprehensive policy for child protection includes action to be taken, the nursery's own reporting procedures and contact with outside agencies. Practitioners have a clear understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect. However, not all staff show sufficient understanding of their responsibilities for reporting possible child abuse or neglect to the relevant agencies in the absence of the manager or if they are concerned in line with Local Safeguarding Children Board. Consequently, this could potentially compromise children's wellbeing.

Children's welfare and safety is maintained well as practitioners undertake regular comprehensive risk assessments to identify and take appropriate action to ensure the premises and resources are safe for children to use. This includes daily, weekly and longer term procedures. Children are kept safe on the premises as practitioners are vigilant about locking doors and gates. They know who is on the premises at all times as they maintain an accurate record of visitors. Consequently, children are protected effectively from unknown adults.

The premises are bright, stimulating and maintained in good order. Displays show children's work and information in a range of ways and languages. Therefore, children feel special as they know their work is valued and they can explain what the displays are about. Equipment used by babies is sterilised to prevent the spread of infections and all toys and equip undergo regular cleaning and maintenance checks. Consequently, children are protected from germs and unsafe equipment. They can safely access an extensive range of appealing toys and resources as these are stored at children's height and comply with the relevant safety standards. Therefore, they can move safely around the premises developing their confidence and ability to make choices.

Children's safety is maintained effectively during outings as practitioners implement

clear procedures. Risk assessments are completed before each visit and the number of adults caring for children is increased. Children understand why action is taken and rules are in force to keep them safe. For example, when a child kneels on a chair he is reminded this is unsafe and can explain what will happen if he falls. Children help to maintain a safe environment by helping to tidy away toys.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are making strides as they receive time and space to explore their environment. Practitioners are forward thinking in the use of 'Birth to three matters' which is exceedingly well planned, implemented, monitored and assessed to set targets for children to achieve. Focussed, adult-led activities, everyday experiences and good use of the indoor and outdoor environment help children learn in a variety of ways. Children are extremely happy and enjoy themselves in the nursery. Therefore, they are very confident and happily leave their parents. The practitioners are dedicated to providing the best care for the children and radiate a very caring, warm and loving atmosphere. Children flourish as practitioners provide excellent care, are focussed and enthusiastically involved in the children's care, learning and play. Consequently, children have exceptionally good self-esteem. All children are actively involved in an extensive range of stimulating activities. For example, babies sit and play in water with a range of toys and splash. Therefore, they become confident in water play and learn simple words as practitioners talk to them to identify their toys and actions. Children who do not enjoy this type of play are encouraged to take part, however practitioners remove them and provide alternative play experiences when they are not happy. Toddlers and older children learn to use the sense of touch when playing with messy activities, for example baked beans. Older children engage in meaningful activities and experiences for sustained periods of time. An example of this is the role play area which children are actively involved in setting up. Consequently, they understand the aims of the activities, take turns to share resources and play different roles. Therefore, their play is used exceptionally well to support their learning and development.

All children spend their time purposefully. They eagerly participate in a good range of stimulating planned activities and are confident to initiate their own play, independently accessing an appealing range of resources to effectively support this. Practitioners are skilled and effective in knowing when to direct and support play and when to allow children time, space and resources to develop planned activities and to initiate their own play and learning. Consequently, children become independent and confident in their own abilities. Outside professionals are welcomed into the nursery to provide additional activities for children, for example, French and Yoga lessons. Therefore, children have the opportunity to learn additional languages and how to keep fit. A very clear and concise policy for the care of the children who attend the nursery out of school club and discussions with these children show the nursery provides excellent care for them. Children are confident and have time and space to relax with their friends, however they are also engaged in a range of developmentally appropriate activities. For example, music, drama, crafts and games. The care needs of the children are effectively met as detailed records are in place to identify their

individual needs. Practitioners know the children well as they develop very good partnerships working with parents. Therefore, children's individual routines are maintained. All children are treated with respect and kindness and practitioners ensure they can all access the activities provided. Adapting these when necessary to ensure all children are involved. For example, children paint on paper by walking in paint, a child is not confident to do this therefore staff allow him to watch and encourage him to paint with his hands until confident to paint with his feet.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Therefore, children are making good overall progress towards the early learning goals in the Foundation Stage. Practitioners have a clear understanding of the stepping stones within the 'Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage' and how children learn. Consequently, these skills are effectively used to provide an exciting, broad and balanced curriculum with clear aims for children to achieve. Practitioners make good use of activities, discussions and teaching methods to ensure children work towards reaching their full potential. Comprehensive, detailed assessments of children's current stage of development and learning begin when they enter the foundation stage. Ongoing focussed observations by practitioners and discussions with parents help to recognise children's achievements and identify the next steps in their learning. Children's achievements are shared with parents. Consequently, they are kept well informed and become actively involved in their children's learning.

Children are very interested and show a positive attitude to the activities and resources provided for them. They have time to access a good range of planned and free choice activities to consolidate their prior learning, building on what they already know to further develop their own play and learning. Consequently, children become absorbed in activities and concentrate, applying themselves to completing tasks to their own satisfaction and take responsibility for their own learning. Children's personal, social and emotional development is good. They are confident and make choices about their play and personal needs. They use their imagination effectively to develop their communication and social skills in role play where they successfully share and take turns. Children sit quietly at story time, listening and discussing the story. Therefore, they learn to take turns to talk and develop good conversational skills. Children independently maintain their personal needs. For example, they can put on their shoes and aprons, only asking for help when required.

Children are confident speakers and use language effectively to organise their thoughts and explain what they are doing. For example, a child explains what he is making for dinner in his imaginative play. Children have a range of experiences to help them develop independent writing. For example tracing, role play and drawing. All children make marks and can explain what these mean. More able children are independently writing their name. Children are competent in linking initial sounds and letters in their names and to everyday items. An example of this is children telling me at meal times that "sausage begins with S and broccoli begins with B".

Children spontaneously use numbers during their play to count. Older children can count by rote and to count sets of objects. For example, they count how many pieces of fruit they eat at snack time. They use simple addition and subtraction when singing

number rhymes. However, some children cannot accurately identify numbers. Therefore, the ability to recognise and order numbers is sometimes limited. Children can recognise and accurately name simple shapes and colours in the environment. Children discuss tambourines that are the same colour and make the same noise and the size of elephants in a sorting game. Therefore, they have an understanding about grouping and size. Children have a significant range of opportunities to learn about the wider world in which they live as they celebrate a range of festivals, events and fund raise for others throughout the year. Visits and visitors to the nursery help them learn about the local community and to learn languages, for example French. Children have an understanding and are competent when using information technology. They use a computer and other technological equipment, for example calculators. Children explore a wide range of different materials and texture in their play and in their art and craft activities. Therefore they are very creative. They roll balls in paint and along sheets of paper to make patterns and use natural materials to make pictures.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Practitioners provide an extremely caring atmosphere and have a very high regard for the children's welfare. They are focussed, conscientious and show commitment to helping children to achieve their full potential by extremely effective interaction through play and discussion. Consequently, children feel welcome in the nursery and develop a very positive attitude to learning. This promotes children's self-esteem and encourages them to become responsible for their actions. Children's behaviour is very good due to consistent, positive behaviour management by practitioners who are very good role models for children and successfully implement the nursery behaviour management policy. Practitioners treat children with respect and kindness. Consequently, children treat others in the same way as they understand and show how to be nice to each other. Children are skilled at sharing and taking turns. Therefore, they play harmoniously together for sustained periods of time. Effective developmentally appropriate discussion and distraction is used to manage potentially unacceptable behaviour. For example, two children who want to play with the same toy are encouraged to share. Consequently, they learn to self-manage their behaviour extremely well.

Children and families are valued, treated with equal concern and respect. Excellent account is taken of children's individual needs by sensitive practitioners who know the children well. Therefore, children's preference not to be involved in activities and experiences is respected. For example, a child chooses not to participate in printing with his feet. Practitioners give him time to observe the other children and offer alternative activities so he can take part in his own way. Practitioners effectively organise resources and activities to encourage children to independently access these. Consequently, children make informed choices and taking responsibility for their play and learning.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are very keen to learn and actively participate in all activities for sustained periods of time. The

nursery places a strong emphasis on developing children's self-esteem. Consequently, they are highly motivated and show a sense of awe and wonder in new experiences provided for them. For example, they show excitement and eager anticipation at rolling paint covered balls along paper to make patterns as part of the nursery celebration of the football world cup. Children have extensive opportunities to engage in a variety of stimulating activities and experiences to learn about the wider world in which they live. This is enhanced by visits and visitors to the nursery and participating in fund raising events. Therefore, children learn to understand the needs of others. Children can access a wide range of appealing resources which promote positive images. For example, dressing up clothes, cooking utensils in the role play area and a range of books which enables them to develop their knowledge and understanding of other cultures, traditions and respect those who are different to themselves. Children with special needs are effectively supported to achieve to their full potential as experienced practitioners have a clear understanding of their responsibility to seek professional advice and support from outside agencies to ensure their needs are met.

Parents receive a very comprehensive prospectus at induction which explains the service provided and includes detailed policies. Further relevant information is shared by displaying notices and current information and providing regular newsletters. A very detailed document includes details of the nursery schemes of work, 'Birth to three matters' and the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and is available to parents at all times. This document very clearly explains the activities and experiences children receive and the learning expectations of these. Parents are kept informed of their children are currently learning as planning is displayed in each room. Practitioners ensure parents are kept well informed of their children's routines and achievements through daily discussions and diaries for younger children. Excellent two-way communication by all parties means children's current care needs are identified and met. Discussion and observations show parents are extremely happy with the care their children receive and are confident to discuss their children with the practitioners at any time.

The partnerships with parents and carers is outstanding. Practitioners effectively promote very close, mutually respectful working relationships with parents. Consequently, this promotes children's learning. Practitioners successfully implement a very clear policy and procedure to positively involve parents in the nursery, their children's progress and achievements in the Foundation Stage. Parent's views and opinions about their child's care needs and learning are successfully collected at induction and regularly updated. Effective organisation ensures that all parties are kept fully informed of the children's current needs and achievements through a range of daily discussions, sharing of records, regular written reports and planned meetings. Consequently, parents are actively involved in assessments and receive detailed information about their child's progress towards the early learning goals. Therefore, the next steps for children's learning are successfully identified. Practitioners are pro-active in encouraging parents to extend their children's learning at home. For example, children and parents are encouraged to borrow books with additional resources to share and support the children's reading skills. Consequently, parents are actively involved in their children's learning in meaningful ways.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management is good. The management are good role models and actively show this by involvement in the day to day care of the children. Consequently, this builds a dedicated, cohesive team of practitioners, who are committed to improving the outcomes for all children. 'Birth to three matters' is extremely well planned, implemented and monitored. Consequently, care, learning and play are enhanced. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals in the Foundation Stage. Practitioners understand the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and are actively involved in the planning process which is adapted to meet the needs of the children currently in the Foundation Stage. Therefore, practitioners understand the aims of the activities they provide. Consequently, children are actively involved in meaningful experiences which promote their individual stage of development and challenges them to achieve. Comprehensive monitoring and assessments of the activities provided and the children's progress ensures their development and progression through the Foundation Stage of learning is good.

Practitioners promote an inclusive environment in which every child matters. The environment, time and resource are organised well to provide children with an extensive range of developmentally appropriate play and learning opportunities. This includes the very effective use of the outdoor environment to provide and extend children's learning in different ways. The atmosphere in the nursery is very warm, caring and loving as practitioners effectively interact to support children's development, play and learning. Consequently, children feel safe and are very happy to be there. Practitioners are skilled and know when to allow children time and space to develop their own independence and play. Therefore, children move assertively around the premises freely accessing a wide range of stimulating activities and appealing resources. Staff have a high regard for children's well-being and encourage all children to achieve to their full potential.

The operational plan works very well in practice. Very comprehensive policies and procedures are successfully implemented and underpins the whole ethos of the nursery and care for the children. Children's records are detailed and regularly updated. Therefore, their current developmental and learning stages are known and next steps for these are identified. The effective deployment of practitioners often ensures the minimum number of staff required to work with the children is exceeded. Consequently, their care, learning and play are effectively enhanced. The management has a clear vision and a pro-active commitment for the future of the nursery and have an action plan in place to achieve this. Children's welfare is maintained as the management implements very robust procedures for the recruitment and vetting of new practitioners. Thorough checks are made to ensure all prospective employees are suitable to work with children and are medically fit to do so. Practitioners and students receive a very comprehensive induction. Consequently, this arms them with the knowledge they need to successfully

implement the aims of the setting and contribute to children's well-being and care. This is evident in practice. Most practitioners hold recognised early years qualifications and they are encouraged to enhance their professional development by attending a minimum of two training courses each year and regular staff appraisals. This is supported by the nursery's own internal training and meetings. Consequently, the service provided is enhanced and promotes children's care learning and play.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the registered person agreed to develop the organisation of mealtimes to further encourage the children's independence. The registered person has taken the appropriate action to meet the recommendation by encouraging children to serve themselves with snacks, meals and drinks and helping to give out cutlery and plates. Younger children are supported by practitioners. Therefore, children independence is enhanced.

At the last nursery education inspection the registered person agreed to provide activities to enable children to recognise the changes that happen to their bodies when they are active. The registered person has taken the appropriate action to meet the recommendation by providing activities and opportunities for children to learn about changes in their bodies during exercise and a topic theme of my body. Therefore, children's knowledge and understanding of the effects active exercise has on their bodies is enhanced.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection. The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that staff are confident to implement the child protection procedure in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- continue to develop children's recognition and ordering of number.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk