

Nature Trails Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY333724
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Inspector Hazel Christine White

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Description of the setting

Nature Trails Day Nursery Ltd opened in 2006, having previously operated since 2004 as Nature Trails Day Nursery. The setting is privately owned and managed. It is easily accessible and operates from five main rooms on the ground floor of an annex at the side of the owner's home. Pre-school children are housed in a large log cabin within the grounds. It is situated at the edge of the countryside, on the outskirts of Rugby. The nursery serves the local and surrounding areas and has strong links with other early years settings. All children share access to secure enclosed outdoor play areas and use the surrounding woodland areas.

The setting is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year. Sessions are available from 08.00 to 12.30 and 13.00 to 18.00. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 63 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 90 children on roll, all of whom are within the early years age range.

The setting employs 24 members of childcare staff. All hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff has Early Years Professional Status and several staff are working towards this. The setting receives support from the local authority.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the provision is outstanding. Nature Trails Day Nursery is very effective in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) because children are at the heart of all that happens within the nursery. They and their families are warmly welcomed and staff demonstrate, through their enthusiasm and professionalism, that each child is valued and respected. They thoughtfully organise the environment and plan and facilitate an extremely exciting range of experiences for children. Consequently, children flourish and demonstrate high levels of independence and self-esteem. Their welfare is effectively safeguarded and security is a very high priority. The nursery demonstrates a very strong capacity for improvement and regular monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of the provision leads to the clear identification of targets and priorities.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- the accessibility of ICT equipment for younger children.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are exceptionally well safeguarded. Robust and vigorous procedures ensure that all adults working with children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so. A comprehensive safeguarding policy is in place and all staff members have recently received child protection training. Personal and professional development of all staff is actively encouraged and the result is a knowledgeable and enthusiastic staff team who effectively support and include all children. They have an excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and demonstrate a strong commitment to developing their knowledge and skills through ongoing training. Staff to child ratios and the percentage of qualified staff exceed requirements. Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and fully support the safe and efficient management of the provision. A comprehensive risk assessment has been conducted and all paperwork is effectively maintained.

Partnership with parents and carers is exceptional. Several parents commented positively on many aspects of the nursery during the inspection. Regular two-way communication between staff and parents effectively supports children's learning and development and ensures each child's ever changing needs are effectively and continually met. Noticeboards around the nursery display a wealth of useful information and children's work is attractively displayed. A folder is continually available containing guidance on EYFS and comprehensive policies and procedures which successfully reflect the ethos of the setting. Parents are asked for their suggestions and complete questionnaires based on 'Every Child Matters'. Any ideas or points of view are discussed, evaluated and changes made where it is felt to be in the best interests of the children. Parents in Partnership meetings are well attended and give parents an opportunity to be involved in decision making. Attractive and informative 'Learning Journeys' are maintained for children and parents are invited to contribute to these. A wide range of strategies have been adopted to help parents develop their children's learning at home and strong links are fostered with other settings delivering the EYFS to ensure progression and continuity of learning and care.

The leadership and management of the provision is exemplary. Excellent communication between management and the staff team means that good practice is shared and encouraged. Ongoing reflective practice enhances children's welfare and results in a highly focused and motivated staff team. Management utilise support and guidance from the local authority and this helps the staff team to effectively assess and improve their practice. The setting has a positive attitude towards ongoing improvement of the provision and their self-evaluation reflects the service provided. There is a strong focus on seeking the views of others in order to ensure priorities for improvement are accurately targeted and have a positive impact on children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children make excellent progress in all areas of learning and development and are having lots of fun. Staff structure the day flexibly and make full use of the indoor

and outdoor environment to maximise opportunities for children's progress and enjoyment. The quality of planning for individuals is of a very high standard and it is carefully informed through regular observations of children during play. Children's personalities, likes and interests are extremely well known and this information is used effectively to ensure that they are happy, settled and enjoying their time at nursery. Children with additional needs are supported admirably as staff thoughtfully plan activities to encourage all children to reach their full potential.

Children's creativity is exceptionally well supported. They enjoy the freedom to select and express their ideas through easy access to a wide range of stimulating materials, for example, paint, dough, sand, construction toys and role play. The nursery operates a 'forest school' for children aged three and over, which successfully enhances their learning and range of experiences in a natural environment. This allows them to discover nature, the changing weather and seasons and to enjoy the space and opportunity to be physically active and exuberant. Children have a fabulous time cooking dough over a camp fire, climbing rope ladders and building dens. They whittle wood using potato peelers and look under logs to examine insects. Children describe how they slide on the mud and use a water hose to clean their Wellington boots; consequently, they have an abundance of fun.

A thoughtfully planned environment ensures that available space is optimised well. Resources are plentiful, safe, clean and encourage children's natural curiosity as learners. Children of all ages select their own resources, therefore promoting their independence. They are confident, active learners and personal, social and emotional development is particularly strong. Children are happy and settled and their self-esteem is fostered through the praise and encouragement continually given by staff. They benefit from the warm and sensitive nature of the staff who care for them. Babies and young children are at ease and happy to go to staff for comfort, reassurance and support. They thoroughly enjoy action songs and rhymes, and staff respond to their sounds and gestures, extending their vocabulary by naming and repeating sounds and words.

Children are learning about the wider world through exploring the environment, craft activities, stories, music and everyday discussion. A range of religious and cultural festivals are recognised and resources reflect positive images of diversity. Children support several charities, for example Comic Relief, Barnardos, Children in Need and a children's centre in Mozambique. They use cameras to capture chicks hatching out and look at the changes in their growth on a daily basis. They competently use a computer, overhead projector and an interactive white board. Staff have recognised that although they have very good resources for increasing the children's knowledge of information and communication technology (ICT), they are not as readily available for younger children. This is an area they are currently reviewing.

Children show an avid interest in books and stories and they see an array of letters, words and text. Pre-school children listen intently during group times and staff skilfully encourage them to reflect on past activities and experiences. During circle time, children select their favourite books and make up their own stories.

They listen to pieces of music and describe the instruments that they hear, such as cymbals, violin, drums and piano. Children express in their own words what it sounds like. For instance, 'lambs jumping in the spring' and 'fairies dancing', therefore using their imagination well.

Older children are very confident and form strong friendships with their peers. Their behaviour is superb and they demonstrate a high level of understanding with regards to their safety. For example, children are taught to use scissors and tools carefully. They have an exceptional awareness of possible hazards they may encounter when attending forest school. Staff thoroughly prepare children before they go and gently remind them of expected behaviour. They know to stay within the blue rope and sit sensibly on the logs when the fire is lit. Children listen to staff and demonstrate impeccable manners.

Children's good health is rigorously promoted. All staff have current first aid certificates, and accident and medication procedures are known and adhered to. First aid boxes are readily available and fully stocked. Hygiene procedures are thorough to prevent the spread of infection. Children are well aware of the importance of handwashing routines, for example, before eating and after toileting. They receive balanced and nutritious meals and snacks which are freshly prepared on the premises using organic food when possible. Fresh water is provided throughout the day. Menus are carefully planned and shared with parents and mealtimes are a happy and relaxed social event. Children are actively encouraged to be involved in physical play. This includes weekly dance and drama sessions where they learn how their body works and how to keep it healthy.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	1
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	1

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1

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