



Rocking Horse Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	254636
Inspection date	30 January 2006
Inspector	Anne McKay
Setting Address	Rocking Horse Day Nursery, 229 Cinderhill Road, Nottingham, NG6 8SE
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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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Rocking Horse Day Nursery opened in 1988. It operates from the ground floor of a converted house in the Bulwell area of Nottingham. The nursery consists of 4 rooms and an enclosed outdoor area, with a separate outdoor area for under 2s. Places at the nursery are available to the general public and they have a wide catchment area. The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round, closing only for bank holidays. They open from 08:00 to 18:00.

The nursery is registered to provide 25 places for children under 8 years. There are currently 45 children on roll, this includes 7 funded three-year-olds and 2 funded four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions each week. There is a limited out of school service offered only to families who previously used the nursery, and those with siblings currently attending. This service depends on available spaces. They currently take and collect children from Hempshill Hall and Old Basford school.

There are seven staff who work with the children. Five staff, including the manager, hold a relevant childcare qualification, and the remaining two are working towards qualifications. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well by staff who have a good understanding of relevant policies and procedures and are able to put them into practice. Children learn to wash their hands by following the staff's example and older children do this independently as part of the daily routine, including washing their hands after blowing their noses, sneezing and coughing. This protects children from the risk of cross-infection. Children understand that these practices stop the spread of germs. Effective systems are in place to record any accidents that occur and any treatment that has been given. Children receive any necessary treatment from staff who have undertaken appropriate first aid training. Medicine is only administered with written parental consent and parents sign the records to acknowledge they have been informed. All health records are shared responsibly with parents to ensure children receive consistent care.

Children exercise and play physically every day. They have access to a secure outside play area, with a separate area for the under 2s. The older children sometimes go to a local park to access the larger climbing equipment and to have more space to run around. Children are given drinks on a regular basis so they do not become thirsty or dehydrated. Children rest when they need to. There is a regular sleep time in the afternoon for the younger children and babies sleep according to their own routines. Children are well nourished through a balanced menu of nutritious meals and snacks. Children learn about a variety of different foods through sampling them so they develop new tastes. Individual children's dietary needs are catered for according to individual need and parents' wishes. There is a vegetarian option at every meal.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, safe and secure environment both indoors and outside. The rooms are brightly decorated with posters and displays of the children's

work on the wall. There is a good range of resources available for the children. Toys and activities are suitable to promote the development of children in all areas and are stored where they can access them to make their own choices from what has been set out for them each day. Children can play with confidence because the environment and the resources are checked regularly through an efficient system of risk assessment. All potential hazards are identified and appropriate action is taken promptly to minimise any risk to children. Children are supervised at a level that is appropriate to their age, stage of development and level of understanding. This means that children are kept safe from accidents whilst being able to explore and to develop their independence skills. Children are protected by staff's good knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children throughout the nursery are settled and confident in the care of staff with whom they have positive relationships. This means children have a secure basis to learn and play. Children are interested in the activities set out for them and show curiosity as they move between rooms in their groups, looking to see what there is to do. Children interact well with each other and with staff, chatting freely with each other and with staff during activities and at meal times. This promotes their social and communication skills. Staff ask questions that encourage children to think and to learn through their play. The activities planned for the children represent a good balance to promote their physical, social, emotional and intellectual development.

The younger children benefit from the staff's use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework that has recently been introduced within the nursery for the planning and assessments. Staff keep assessment records that are shared with parents and that parents can contribute to so there are good links between what the children are doing at home and the nursery. However, the children aged up to 2 years do not have assessment records that are linked to the framework. This means their assessments do not sufficiently identify areas of development that need more support. The planning and assessment for the children aged 3-5 years is linked with the Foundation Stage curriculum whether or not they are receiving funding for nursery education.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have an adequate knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and the principles for early learning and plan activities to cover a balanced curriculum. However, the learning outcomes are planned for the group as a whole and there are not clear learning outcomes identified for individual children's progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Children are generally interested in the activities set out for them and are supported by staff in becoming involved. Children can concentrate but do not always complete tasks because the groups of children rotate between rooms each half hour. There are limited opportunities for children to explore their ideas and put their

learning into practice through imaginative play. Children are good communicators and respond well to questions from staff that encourage them to think and to make connections between home and the setting. Children use language to interact with staff and with each other. They take turns in conversations and persevere to make themselves understood. Children are encouraged to write their names and have some opportunities to make marks during painting and drawing activities.

Children use some mathematical terms during their play and the older children can count by rote to at least ten. They explore some basic calculation through nursery rhymes. They observe staff calculating and counting during activities and the daily routines. Children explore a range of different materials and textures in their play and in art and craft activities. They learn about everyday technology through the use of electronic toys and through access to a computer. Children develop a sense of time and space through their discussions at group time. They play with a good selection of resources that reflect diversity so they can learn about the wider world and explore aspects of their identity. They develop some understanding and respect for different cultures through activities arranged by the staff.

Children are developing friendships and play co-operatively together. They are well behaved and are learning to share. They are developing independent skills but staff do not always extend these skills for the more able children, for example in allowing them to pour their own drinks. Children move around the nursery and negotiate space with confidence. All children use small tools such as scissors and glue-spreaders. Older children are confident manipulators of different tools and equipment and show good co-ordination. They develop their physical skills through access to some equipment at the nursery and through visits to the local park where there is larger equipment for them to climb and balance on.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into the nursery and are encouraged to feel at home through such measures as having their work displayed on the wall and having their own named coat pegs. Staff work closely with parents to ensure they have all relevant information to meet individual children's needs and to provide continuity of care. Children with special needs receive appropriate support to ensure they are included and have their individual needs met. Children learn about wider society as they play with a very good range of toys that reflect diversity and through activities and stories shared with them by staff. Children understand responsible behaviour. They play harmoniously together, share activities and take turns. Staff manage behaviour sensitively according to children's individual age and level of understanding. Children are praised for positive behaviour and for their achievements. This develops children's confidence and good self-esteem and encourages them to continue to behave well. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children benefit from the positive partnership staff develop with parents. Babies settle well because staff work closely with parents to ensure they follow the home routine. Staff make time to exchange information with parents about their children's welfare

on a daily basis. Parents are also kept informed through a parents' notice board that includes copies of the nursery routine and the daily menu. A regular newsletter is sent home to inform parents of what is going on in the nursery. The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is good. Parents receive good quality information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and understand that their children are being taught across six areas of learning. There are good, established links between home and the nursery so parents are able to support their children's learning. Parents have access to the planning for the children and can view and contribute to the assessment records. They are invited to parents' evenings where they are able to discuss their children's progress and receive a written report.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from effective recruitment and vetting procedures that ensure suitable staff work with them. Clear and supportive induction processes help staff settle into the nursery and to understand the policies and procedures. Children are looked after by staff with good knowledge and experience of child development so they have suitable activities planned to promote their progress. High priority is given to ongoing training to ensure staff enhance their existing knowledge and skills. Staff and resources are well organised to ensure that ratios are always met and that children have a safe environment in which they can rest, eat and play in comfort. Good practice is underpinned by clear and comprehensive policies and procedures. These are updated in line with current regulations. All essential documents and parental consents are in place and are reviewed regularly.

Leadership and management for nursery education is satisfactory. The quality of the provision is monitored by the nursery co-ordinator and the manager of the setting. The staff team are all responsible for delivering the curriculum to the children and are well supported by the management in putting the plans into practice. The planning represents a range of activities across the six areas of learning but the organisation of the daily routine does not ensure that all children are accessing a balanced range of activities across the curriculum. The regular movement of the groups of children between the different rooms places some restrictions on their learning, in particular in accessing resources to develop their imaginative play, in making choices and in completing tasks to their own satisfaction. Assessment records show that children are making progress along the stepping stones but plans are not in place for individual children's next steps towards the early learning goals. This means that some of the children are not sufficiently challenged. There is a clear commitment to continuing to improve the provision and the outcomes for the children. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care and nursery education inspections, the nursery agreed to make some improvements. Children now sit together at snack time and develop their social skills as they chat with each other and with staff. The planning and organisation of the

nursery has been improved for the 2-3 year olds through the use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and by the younger children being grouped together and being supported in accessing activities that are suitable to promote their development in all areas. For the children who are funded to receive nursery education, the organisation of the day requires some further improvement to ensure children have increased time to fully explore their ideas and make choices in their play and learning. This has been brought forward as a recommendation at this inspection.

Complaints since the last inspection

Ofsted has received one complaint since April 2004. The complaint raised concerns about the care of children under National Standard 1 (Suitability) National standard 6 (Safety) National Standard 7 (Health) National Standard 8 (Food and Drink) National Standard 12 (Partnership with Parents) and National Standard 14 (Documentation). Following an investigation by an outside agency a Child Care Inspector made an unannounced visit to the provision on 31/08/2005. The inspector found that steps had already been taken to address the concerns raised. The provider was issued with one recommendation under Standard 14 to review procedures to ensure that all significant events are notified to Ofsted without any delay. The provider continues to meet the National Standards and remains qualified for registration.

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.

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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):

- continue to improve outcomes for children from birth to three by using an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework, with particular reference to the assessment of children aged birth to two

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):

- ensure the planning effectively meets the needs of all the children, taking into account children's different ages, rates of learning and particular needs, with clear learning intentions for individual children so they are sufficiently challenged to make progress along the stepping stones towards their next steps in learning.
- improve the organisation of the daily routine and consider the grouping of children to ensure that all children access a balanced range of activities across the six areas of learning, have time and opportunities to fully explore their ideas and make choices in their play and learning, with particular reference to imaginative play.

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