

The Red House Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	223585
Inspection date	28/03/2011
Inspector	Jane Laraman
Setting address	The Old Vicarage, Upton Bishop, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire, HR9 7UL
Telephone number	01989 780254
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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*.

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Description of the setting

The Red House Nursery School opened in 1996 as a privately run provision. It operates from four classrooms in a property adjoining the provider's home, near to the village of Upton Bishop, in Herefordshire. The nursery serves the village and surrounding communities. Children have use of several enclosed outdoor play areas and the property's extensive grounds. The building has suitable access, with indoor facilities used by the children on ground and first floor levels.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 9.00am to 12.30pm during school term time only. A maximum of 16 children aged from two to five years may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 23 children on roll. The provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and funded early years education is provided for three and four-year-olds. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language are supported.

The nursery school employs three members of staff, two of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. Additional staff are employed on an as required basis. The provision receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

All children and their families are warmly welcomed into the wonderfully vibrant, child-centred environment created by very friendly, approachable staff who demonstrate a genuine commitment to inclusion. Children are lovingly nurtured and are very happy and relaxed, as they are highly respected and valued as unique individuals by intuitive staff who understand how to meet their diverse needs. All aspects of children's welfare and learning are promoted extremely successfully. Their special interests and specific needs are established in effective consultation with parents. The staff then plan meaningful, inspiring activities that are tailored to children's preferences, which means that they are interested, motivated and consequently making outstanding progress in their learning and development. Highly effective systems to evaluate the nursery provision reflect high aspirations for quality, which are embedded across all areas of practice. This ensures continuous improvement and excellent outcomes for all children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- incorporating formal review points into the existing self-evaluation systems in order to monitor the effectiveness of improvements that are implemented.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are very effectively safeguarded because all staff have an excellent understanding of health, safety and child protection issues. The staff are able to identify signs and symptoms of potential abuse or neglect, have accessed relevant training and know the procedures to follow in the event of a concern being raised. A rolling programme of training ensures their knowledge remains secure and up-to-date. All policies and procedures to promote child protection are in line with guidance from the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Robust recruitment, vetting and induction procedures are in place to ensure the suitability of staff to work with children and all staff have a very clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They are extremely vigilant about the children's safety and carry out daily safety checks of the environment to ensure any risks or hazards to children are recognised and minimised immediately. Written risk assessments, which are regularly reviewed, are in place for the premises, toys, equipment and activities and these help to ensure children's safety both in and out of the premises and whilst on outings. The nursery is kept very secure and parents have a full understanding of collection arrangements. Staff are deployed effectively and children are encouraged to develop safe levels of risk taking and independence.

A comprehensive range of written policies and procedures, required for the safe and efficient management of the setting, are consistently implemented by staff to promote children's health, welfare and safety. Consequently, the nursery operates smoothly and efficiently. The strong, stable staff team work and communicate extremely well together. Their mutual respect for each other means that they are able to share their ideas, opinions and thoughts about the running of the nursery. This approach is exceptionally successful in promoting a clear, shared vision for future developments, which are well targeted to improve outcomes for all children. The importance of self evaluation and reflective practice in driving continuous improvement is fully recognised and embraced by staff. Recommendations made at the last inspection have been fully addressed, further demonstrating the nursery's capacity for continuous improvement. The staff are well qualified, very experienced and highly motivated to develop their professional practice and expertise through ongoing training. Support and guidance from the local authority mentors and advisors is readily accessed.

A very strong, positive commitment to equality and diversity is intrinsic throughout all aspects of the staff's practice and equal opportunities are promoted through meeting children's individual needs very well. Children with English as an additional language, special educational needs and/or disabilities are able to fully participate in activities through the provision of additional adult support when necessary. Children learn about a wide range of beliefs, cultures and festivals through planned activities and through using the extensive range of resources that reflect positive images of society and the wider world. This encourages children to develop an understanding of diversity and to respect similarities and differences in other people.

The excellent partnerships established with parents are a key strength of the provision. This is because the staff value their input and recognise how important their contributions are in ensuring children's progress is maximised in relation to their starting points. Detailed information is sought from parents when children start nursery to ensure full awareness of their home routines, interests and dislikes. Children's records are frequently reviewed to ensure their care and learning needs continue to be met. Parents receive a wealth of information about all aspects of the nursery and are consistently involved in their children's learning. For example, through sharing their skills and knowledge with the children and contributing to their learning and development records. Parents state they are very appreciative of the excellent service they and their children receive. Staff make time for parents to formally and informally discuss their children's progress, achievements and experiences. Through being made very welcome, parents develop an excellent rapport with staff and indicate that they are confident to express their views on the provision. For example, some parental comments were that they appreciate the fact that the staff are enthusiastic, cheerful, conscientious and know all the children very well. The nursery is highly pro-active in developing effective partnerships with other settings children attend and also relevant professional agencies. This helps to promote continuity of care for the children and fosters a consistent approach to their learning, development and educational progress.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at this nursery, where they access outstanding indoor and outdoor play opportunities in a very attractively presented, exciting learning environment. Staff have an excellent understanding of how young children learn and progress effectively through fun, play-based activities. Teaching is rooted in their expert knowledge of the welfare, learning and development requirements of the EYFS. As a result, children are very well supported through receiving excellent attention and their wellbeing and achievements are exceptionally high. Children are very settled, happy and confident as the staff interact positively with them in a kind, caring manner. This helps to build excellent, nurturing relationships and enables the children to develop a strong sense of security, trust and self-esteem. All six areas of learning and the principles of the EYFS are very naturally threaded through the continuous provision of indoor and outdoor experiences and well planned activities. An excellent balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities ensures that children are appropriately challenged. They play a dynamic role in their own learning through contributing their ideas and developing independence and control over their choices of activities. This helps to excite and sustain their interest, motivates them to become active learners and consequently, they have a very enthusiastic attitude towards learning. Resources are excellent and stored accessibly so that the children can exercise personal choice and decision-making throughout the sessions. Well-presented displays of their creative work also help to boost children's pride in their efforts and achievements. Regular high quality and sensitive observations, which are evaluated, are used astutely in order to assess children's abilities, interests and skills. The staff fully utilise all information gained from a variety of sources to

formulate personalised learning plans for each child. As a result, children are engaged in very enjoyable and challenging experiences, which support rapid progress towards the early learning goals from their individual starting points.

The extensive, very well-resourced outdoor play areas are particularly enjoyed by the children, as they 'free-flow' between the indoor and outdoor environments. The gardens are well-established, with many mature trees, bushes and shrubs. Consequently, the children have opportunities to observe the changing seasons as they run around, climb on the play equipment and benefit from physical exercise in the invigorating fresh air. They are enchanted by the wild flower meadow and adore visiting the fields where the ducks, guinea fowl and chickens live. They see Molly, the pigmy goat and Beauty, the Shetland pony and they help to make sure that the animals are fed. They are fascinated by how many eggs they can collect from the chicken pens and count them as they carefully place them in a basket. Children also learn how to grow and take care of plants and vegetables. As well as providing a captivating environment for physical play, the garden is also a calm and relaxing place for the children to enjoy. They are given time and space to explore the outdoor resources, play with sand and water, observe mini-beasts or simply absorb the soothing ambience of the garden as they draw pictures or look at books.

Children's language and communication skills are developing exceptionally well. For example, they confidently initiate meaningful conversations with adults and one another, keenly expressing ideas and opinions, whilst talking about their experiences. Linguistic diversity is embraced and children are able to simply count and offer greetings in French, German, Czech, Italian, Maori and Welsh. During 'circle time' they eagerly join in with cheerful songs and rhymes. Their imaginations are captivated as they listen to the story, 'We're going on a bear hunt.' They discuss and think about the habitat of bears and they recreate the bear's journey through the woodland as they collect leaves, mud and grass in a wheelbarrow. Children's understanding of written language is promoted through seeing labels and picture captions around the rooms. Many opportunities to develop early writing skills, through the use of mark making materials, are available throughout the nursery and in various role play activities. Older children can successfully recognise the letter sounds that make up their name and other words. Numeracy is embedded into the everyday routines and spontaneous activities are used well to help the children develop good mathematical thinking, counting and problem-solving skills. Children use mathematical vocabulary with confidence, they develop their number recognition ability as they see numbers in the nursery environment and they learn about shape and size as they use puzzles and play games. Information technology skills are being acquired by the children through using CD players, various programmable toys or the computer. Children explore, experiment, observe, predict and solve problems through early scientific experiments. During a recent 'Science Week,' they marvelled at their ability to grow crystals and make model volcanoes erupt. Excellent measures are in place to promote healthy lifestyles and children's understanding of how to stay safe. There is a strong emphasis on caring, sharing, taking turns and children are extremely well behaved. As they learn to be considerate and play together harmoniously, children are developing the requisite social and personal skills to support their future economic well-being.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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