

Carousel Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	24/10/2011
Inspector	Lynn Hughes
Setting address	Chapel Hill, Braintree, Essex, CM7 3QZ
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Type of setting	Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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*.

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).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Carousel Day Nursery was registered in 2006 and is run and managed by 4 Children. It operates from rooms within a Children's Centre in Braintree, Essex. A fully enclosed garden provides appropriate areas for outdoor activities. The nursery is open from 8am to 6pm five days per week, for 51 weeks of the year.

A maximum of 121 children under eight years may attend the nursery at any one time, of whom 73 may be in the early years age range. There are currently 176 children on roll. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and both parts of the Compulsory Childcare Register.

The nursery employs 19 members of staff. Of whom 16 including the manager hold appropriate qualifications to at least level two. A qualified teacher from the Children's Centre works with the setting.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The setting delivers all aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage to an exemplary standard. Robust systems are in place to promote children's welfare, learning and development. Staff's knowledge of the children in their care is extensive and extremely effective partnerships with parents ensure that ongoing communication is productive. The management pro-actively drive ambition and strive for improvements, they enthusiastically share their vision with the staff team who work extremely well together. Children excitedly participate in a wide and challenging range of activities however, opportunities for them to extend their knowledge of the wider community through trips and walks are offered less regularly.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- further developing opportunities for children to extend their knowledge about their environment and to talk about the features they like and dislike.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting has robust systems in place to ensure that children are well-safeguarded. Staff are extremely knowledgeable of their responsibilities with regards to protecting children and the key persons to refer any concerns to. Effective logging systems ensure that all concerns are well-documented and acted upon. Staff regularly update their safeguarding knowledge through appropriate

internal and external training and participate in workshops organised by the setting's managers. Staff recruitment is rigorous in ensuring that newly appointed staff hold appropriate qualifications, provide personal references and follow a thorough induction programme which leads them through their first six months of employment. All staff hold appropriate Criminal Records Bureau disclosures and proof of their clearance is held on file.

The setting has undergone a number of staff changes since the time of the last inspection. The current management and staff team work extremely well together to deliver an exceptionally high standard of care. The management is firmly committed to embedding ambition and driving improvements through thorough and effective leadership and management systems. Every aspect of the provision is rigorously reviewed and evaluated in order to continuously improve the outcomes for children. Parents, staff and children actively participate in the self-evaluation process. For example, staff peers comment on any good practice they see or hear their colleagues using. They record their comments in the staff room and this information is used to develop discussions and further good practice. Parents regularly complete questionnaires which provide the setting with clear feedback on their views and how they feel their children are progressing. Data from the questionnaires is reviewed and displayed on clear notice boards for parents to see. Good and negative comments are displayed with clear action plans detailing how the feedback is being reviewed. This provides good evidence to show how the setting actively addresses any areas for improvement. Children have opportunities to express their feelings as they are asked to place a sad, okay or happy face on the children's evaluation board at the end of their session or day.

Children are provided with excellent opportunities to make choices and decisions about their play and learning. They enthusiastically self-select equipment and resources from the range on offer to them and are reminded to replace baskets and boxes of toys when they have finished with them. They are provided with superb opportunities to freely move between the playroom, hallway and garden at various times during the day. Staff are extremely attentive and follow the children's interests enthusiastically. They facilitate their play and support their learning proficiently. An extremely good adult to child ratio ensures that children are well-supervised and supported. This also provides the setting with a number of 'Butterflies', who are staff who can float around the provision assisting wherever required. Children's individual needs and requirements are expertly promoted throughout the provision by confident staff who know the children in their care well. Children and families who speak English as an additional language are well-supported to enable them to be fully included in the provision. For example, the setting has used interpreters from the Local Authority to communicate with families and has also called upon the home language of staff to aid communication and to translate information. Resources displayed around the setting help to promote equality and diversity. Children are provided with excellent opportunities to participate in appropriate activities to extend their knowledge of other people's differing needs.

Superb partnership working between the setting and parents promotes children's well-being. Parents spoken to at the time of the inspection enthusiastically express their satisfaction in the setting. They feel confident in the staff and are able to

approach them with ease. Many parents comment on the improvements which have occurred over the past year, especially the security of dropping off and collection times. The setting operates within a Children's Centre. Excellent working relationships promote good partnership working between the provision and the Children Centre staff. The setting is able to access support for families through this avenue. Superb systems are in place to enable the setting to work with other Early Years provisions and transition between the nursery and school is excellent.

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

Children are excited, stimulated and challenged by the extensive range of play materials and activities provided for them. They enthusiastically participate in both planned and freely chosen play and form very good relationships with each other and with the staff caring for them. Baby's personal needs are expertly met by caring and consistent staff. Their early steps and attempts to communicate are well-received by attentive staff who clap and praise them. They flourish from the individual attention they receive and enjoy cuddles and comfort in familiar, bright and attractive surroundings. Older children benefit from being able to make very clear choices about whether they play indoors or outdoors. The outdoor facilities have been recently renovated and extended to provide children with superb opportunities to explore nature and the environment. For example, their physical skills are expertly developed as they enthusiastically dig large holes in the digging area. They sit and chat on bales of straw positioned under a tree. They actively participate in planting and growing a large selection of vegetables in the vegetable plot. They harvest these when ready and take them to the kitchen for the cooks to use in meals. A disused canoe provides an excellent herb bed and willow tee-pees enable children to sit quietly and talk with their friends. Indoors children enjoy creative play opportunities such as, painting bats for Halloween and making collages out of scraps of paper and different materials. Children's play is expertly observed through the setting's clear systems. Staff record their observations proficiently linking them to an area of learning and identifying children's next steps in learning. The blank planning sheet displayed on the wall of each of the playrooms is then gradually built up with next steps activities clearly initialled to show how each child will benefit from them.

Children are and feel very safe and secure within the setting as they are actively reminded about safe behaviour. For example, they know to be caring towards each other and to negotiate space well when running around outside. Well considered topics and themes enable them to extend their safety knowledge by discussing issues, such as, road safety. The setting is extremely well risk assessed ensuring that children always play in a safe and secure environment. Children's health and well being is expertly promoted through the setting's clear and consistent policies and practices. For example, children understand the importance of hand washing at appropriate times as they independently access toilets and hand washing facilities. Children enjoy well balanced and nutritious meals and snacks prepared and cooked on site. They are actively encouraged to serve their own meals and to participate in the preparation of snack. For example, they cut up a selection of fruit

for snack using safety knives and serve themselves a delicious portion of macaroni cheese and vegetables for lunch. Fresh drinking water is always available and children understand the need to remain well-hydrated as they are reminded by staff to drink regularly. Children thoroughly enjoy fresh air and exercise as they freely play in the nursery gardens. The space available to them allows them to run and to make good use of the wide range of resources and natural elements available to them.

Children are extremely settled and content. They know the provision well and are comfortable in their surroundings. They enthusiastically approach staff and thoroughly enjoy the good quality interaction they receive from them. Children's self-esteem and confidence is expertly promoted by staff who offer constant praise and encouragement to them. They are valued and encouraged to express their feelings through a 'feelings tree' and also on the children's evaluation board. Superb activities are provided for children to develop essential skills for the future, for example, they are provided with extensive mark-making materials indoors and outdoors. They have regular access to computers and other technical equipment. They are encouraged to express themselves creatively and to have an active voice within the setting. Children are provided with some opportunities to extend their knowledge of the wider community when they go for walks in the local area, however, these are not currently actively promoted.

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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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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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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met