

Free Rangers

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY441642
Inspection date 16/07/2012
Inspector Elaine Douglas

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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

Welton Free Rangers Forest School Nursery is privately owned and registered in 2011. It operates from a purpose-built converted barn on a former working farm site in Radstock, Bath and North East Somerset. It provides care in four rooms over three floors and a large outdoor play area with free-flow access. Children also use the paddock, plantation, pond area, the farmyard, woodlands and brook.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 46 children from birth to eight years of age may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 90 children on roll who attend for a variety of sessions. Free Rangers is open for 48 weeks of the year, Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm. In addition they run a holiday club for children aged five to ten years each school holiday. The nursery currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who are learning English as an additional language.

The owners employ a manager who holds a level 7 early years qualification and is working towards a level 8. The deputy holds a level 6, as well as Early Years Professional and Qualified Teacher Status. There are a further 13 staff, three of whom hold an early years degree and four hold a level 3 qualification. One member of staff is a conservation guide, three staff hold Forest School qualifications and one is working towards a level 3 qualification. There are three apprentices all working towards a level 3 early years qualification. Both the cook and assistant are nutritionists. The nursery operates in line with the Forest School philosophy and is funded to provide free early education to children aged three and four years.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Enthusiastic and knowledgeable staff provide an inclusive, welcoming environment where all children thrive. Excellent planning and deployment of resources enables children to make significant progress in their learning and development. Overall, children develop an excellent awareness of a healthy lifestyle and safe practices. Excellent access to resources enables children to make significant gains in their development through being engrossed and motivated in their learning. Staff recognise the uniqueness of each child and support them extremely effectively in becoming independent learners. The leadership team and staff share an exemplary ambition for continuous improvement through rigorous self-evaluation.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person

should consider:

- extending children's independence in appreciating the need for healthy practices.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff give children's safety the utmost priority. The designated person for safeguarding children has an excellent awareness of child protection procedures and all staff receive training. The leadership team and staff use the extensive documentation highly effectively to underpin their practice and help to safeguard children's welfare. For example, staff analyse the records of any accidents to see if they can make any further improvements to keeping children safe. Staff use extensive risk assessments to ensure children remain safe while developing autonomy and independence. High ratios provide excellent supervision while children engage in Forest School activities. Managers make rigorous checks on all staff and provide an extensive induction programme to ensure only suitable personnel care for children.

The leadership team is highly qualified and has high aspirations for the continuous development of the provision. The newly appointed manager has already taken an active role in the self-evaluation process, such as assisting the owners in observations of the staff to monitor teaching and provide feedback. Staff throughout the nursery are exceptionally motivated and passionate about their roles in providing high quality childcare. All staff, children and parents are involved in the extensive systems of monitoring and analysis; plans are in place to enable parents to access the nursery's on-line system. Currently, staff are looking to purchase child-size real tools to enable children to have better control when using them. Staff research and visit leading settings so that they can implement any outstanding practice to enhance the children's experiences.

Staff deploy the excellent resources extremely well both indoors and outdoors, which has a direct impact on children's development. Low-level labelled containers enable all children to have equal access. Exceptionally enthusiastic, motivated staff provide skilful interaction, knowing where to deploy themselves, when to intervene and when to enable children to lead their own learning. Trained and qualified staff lead the Forest School experiences, which enhances children's all round development. Children of all ages have free-flow access to the enclosed garden and with the use of wet weather gear, children have full use of the outdoor facilities all year. The leadership team and staff provide a highly inclusive, stimulating environment, which represents children's backgrounds and people's differences. Additional staff provide one to one care, where required, for children with special educational needs. Consequently, they take a full and active role in all activities.

Excellent partnerships with parents, other providers and professionals mean that staff gain a holistic understanding of each child's individual needs and support them to reach their full potential. Staff work closely with outside agencies to

support children with special educational needs, incorporating their recommendations into the planning. Parents receive very good information; informative displays provide visual explanations of how children are learning and parents are actively encouraged to be involved. Staff gain comprehensive information on babies routines and daily needs, so that their key person can provide consistent care and enhance their feeling of security. Parents are very positive about the nursery provision. They particularly mention the thought and care which goes into planning the environment. Despite recent staff changes parents are impressed by the continuity and communication.

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

Children develop outstanding skills for their future. They demonstrate high levels of curiosity, imagination and concentration. Children make excellent links in their learning, purposefully selecting resources indoors and looking deep in thought as they take them outside to support their play. Babies explore treasure baskets using all their senses, and become wide-eyed and excited as they listen to the noises as they hit them on the ground. One member of staff is also a musician and encourages children to enjoy playing with rhythm and rhyme. This also promotes children's language and literacy skills. Toddlers notice the marks they make with their fingers in the sand, flour or when exploring paint. They enjoy playing with shapes and numbers and display excellent problem-solving skills. Children of all ages enjoy books and making up stories. Staff extend children's knowledge and vocabulary, for example by explaining what metamorphoses is and using dual languages books.

Staff use a range of methods, including video to observe children and analyse their findings. This ensures that they are able to provide highly effective interaction to support and challenge each child's development. Staff use inspirational ways to engage children so that they soon become animated and eager to have their turn. Children's behaviour is exemplary because staff sensitively support children in expressing their emotions appropriately and reflecting on how they can manage conflict. Male and female staff provide excellent role models empowering originality and elaboration of children's ideas. Staff ensure they are receptive to all forms of communication, especially for those with special educational needs. Children form excellent relationships and learn to value each other. For example, one older child praises another, saying 'good idea, let's do it that way'. Toddlers are pleased to see each other when they wake up from a sleep and confidently approach staff for cuddles. Meals are a social experience where children clear their plates and wash up. All children help to take care of the environment. They recycle waste food, look after the animals and wildlife, grow produce and learn about sustainability. All of which support them in making a positive contribution to the nursery, their community and the wider world.

Children thrive and gain an outstanding awareness of the importance of being active and enjoying the outdoors. All ages have excellent access to the Forest School experiences. For example, while older children make boats and go down to

the brook to float them, the younger children find worms in the compost and plant seeds. Overall, most children develop excellent independence in managing healthy practices through their daily routines, such as helping themselves to water, washing their hands and blowing their noses. Occasionally children's independence with regard to healthy practices is not fully promoted. For example, they cannot always access tissues when playing outdoors. Children enjoy extremely nutritious home cooked meals and snacks. As far as possible, all produce is organic and locally sourced. Children grow and harvest their own produce in the bio dynamic garden, which the cook uses in the meals and to make cordials. Staff enable children to develop an impressive awareness of safe practices, for example the pre-school children use real tools under strict supervision and guidance. Pre-school children have an impressive knowledge of the Forest School rules, such as staying with an adult, not putting anything in their mouth and walking right around, not across, the fire circle.

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