

# Railway Children Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** EY342183

**Inspection date** 26 April 2007

**Inspector** Anne Archer

**Setting Address** 61 Station Road, KETTERING, Northamptonshire, NN15 7HJ

**Telephone number** 01536 522377

**E-mail**

**Registered person** Railway Children Nursery

**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](http://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 good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Railway Children Nursery is privately owned. It opened in 2006 and operates from the newly refurbished station master's house situated close to the railway station in Kettering Northamptonshire. A maximum of 35 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 56 children aged from three months to under five years on roll. Of these 18 receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area.

The nursery is managed by one of the joint owners and employs eleven childcare staff of whom six hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a relevant qualification. A trained cook is employed to provide freshly prepared and cooked meals and snacks for the children and staff.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is promoted extremely effectively in all areas of the nursery as staff adhere to meticulous hygiene routines such as wearing aprons and a pair of disposable gloves when changing nappies and cleaning the area between each nappy change. Children are encouraged to learn about and adopt simple personal hygiene routines such as washing and drying their hands after going to the toilet and before eating. This sustained level of hygiene helps to prevent the spread of infection. Staff also receive training in food hygiene to ensure children's health when meals and snacks are being served.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff attend paediatric first aid training as and when necessary to enable them to maintain a current certificate and they are confident to administer treatment in the event of an accident. Accidents are recorded clearly and a parental signature is sought. There are precise procedures for when a child becomes unwell and parents give their written permission for staff to seek medical advice or treatment in the event of an emergency. Written consent is also sought before medication is administered and accurate records are maintained.

Children of all ages develop physical skills as they take part in regular indoor and outdoor activities including music and movement, parachute games and other activities to develop their balance and spatial awareness. Older children also enjoy playing on the climbing frame and developing ball skills. Children also get fresh air as they enjoy walks in the local area. Children can rest whenever they are tired either in a cot, if appropriate, or on individual bedding.

Children are well nourished and have excellent opportunities to learn about healthy eating as they sit with staff at snack and meal times and chat. For example, at lunch time a member of staff and a child talked about which vegetables they particularly enjoy eating i.e. carrots and peas. Staff and children eat together ensuring that children learn about table manners and enjoy the social occasion that meal times become when they can chat with children and staff. Children are provided with regular drinks of milk or water and nutritious snacks include fruit and vegetables. The colourful posters displayed stating 'we eat lots of fruit' reinforce the important message that staff give to children.

A trained cook provides freshly prepared and cooked meals which comply with the children's dietary requirements as provided by their parents. She sources recipes and ingredients to ensure all children can eat the same dish with the confidence that their dietary needs are being met. For instance, a recipe for flapjack was obtained that used ingredients suitable for a child with a particular food intolerance. Children are encouraged by staff to take regular drinks and older children are able to access individual water bottles at any time.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a very welcoming environment where risks are identified and action is taken to minimise them. Staff are aware of children's developing abilities and so ensure that appropriate measures are in place to avoid dangerous situations. For example, safety barriers prevent children having unsupervised access to the stairs. This enables children to move around safely and independently. Children use a wide range of equipment that is suitable and safe

because the owner provides furniture, equipment and toys that are appropriate for their purpose and the children's stage of development. They are kept clean, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

Children's safety is meticulously maintained because the owner takes thorough steps to promote safety within the nursery and on outings. Staff to child ratios are high and a health and safety consultant has been retained to carry out regular risk assessments on the premises. Any incidence of faulty or defective equipment raised by staff is recorded and acted upon immediately and daily visual checks of the premises and outdoor area ensure that safety measures are maintained. Children's security is actively supported because there is a strictly adhered to code of conduct for arriving and departing parents and visitors. Only senior staff take turns at door duty and all visitors must provide identification. Children's welfare is well safeguarded because the emergency escape plan is practised over a week each term to ensure that all staff and children are involved and become familiar with the routine. Lost and uncollected child procedures are in place and would be implemented immediately if concerns were raised. Children's wellbeing is also safeguarded by staff's understanding of their responsibilities in relation to local child protection recording and referral procedures.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Babies and children settle well at the nursery because they and their parents are warmly welcomed. The environment is decorated attractively to a railway theme and there are colourful displays and posters which include examples of children's own art work and so attract their interest. Babies and children gain confidence through routines and the close relationships they develop with staff and with other children. Children develop their independence as they express their ideas during play using a range of resources which attract their interest. However, the majority of resources and toys in regular use in the baby room are made of plastic so babies miss out on tactile experiences. Staff working with children under two and those working with children aged two to three take account of the 'Birth to three matters' framework when planning activities although the observation and assessment systems are not yet fully developed to enable staff to respond readily to children's interests.

### **Nursery Education**

Children are happy, enjoy coming to nursery and show a positive attitude to learning. They are confident and play well on their own and with others. Children are involved, motivated and engaged in a broad range of developmentally appropriate activities. They are keen to offer their ideas and respond with interest when introduced to new activities. Children behave well and are starting to accept responsibility for their actions. They show an awareness of right and wrong and although a small number of children occasionally test the boundaries staff do not allow this to affect other children's learning.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are confident learners and access activities independently. Activities take account of children's interests and are linked to the six areas of learning. However, plans do not yet fully take account of children's individual learning needs. Staff provide group and one to one support as required and although they have developed effective skills in encouraging and questioning children to make them think and progress, staff are not always fully aware of their intended role in activities and therefore learning opportunities may be missed.

Children use their imagination as they participate in role play often based on first hand experiences. For instance, a child noticed that a tap in the play kitchen did not work and tried to repair it. Children learn to recognise their own name cards and trace around the letters. They are confident speakers and most offer their opinions readily. They enjoy looking at favourite books alone and in groups and listen intently to stories such as 'The Star That Fell'. They also enjoy joining in with rhymes and songs and have particular favourites such as 'Wind The Bobbin Up' and 'The Wheels On The Bus'. Children learn about numbers through practical experiences such as when a group of four children were given the same number of counters, were asked to put one in the middle pile and then asked how many they had left and how many were in the pile. A child learnt about length and measurement as he tried to find something in the play room the same length as his piece of till roll.

Children develop knowledge and understanding of the world when they participate in activities relating to different types of trains and other transport, when they learn about life cycles and when they find out more about practices within their own and other cultures such as Diwali and Christmas when they sang 'Rocking Around The Christmas Tree' at their concert. Children have regular access to simple equipment such as calculators and there is a computer with educational programmes to support their learning. Overall, children make good progress towards the early learning goals.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are confident in their relationships with staff because they are valued and respected as individuals. This promotes a sense of wellbeing and aids their emotional development. Staff work closely with parents and carers to meet individual children's needs to ensure they are fully included in the life of the nursery. Children learn about the diversity of the world in which we live through planned activities for Chinese New Year and Easter, for instance, and from outings in the local area. A range of resources for the children to play with which reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disabilities is being developed. The owner is proactive in ensuring that appropriate action is taken to identify and support children with learning or behavioural difficulties so that they receive appropriate support from staff to enable them to take a full part in nursery life.

Children behave well and are polite as they respond to the praise and clear, consistent guidelines set by staff. Older children are familiar with and show some understanding of rules while all children enjoy the security of routines. Staff deal with unwanted behaviour consistently taking into account individual children's level of understanding and maturity. Children learn, from an early age, the importance of sharing and taking turns such as at snack time and during card matching games. Some older children are developing friendship groups. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's care, welfare and development are promoted through strong, positive working relationships with parents. Parents' views about their child's needs and interests are sought before the child joins the nursery and these are used to help settle the child. Children and parents are able to settle in according to their own needs. They are supported by the child's two key workers who are there to liaise, share information and ensure a smooth handover. New parents receive a prospectus and welcome pack which explain clearly how the nursery operates and about the provision for funded nursery education. The nursery owner takes the concerns of parents very seriously and has a comprehensive procedure for dealing with complaints. A complaints record is maintained.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. The leader of the pre-school verbally provides parents of children in receipt of funding for nursery education with details of how the foundation stage curriculum is presented to their children. A termly parents meeting ensures they are kept informed of how their children are progressing and they can access their child's records at any time. This is in addition to the daily exchanges of information with staff, newsletters, displays and notices to ensure parents are kept fully aware of their child's learning journey.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The organisation of the nursery ensures that children of all ages are well cared for by suitable staff. Staff recruitment, induction and appraisal systems are in place and staff training and personal development is encouraged. Practices within the nursery protect children and effectively promote all outcomes for children. Space and resources are well organised and children are able to make choices and develop their ideas as they play. Staff support children well during activities while children under three, particularly, receive caring support and encouragement as they begin to develop basic skills. Children's care and welfare is further safeguarded by the comprehensive documentation and record keeping systems that have been established and maintained.

Leadership and management is good. The owner is pro-active in ensuring that the practice of all staff contributes positively to children's health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and ability to take an active part in the life of the nursery. She has clear aims and is able to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the nursery and take appropriate action to improve and develop the provision. However, as a result of the nursery only being open for a few months, the system to monitor and evaluate the provision for nursery education has not yet been fully implemented. Overall children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. 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 develop the provision for children under three and provide a wider range of tactile experiences for children under two
- continue to develop resources to reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and particularly disability.

### **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):

- continue to develop the provision for nursery education to ensure children's individual learning needs are met and include details of the role of the adult in activity plans so that intended learning, such as new words, is fully delivered
- implement a system to effectively monitor and evaluate the provision for nursery education.

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