

# The Rocking Horse Club

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY265392
<b>Inspection date</b>	28 March 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Wendy Fitton
<b>Setting Address</b>	Marsden Community Centre, Marsden Hall Road North, Nelson, Lancashire, BB9 8JL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01282 613 437 and 01282 603 375
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	The Rocking Horse Club
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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 satisfactory. 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?

Little Tigers Playgroup is registered under The Rocking Horse Club Pendle Ltd that forms part of the extended services of Walton Lane Children's Centre. The playgroup is registered to provide full day care and sessional day care for a maximum of 50 children aged two years up to five years. The playgroup registered in 2003 under a management committee. There are currently 48 children on roll and of these 25 are in receipt of funding for early education. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are supported and included.

The playgroup operates from Marsden Community Centre, situated on Marsden Hall Road North in Nelson, Lancashire. Opening hours are Monday to Friday 09.00 to 11.30, 13.00 to 15.30 for sessional care and full day care from 07.45 to 15.30. Operating times are term time only, however some holiday provision is available.

Children have access to the main community hall, toilet and changing facilities and outdoor grounds. Staff have access to an office, kitchen and toilet facilities.

There are four core staff working directly with the children and one is the team leader. All staff hold early years qualifications in childcare and education and have first aid certificates, and participate in various workshops and in house training programmes.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health needs are promoted and positive steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures taken when children have an accident or become ill. Tables are wiped before food is served and children are encouraged to wash their hands before snacks, after the toilet and after outdoor play. Bathroom areas are clean and there are procedures in place for nappy changing and general hygiene practices. Children's first aid needs are attended to as staff have up to date training and a first aid box is available. Accident and medication records are in place and there is written consent from parents to the seeking of emergency medical attention.

Children are provided with regular drinks and snacks to meet their individual dietary needs. Meals are freshly prepared and transported to the centre from the main nursery kitchen. The range of snacks includes milk, water, breadsticks, fruit and crackers. Children understand about healthy foods and are involved in activities to promote healthy eating. They taste different fruits and vegetables from around the world and the group is registered with the 'smiling for life' campaign. Children's food preferences are taken into account and all necessary dietary information is known to staff. Children sit together at meal times and staff aim to provide a positive social occasion. However, there are some missed opportunities for children to develop their own independence and free choice.

Children develop their physical skills as they manoeuvre around the environment negotiating space, furniture and equipment. They climb on the slide and frame, ride on bicycles and wheeled toys and run around outside on a daily basis. Children participate in activities to develop their hand-eye coordination as they use one handled tools and equipment. For example, drawing and painting with pens, pencils and brushes, rolling play dough and cutting with scissors. Children learn about keeping fit and healthy as they enjoy the keep fit sessions to music, play with hoops and balls and use their arms during the parachute game.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children access a warm, welcoming and safe environment where they feel secure and have access to all necessary facilities for a range of experiences to support their development. There is effective and creative use of space within the community centre hall and children can play, relax and eat in comfort as the room is divided into specific play areas. The setting is maintained with access to bathroom and changing facilities and an outdoor area. Children feel a sense of belonging as they see their own names on displays, art work displayed and photographs of themselves and their key workers.

Children make choices from suitable and safe equipment and this includes every day routine furniture of child sized tables, chairs, cushions, rugs and bathroom necessities. Toys include jigsaws, writing and drawing equipment, large physical play equipment, role play equipment, small world health centre and garage, construction equipment and books. The storage of toys

and equipment enables the children to make decisions and choose the resources. There are low trolleys with clear written labels and photographs on walls to show the children the type of resources they can access.

Children are safe and secure as staff follow safety procedures and ensure that hazards are minimised. Staff talk to the children and gently remind them of the rules about safety. Children know not to run about inside, keep their hands safe and not to climb on equipment with toys in their hands. Risks are identified through daily visual checks of premises and equipment, and the premises are secure during the sessions with visitors booking in. Children and staff are signed in and out daily, the front door is locked during sessions, the outdoor area is secure and safe and there are procedures in place for transporting children to other premises and services. There are procedures in place for fire evacuation but a fire drill has not been carried out with new members of staff.

Children's welfare is protected because staff understand their role in child protection. Staff are aware of documenting any concerns and the procedures for reporting to the designated person. Staff training is ongoing and there are detailed policies and procedures in line with Local Safeguarding Children Boards. Children are cared for by vetted and cleared staff and safe practices are followed regarding supervision of children.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy and achieve as they are provided with a range of activities and experiences to support their development and learning. These include role play, painting, sand, play dough, reading books, construction toys, art and craft, jigsaws and physical play activities. Children show an interest in what they are doing and play with a purpose because staff support and encourage them and they are occupied and busy. Children make independent choices from the resources as they access the low storage units and relate to the photographs and tasks for them to promote their decision making. Children acquire new knowledge and skills as they think about what they are doing and ask questions about how things work, staff extend their knowledge through open questions to challenge their thinking. Children develop their confidence and self-esteem through positive relationships with their key worker, and staff observe children and respond to their individual needs so that children feel secure with the routines and rhythms of the day. Interaction with adults and children is positive, supportive and nurturing.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are interested and motivated as they play with a purpose, concentrate and complete tasks. They develop positive attitudes to learning and are curious as they ask questions and develop confidence through positive support, praise and encouragement. They sit and listen during story time and circle time with opportunities for self expression. Children are encouraged to use manners and show respect for each other's contributions during discussion times. Children work harmoniously together and share and take turns. There are some missed opportunities for children to develop their independence and social skills during snack and lunch times. Children learn about sounds and letters as they see everyday furniture and equipment clearly labelled and are learning to recognise their own name on their display work. They access the book area and enjoy reading stories. Children practise their handwriting as they use resources to develop their hand-eye coordination with scissors, pencils, crayons and paintbrushes.

Children are beginning to understand and practise counting as they count the number of cars on the multi-storey car park, count and subtract the chickens in the number rhyme and the numbers of children allowed in the physical play area at any one time. They are beginning to understand about space, shape and measure as they measure their own height and record this on the height chart, they plant the sunflower seeds and calculate how many days and weeks it takes to grow and then measure the height of the flower. Children identify simple shapes as they create their own houses and people from a triangle, square and circle. There are some missed opportunities during everyday routines, counting plates, cups and cutlery at meal and snack times.

Children use their exploration and investigation skills as they look at the worm and the sunflower seeds. They learn about growth and new life as they look at the tadpoles and caterpillars and their growth life cycles. Children talk about their families and pets and are involved in activities about communities, for example, the crossing patrol lady visits, the community police officer visits and they learn about cultures when they taste food, make cards, celebrate festivals and dress up. Children use their imagination as they bath the dolls in the home corner and make the meal. They enjoy music and dancing and access musical instruments to create their own rhythm and sounds. Children respond to what they touch, see, hear and feel as they watch the process of marbling inks, play the memory game, use different textures on their pictures and craft work and smell the scent of the daffodil. There are some missed opportunities for children to develop their own creativity as some activities are adult led and directed.

The starting points for children's needs are identified through information gathered from parents and other groups. The planning of activities is in line with the six areas of learning and link to the aspects of learning and the associated stepping stones. There are medium term, short term and focused activity plans. The daily focused activity does not link to the needs of particular children and the differentiation aspect, and it is not evaluated to plan for the next steps of learning. Staff observe children during their play and this is recorded in the children's profiles and linked to the stepping stones. There are photographs of children carrying out activities and all information about children's progress is shared with parents. Staff's questioning techniques challenge and support the children to achieve as much as they can. Teaching methods interest the children and help them to become focused, resist distractions and play and learn with a purpose.

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

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed into the setting and are valued and respected because staff promote equality of opportunity and ensure that children are fully included in the life of the setting. The premises are accessible and children have free access to all resources and equipment. There are admission forms for each child and information from parents enables staff to provide appropriate care according to children's interests and needs. Children are learning about diversity and the wider world as they participate in activities about festivals, celebrations and their community. There are resources and toys that reflect cultures, family lifestyles and gender through books, dressing up, play people and posters.

Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are well supported and fully included in all routines and activities. There are good links with parents and other agencies and a Special Educational Needs Coordinator is employed to support families and staff. Individual learning and development plans for children with specific needs are in place and there are regular monitoring systems in place in liaison with outside agencies and other professionals.

Children behave well and there are positive strategies in place to help children learn to manage their own behaviour. There is a named person who supports staff in their role to promote consistency. Children are encouraged to be kind to each other, share toys, take turns and have manners. Staff are good role models to the children and are respectful and well mannered to each other and the children. Staff give good eye contact as they discuss children's unwanted behaviour and get down to their level to help the children listen and think about what is being said to them. Children are given stickers to help them feel good about themselves when they sit at story time or circle time.

Children really benefit from positive relationships between their key worker and parents. Staff respond to the 'all about me' information from parents and discuss routines and share information about the children. Each child has a profile and there are photographs and observations of children playing and working. There are newsletters, fund raising events and information boards for parents to refer to and a brochure informs them of the organisation, staffing and access to policies and procedures. However, parents are not fully aware of the role of Ofsted in relation to complaints. Parents comment positively on the care provided, that it is flexible to their working needs. They state that they are aware of who their key worker is and that staff are fantastic as they take time to discuss things on a daily basis.

Partnership with parents and carers in relation to nursery education is satisfactory. Parents are aware of some aspects of the curriculum as the planning is displayed and parents see children's profiles of work and the observations. There is a system in place to enable parents to assist children in taking on their own responsibility, as they take a book home in a teddy bear rucksack and parents are asked to read the book and become involved with their child's learning and development.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. They learn about their community and the wider world as they welcome visitors and participate in cultural themes and festivals. Children take on responsibility for their own behaviour and positively support and respect each other through sharing, turn taking and helping each other to feel settled and secure. They thrive from positive relationships with staff and develop good social skills as they play harmoniously in groups and alongside each other. Children are very confident and have good self-esteem through positive praise and encouragement.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are well protected and safeguarded as they are cared for by experienced and qualified staff. All staff are qualified in childcare and have opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills through various in house training programmes and through team meetings and appraisals. The group is managed through a committee of a limited company and there are various extended services to meet local needs. There are comprehensive induction procedures for staff and all staff receive a manual of policies and procedures.

Children really benefit from an environment and practice that is organised to meet their needs. There is good support for children through a key worker system and there are good ratios of staff to the number of children attending. The staff work well as a team and are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities. Space and resources are organised creatively and effectively to ensure that children can play, eat and rest in comfort and safety. Children feel secure as they respond to the routines and rhythms of the day.

Children's welfare, care and learning are well supported through the records, policies and procedures that are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision. Documentation is maintained and up to date and records of accidents, attendance, medication and personal information are available for inspection and stored securely. There are detailed organisational policies and procedures that are accessible to all staff and parents. There are systems in place for evaluating the policies and procedures and ensuring that they meet with the National Standards and to meet with the outcomes for children.

The leadership and management is good. There is a clear vision to continue to provide flexible quality care and education for the community and commitment to evaluate and develop the service. The overall strengths and weakness of the facility are identified through management and staff meetings and through opportunities for training. There are good systems in place to monitor staff and the provision as there are performance management systems and appraisals ongoing. Management are clear on their roles and responsibilities and maintain the health, safety, care and education of both staff and children. The manager identifies areas for development and is fully aware of her role and responsibilities in relation to Ofsted.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the provider agreed to request written permission from parents to the seeking of emergency medical advice or treatment, and to ensure that confidentiality is maintained when recording and displaying children's individual dietary needs. Parents now sign consent to the seeking of emergency treatment and advice and individual details of children's dietary needs and allergies are displayed in the kitchen area. Children's health, protection and well-being are now enhanced.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection 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.

## **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 satisfactory. 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 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):

- carry out a fire drill with newly appointed staff
- develop the complaints procedure in line with current legislation (also applies to nursery education).

### **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):

- develop lunch and snack times to promote children's social, independence and mathematical development (also applies to care)
- ensure that planned activities are child led and promote children's creative development
- develop and evaluate the planning of focused activities to target individual children's needs and interests, and identify the next steps of learning.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)