

# Rocking Horse Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	400070
<b>Inspection date</b>	31 May 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Dawn Bonica Brown
<b>Setting Address</b>	1 The Stables, Carla Beck Lane, Carleton, Skipton, North Yorkshire, BD23 3BU
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<b>Registered person</b>	Jacqueline Asquith
<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 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?

Rocking Horse Day Nursery is privately owned. It opened in 1996 and operates from two rooms in a converted barn in the village of Carleton, near Skipton, North Yorkshire. A maximum of 38 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year; it is closed over Christmas and on bank holidays. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 73 children aged from three months to five years on roll. Of these, 22 children receive funding for early education.

The nursery employs 11 members of staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children have a good awareness of healthy hygiene routines as they practise these consistently and are well supported to become independent through use of appropriate facilities. They remain healthy because staff follow hygiene routines diligently to prevent the spread of infection.

Children benefit from good maintenance of the required documentation to keep them healthy. For example, their special dietary requirements are carefully monitored. They are further protected through policies that help to prevent the spread of contagious ailments, such as the routines to be followed when children are contagious. This is carefully explained to parents so that they are fully aware of which ailments are highly contagious and understand when to keep their children at home, thereby acting in the best interests of all children.

Children's health is protected effectively because sufficient numbers of staff hold relevant first aid certificates. This means they have the current knowledge to promptly administer first aid in the event of an accident.

Children are well nourished with substantial snacks that include fresh fruit each day. Their meals are balanced and children are encouraged to taste a wide variety of food. Pre-school children help themselves to water from a drinks dispenser and babies' nutrition is monitored well. Care is taken to ensure that babies and toddlers are fed appropriately. Weaning babies are carefully monitored and good advice is given to parents about introducing new food.

Children's attitude to mealtimes is very positive. All children enjoy their snacks and meals as a social activity. Pre-school children learn about food that keep the body healthy and regularly participate in preparing their own snacks.

Children benefit from daily physical activity and look forward to outdoor play on a wide range of equipment in the play area. They enjoy physical activity indoors through music and movement and all children demonstrate good spatial awareness and body control. Children's physical development is well promoted. They are gaining skills in spatial awareness through a wide range of activities, which includes dancing to music and group games involving physical activity. Children are learning to recognise the importance of keeping healthy through exercise, eating the right food and practising good personal hygiene, as these are emphasised in their daily routines.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a range of stimulating activities in a safe environment. The premises are well maintained and space is used to encourage children's independence and to promote their all-round development. Furniture and equipment is safe and age-appropriate. All activities are monitored to ensure compatibility with children's development. For example, babies pull themselves to a standing position to look at themselves in a safety mirror using sturdy furniture and their books include a range of materials to stimulate their interest.

Children's safety is given high priority because risks to children are minimised through good risk assessments. Staff are well trained in safety management through an effective induction

procedure, which means they are all aware of any potential risks in their setting. For example, corner protectors are used on the edges of tables to protect children from accidental bumps, and regular evacuation drills ensure that all children are aware of the procedure.

Children are well protected from abuse through staff knowledge and understanding of how to protect them. For example almost all staff are well trained in child protection procedures and are knowledgeable about the potential signs and symptoms that would cause concern. They are well supported to protect children through good documentation, which maintains the correct contact numbers for reporting concerns. Effective training ensures that they follow procedures carefully and can act quickly in the child's best interest to safeguard children's welfare.

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

The provision is good.

Children are friendly and curious and interested in the activities provided. They demonstrate confidence as they talk about themselves enthusiastically and ask questions. Play opportunities are suited to their individual needs and they are well stimulated. Pre-school children play together cooperatively and enjoy role play in large groups where they enact familiar situations. For example, a Chinese restaurant provides sustained imaginative play on a variety of levels. Several toddlers enjoy parallel play with toy trains, whilst some toddlers engage in solitary play. For example, pretending to mend things using a toy screwdriver and collecting objects from around the setting in a container. Babies enjoy a full range of activities which include tactile play and discovery play with natural materials.

Children's self-esteem and confidence is promoted well as they respond to adult's interest and talk about events in their lives, such as a new baby in the family and pets. The 'Birth to three matters' framework is used effectively to promote the all-round development of younger children. They demonstrate a good awareness of where toys are stored as they help to tidy up enthusiastically and participate in action songs vigorously. Babies listen to a wide range of music which includes classical music as well as nursery rhymes.

### **Nursery education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff demonstrate a good knowledge of the early learning goals through effective planning and delivery of the curriculum which, over time, covers all the areas of learning. Children's progress is observed and recorded well. However, insufficient evaluation of the observations of children's progress means that significant milestones are not highlighted effectively in reports to parents. Also, the next steps in children's development are not highlighted effectively in their individual profiles. All children are sufficiently challenged in most areas. The exception to this is mathematics. Teaching methods are effective as children learn through first hand experiences and find most group activities rewarding.

Children's behaviour is managed well and resources are used productively to create sustained concentration in many areas of play. There are currently no children with disabilities or learning difficulties attending but suitably trained staff are available to provide support, together with appropriate policies.

Children are sociable and interact well with each other in group activities as well as on an individual level. They are independent and demonstrate a secure sense of belonging as they know where the toys are stored and help to tidy them away enthusiastically. Children talk freely

about significant events in their lives and are gaining an awareness of the behavioural expectations within the setting. For example, they demonstrate good self control as they wait their turn to speak at circle time and listen to each other patiently. Their language is developing well; they speak clearly and recall events from their own experience logically, using relevant vocabulary. For example, in relating a series of events about a recent holiday, children find the appropriate words and demonstrate logic. Children's ability to recognise their name is promoted through regular practise, such as finding their names at mealtimes. Their enjoyment of stories is evident as they listen attentively in group sessions and look at books independently.

Children are learning about mathematical concepts through child-centred activities, such as counting in sequence, sorting, matching and constructing three-dimensional objects, as well as experimental play with sand and water. However, insufficient emphasis is placed on providing appropriate challenges for the more able children to practise solving simple problems, or to make meaningful use of number recognition in their every-day routines. Children explore the natural environment through stimulating activities that maintain their interest and help them to understand how plants and animals behave. For example, they explain the purpose of using sand as they prepare their own worm farm and describe how to trick worms to come to the surface using water. They learn about the passage of time through practical experiments, such as growing plants and caring for mini-beasts, such as stick insects. Children use a variety of tools competently to construct three-dimensional objects and are gaining an awareness of the cultures and beliefs of others through child-centred activities.

Children's creativity is fostered through a variety of stimulating activities, which includes experimental printing and painting. Children engage in sustained role play using a wide variety of props, including a Chinese restaurant, where they take orders using a range of writing materials. Their creativity is promoted further through inventive junk-modelling which links several areas of play, such as painting, puppets and role play.

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

The provision is good.

Children are treated with respect as staff are kind to them, listen to their concerns and value their opinions. They are learning to be polite because staff act as good role models and consistently say 'please and thank you' to children, as well as emphasising the need for them to be polite to each other. Children are well behaved; they understand the simple rules of the setting and respond well to high expectations of behaviour from staff. They have formed strong attachments with staff as the key worker system is implemented effectively. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnerships with parents and carers is good. Parents are very positive about the setting and comment on the approachability and depth of experience of the staff. They have good access to their children's records and there is a very good exchange of information between parents and staff, both verbally and in writing. For example, parents receive regular newsletters, understand who their child's key worker is and receive useful information about the Foundation Stage curriculum. This means they are knowledgeable about how to support their children in the various topics covered. Parents benefit from a high level of involvement in the setting and this underpins their good understanding of how their children learn through the Foundation Stage.

Children are valued and included and their individual needs are met effectively. For example, babies' personal care follows their individual routines. Their personal needs are administered

through their key worker, who works with their parents to provide good continuity of care. As a consequence, children are happy, confident and demonstrate high self-esteem. There are no children with disabilities or learning difficulties currently attending. However, staff are well trained and understand how to work with parents and professionals to provide inclusive provision.

Children benefit from activities and resources which help them to learn about diversity and the differences in society. For example, they learn about the cultural beliefs of others through activities focussed on festivals, such as the Chinese New Year. They play with resources that help them gain an awareness of positive gender roles and disabilities. However, there are insufficient books to help them to value the similarities and differences amongst people through child-centred, stimulating stories.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are well protected because staff are appropriately appointed through secure recruitment procedures. They are vigilant and demonstrate a good understanding of child development. Children's welfare is promoted through documentation which is well maintained. All records, policies and procedures that are used to promote children's welfare, care and learning are processed efficiently.

Children benefit from good organisation of their day, which ensures that they have sufficient adult support to feel secure and confident. Staff put the needs of children first and organise space and resources efficiently to maintain their interest and ensure that they receive consistent stimulation. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is good. The provider clearly understands the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. This is achieved through efficient monitoring of the setting, individual staff performance and through obtaining the opinion of parents and childcare professionals. There is a strong commitment to the development of care and education for all children.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection for the care of children the provider was recommended to develop procedures to record the individual needs of children and to devise procedures to record concerns about individual children which maintain confidentiality.

Children's welfare has improved through good implementation of the key worker system which means that staff meet children's individual needs through consistent personal care given by the child's own key worker. Their daily routines are recorded well and significant milestones in the development of babies is monitored effectively. Children's welfare has improved further through the appropriate implementation of procedures to record concerns about individual children.

At the last inspection for nursery education the provider was recommended to improve physical play provision, develop children's understanding of simple addition and subtraction and to improve opportunities for parents to be more actively involved in their children's learning.

The quality of nursery education provision has improved through the development of good outdoor play facilities and the creation of a nursery garden. Children's understanding of simple addition and subtraction has improved through regular practise with child-centred activities. Parents' greater involvement in the setting has benefited children's all-round development because parents are better informed about how they can help their children make progress in the Foundation Stage.

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

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.

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

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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):

- develop the range of books provided for all children to include those that reflect positive images of cultural diversity, gender and disabilities.

#### **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):

- improve the challenges provided in mathematics, particularly for the more able children
- further develop staff skills in the evaluation of observations and assessments and use these to inform future planning for children's next steps
- review the information to parents so that they receive clear information about their child's progress against significant milestones.

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)