

# Rhymes Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	205336
<b>Inspection date</b>	29 October 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Sally Wride
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<b>Registered person</b>	Rhymes Nursery Ltd
<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?

Rhymes Day Nursery opened in 2000. It is a privately owned and managed nursery and operates from a restored, listed farmhouse in the residential Brockhill and Batchley areas of Redditch, Worcestershire. Children are accommodated in eight rooms over the ground, first and second floors, according to their age and stage of development. The nursery serves the local area and has links with local schools. There is a fully enclosed play area available for outdoor play with play equipment and some safety surfacing. There is adjacent parking facilities for staff and parents.

A maximum of 58 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 99 children from six months old to four years old on roll. This includes 30 funded children. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting has procedures to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and currently supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days a week for 51 weeks of the year, except for Bank Holidays. Opening times are from 07:30 until 18:00.

There are 19 full-time and five part-time members of staff who work with the children. There are 18 members of staff who have early years qualifications to National Vocational Qualification Level 2 or 3. There are six members of staff currently working towards a recognised early years or higher level qualification. The setting receives support from a mentor teacher from the local authority and has strong links with a local Children's Centre.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children's good health is well promoted. They are cared for in an environment that is warm, welcoming, clean and well maintained. All of their playthings are regularly cleaned to ensure that they remain hygienic for the children to use. All of the required health documentation is in place. However, although accidents are reported to and shared with parents, their written acknowledgement is not secured. Many staff are trained to administer first aid to children and well-stocked first aid boxes are easily accessible. Effective procedures are in place if children fall ill whilst in attendance at the setting.

Babies and young children receive good care, including sensitive nappy changing, feeding and sleeping arrangements. These are in line with children's individual daily routines. All children receive warm and loving relationships with staff which ensures that their emotional needs are well met. Children throughout the nursery develop an understanding of good hygiene practice. Babies and younger children have their hands and faces wiped both prior to and after meals and snacks. Older children access good quality hand washing facilities and resources to wash their hands at appropriate times. They have a developing understanding that they should wash their hands to keep them clean.

Children throughout the nursery enjoy daily opportunities to play outdoors and access the fresh air. Babies have their own safe and secure grassed play area in which they play with balls and enjoy playing on a small swing. All other children share a play area in which they extend and develop their physical control using age-appropriate climbing equipment and sports toys. They develop their own games when outdoors which often link to other areas of learning, for example, singing action rhymes and songs, digging and raking leaves. Babies and younger children enjoy regular walks around the local community to enjoy the fresh air and experience the changing seasons.

Children are well nourished. They are provided with healthy and nutritious meals and snacks throughout the day, which also cater for their individual dietary needs and preferences. Children attending the nursery for a full day receive all five of the recommended portions of fruit and vegetables each day. Drinks are offered throughout the day and fresh drinking water is easily accessible, ensuring that children are well hydrated. Staff work in partnership with parents to ensure that they are fully informed of children's individual dietary needs and preferences. Babies and younger children sit within their base rooms for their meals and a sociable feel is created as they sit together to enjoy their meal. Their independence and self-care skills are developed as they are sensitively supported as they begin to feed themselves. Older children join together in the dining room to eat their main meals. They sit with their peers and the staff, and engage in conversations about their day. Parents of babies provide their own meals and bottles of milk. These are well stored prior to being offered. All foods are heat tested with a probe to ensure that they are served at the correct temperatures. Parents of older children are also able to provide their own children's packed lunches if required.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a bright care environment that is both warm and welcoming. Their art work is widely displayed on the walls and children take great pride in pointing out their completed art work to parents at arrival and collection times. Children throughout the setting enjoy a wide range of good quality toys and resources that are suitable for their ages and stages of development. These are well stored to allow children's independent access and promote their decision making skills.

Both the indoor and outside areas are safe and secure. Well-detailed written risk assessments have been developed and are continuously reviewed and updated. In addition, daily visual risk assessment checks are conducted prior to the children arriving and also throughout the day. This ensures that all perceived risks are identified and that action is taken in order to minimise them. Children develop an understanding of the actions that they should take in the event of an emergency through monthly fire evacuation practises. There are suitable procedures in place for outings. Children learn about the importance of road safety as they practise the 'stop, look and listen' technique when out for short walks, trips further afield and also through role play in the garden.

Children's welfare is safeguarded through effective child protection policies and procedures. These are openly shared with parents to ensure that they are fully informed. Staff have a clear understanding of the known indicators of child abuse and the actions that they should take in the event of a concern about a child in their care. Effective procedures are in place for the safe arrival and collection of children, including the use of a password system.

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

The provision is good.

Children throughout the nursery are happy and secure in their care environment and enjoy their time at nursery. They settle well at the nursery because they, and their parents, are warmly welcomed by staff. The environment is decorated with attractive and colourful displays which attract children's interest. Children throughout the setting enjoy music and movement sessions each week with an external music man named Mr Peppercorn. During these sessions they listen and sing along to music from around the world and also familiar songs and rhymes. They explore the different sounds and rhythms that they can make with a range of musical instruments.

Staff make effective use of the 'Birth to three Matters' framework to plan and provide age-appropriate activities for the younger children of the setting. Planning documents have not however been extended to clearly show the learning intentions for individual children's learning and development needs. Babies receive cuddles and supportive contact, and have good relationships with staff, which increases their sense of security and well-being. They benefit from routines that are consistent with their needs at home. They enjoy sensory play, such as exploring different textured materials, sounds and colours. Babies develop early communication skills as they interact with staff, who respond to their sounds during play. They enjoy games of 'peepo' and being held up to explore their reflected images in mirrors. Staff sing to babies, who often shake rattles and copy the actions of staff.

Younger children are confident in their relationships with staff. They begin to play happily with their peers and enjoy the involvement of staff and their interaction in their play. They enjoy using natural materials, puzzles, role play and outdoor equipment, suitable to their age and

stage of development. They regularly use sand, raking and digging, and pouring from one container to another. They use their senses to explore jelly, cornflour and spaghetti play. Art and craft activities are provided each day, such as chalking, collage and painting, which helps to develop children's creativity. They dress up in a range of dressing-up clothes and hats, and laugh as they look at themselves in mirrors. They are busy and occupied in their play as they access resources such as construction toys, small world cars and figures and role play resources.

#### Nursery Education:

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and plan a wide range of topic related activities which appeal to the children and cover all six areas of learning. Planning documents do not however clearly identify the learning intentions of activities and do not differentiate how activities can be adapted to meet individual children's learning needs. Although observations and assessments are regularly conducted, the information gained from these is not fed back into planning to ensure that activities are specific to individual learning needs. Staff are enthusiastic in their delivery of the curriculum. They offer clear instructions and interact well with the children, involving themselves in their play. They ask the children questions to encourage their thinking and further their understanding. Consequently, children achieve regular and continuous progress in all areas of learning.

Children play well together, show concern for others and are well behaved. They are familiar with expectations and enjoy helping to tidy up. Children's independence skills are developing well as they go to the toilet and wash their hands unaided and are becoming skilled at putting on their own coats and wellington boots in preparation for outdoor play. They play independently and also as part of small groups. They are confident to contribute to group discussions. Children are eager to learn and their interest is well sustained during activities. Children develop their independence as they help to give out snacks and drinks at snack time. Children are reminded to use their good manners when served with a drink and are praised when they remember without prompt. Children are confident speakers and use language to express their ideas and feelings. They confidently talk about their home lives and their parents' professions. They are beginning to recognise and identify their names, link sounds to letters and recognise that different words begin with the same sound. They practise mark-making each day and are starting to form recognisable letters. Children enjoy looking at books and participate in their favourite stories with excitement and enthusiasm.

Children have a concept of number and count by rote up to 10 and above. They recognise simple shapes and comment on these as they play. Children use mathematical language such as big, small, longer, more and less. They experience quantity and volume by tipping and pouring water and sand. Children are introduced to simple addition and subtraction skills through singing familiar number rhymes and songs. Their mathematical problem solving skills however are not so well supported as staff do not always extend children's thinking. Numbers, colours, shapes and letters are displayed around the room for children's reference. This is in addition to labels being widely displayed and this supports children as they begin to understand that print carries meaning. Children develop an understanding of the wider world through the celebration of festivals and cultural events throughout the year. They engage in many construction activities and design and build, often with a purpose in mind. They have occasional use of a computer within their base room, but their access to this is often limited. They instruct programmable toys as to which direction and how far they want it to move. They use tools such as rakes and spades in the garden to dig and shovel up leaves into piles.

Children benefit from frequent opportunities to play outdoors. They have great fun on push-along and pedal bikes and trikes. They develop their climbing skills as they go up the steps of the slide before sliding down. They play on age-appropriate climbing equipment. They balance along both wooden and plastic stepping stones. They are provided with ideas to further their physical development such as walking along the stepping stones sideways or balancing bean bags on their head as they move. Children enjoy a weekly trip to a local soft play centre. They are collected by bus and transported to go and enjoy physical activity using age-appropriate apparatus. Children's creative development is fostered through a variety of activities which promote self-expression with resources such as sand, paint and dough. They describe what they feel as they explore with their hands. For example, when using wet sand they explain that it's 'wet' and 'sloppy'. They enthusiastically sing action rhymes and counting songs in groups and individually sing favourite songs with confidence. Children engage in structured art and craft activities but have less opportunity to independently initiate their own creative learning. This is because art and craft resources are not readily available to them. Children use their imaginations in the role play area. They dress up and make good use of play food as they make meals and drinks for their peers.

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

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected as individuals and benefit from care that is tailored to meet their individual needs and routines. Throughout the year they have numerous opportunities to develop an understanding of the wider world through the celebration of cultural events and religious festivals. They explore a range of resources in their everyday play that portray positive images of diversity. There are clear procedures in place to identify and support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Strong partnerships between staff, parents and external agencies effectively promote children's well-being and help each child develop their full potential. Well-detailed individual education plans are produced as required to identify short-term targets for children. These are regularly reviewed in partnership with parents in order to assess the progress of the child. Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported in their care environment. Staff work in partnership with parents to ensure that they are familiar with key words that children speak at home to ensure that they can respond appropriately to their communications.

Children benefit greatly from the trusting partnerships that are well developed between their parents and the staff. Parent's knowledge of their children's needs and interests is actively sought prior to a placement commencing. This information is well used by staff to ensure that children's individual care needs and routines are met. Information is shared verbally at the start and end of each day. Parents of babies and younger children also receive a daily written record of their child's day. Parents are provided with a well-presented written prospectus that outlines many of the settings policies and procedures. More detailed policies and procedures are readily available to parents within the setting. Parents are kept well informed of how the care of their children is organised through regular letters and newsletters. Well-presented notice boards provide parents with information about the setting and also information about childcare and health. Throughout the nursery children behave very well. They are busy and occupied in their play and happily share and take turns with their peers. All children receive warm care from staff, who are always available to provide comfort and cuddles. An effective behaviour management policy is in place, which staff implement well in practice. They talk to the children about what is right, wrong and why in order to develop their understanding of desirable behaviour within

the setting. Children enjoy lots of praise and encouragement which develops their self-esteem well. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents of children receiving funded nursery education are invited to attend an information evening about the Foundation Stage curriculum. They are verbally informed of how their children will be supported to achieve in all six areas of learning. Planning documents are displayed within children's base rooms for parent's attention to ensure that they are informed of the activities that their children are involved in whilst in attendance at the setting. Further activity and play information is recorded on white boards each day to provide parents with further details of their children's day. Parents are not however provided with information about how they can support and extend their children's learning from home. Formal parent's evenings are held twice yearly to provide parents with the opportunity to talk to staff about their children's progress and learning needs. Children's observation and assessment records are also shared at this time and are available for parents to view upon request throughout the year. Parents are always welcome to come in and play with their children or to share any particular skills that they may have.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the effective organisation of space and resources both indoors and outside. Indoors, children are grouped in base rooms according to their age and stage of development. Babies attending the group have their own grassed play area, whilst all other children share a safe and secure garden area for physical play and outdoor activities. Staff support children well and allow them the time and space to initiate their own learning. They are able to make choices and develop their ideas as they play. An effective key worker system is in place, which ensures that children feel confident, settled and secure in their care environment.

All of the required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place. These are all well maintained, with the exception of accident records which are not signed in acknowledgement by parents. All documentation is carefully stored and well organised. They are regularly reviewed and are only accessed by the staff, ensuring that confidentiality is maintained. Well-written policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure that they continue to meet current good practice and professional advice. They are openly shared with parents and are well known by staff, who implement them well in their working practice with children. Although robust recruitment, vetting and induction procedures are in place, there are no formal systems of staff appraisal. This means that staff do not always receive feedback on their working practice with children.

The leadership and management is good. The nursery owner and her two managers work well in partnership to ensure that the leadership and management of both the care and nursery education provided at the setting is of good quality. They have a shared vision for the nursery and a commitment to providing a safe and stimulating environment for the children in their care. They involve other staff in planning and decision making which ensures that they function well as a team. They have a strong commitment to training and encourage all staff to take part in regular training sessions to update or improve their knowledge or to gain recognised childcare qualifications. New staff and students have a clear and robust induction programme that enables them to get to know the policies and procedures quickly and find their place as part of the team. This means that all staff are well equipped to support children's care, learning and play. Although the owner, managers and staff team work together to identify and assess the settings

strengths and weaknesses, there is no clear plan in place of how any areas identified for further improvement will be implemented. This can sometimes mean that areas identified for further improvement are overlooked, for example, using information from observations and assessments to ensure that children's individual learning needs are planned for. Regular staff meetings and planning sessions contribute to children participating in interesting and stimulating activities. The responsibility for planning the Foundation Stage curriculum is delegated to staff working with children in receipt of nursery education funding. The two managers oversee their work to ensure that children are provided with activities that support their progress in all six areas of learning. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

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

At the last inspection the provider agreed to improve adult to child ratios. Since then, the provider has ensured that adult to child ratios relate to staff time available to work directly with children at all times. Both the provider and the managers are supernumerary and additional members of staff are employed to cover staff breaks and unexpected emergencies. The provider agreed to increase the frequency of fire drills to meet health and safety guidelines. Children now develop an understanding of the actions that they should take in the event of a fire through monthly practises. The provider agreed to improve the recording and storing of children's medication records. Since the last inspection a new medication recording form has been developed. These are stored in children's individual files to ensure that confidentiality is maintained. The provider agreed to improve older children's access to fresh drinking water. Children now have their own named cups and fresh drinking water is freely accessible in their base rooms. This ensures that children are well hydrated throughout their time at pre-school.

At the last inspection the provider agreed to extend the opportunities for children to do things for themselves. Children are now able to access activities of their choosing and make independent decisions about what they would like to play with and how they would like to spend their time. Storage of toys and resources allows them to self-select and make decisions about their play. The provider agreed to improve the opportunities for children to recognise that print carries meaning and to enjoy and value books. Children now see written text within their base rooms on labels and displays. They freely access books and enjoy spending time sitting quietly to look through a book or to sit and listen to a story with staff. The provider agreed to expand opportunities for children to compare numbers, add more and take away. Children are now introduced to simple addition and subtraction skills through learning activities and also through singing familiar number rhymes and songs. However, further improvements are required in order to further develop children's problem solving skills. The provider agreed to develop the use of assessment to inform written planning for individual children's future learning. Although assessments are well detailed and identify children's individual stages and the progress that they make, this information is not fed back into planning and therefore remains an area for further improvement. The provider agreed to improve parent's access to information about the Foundation Stage and the early learning goals. Since then, information about the Foundation Stage and six areas of learning has been provided to parents in the form of a parents information evening. Parents are able to view planning documents which are displayed within children's base rooms which ensures that they are aware of the activities that their children are involved in.

### **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 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 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):

- ensure that accident records are signed in acknowledgment by parents
- develop and implement a system for staff appraisal

#### **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 systems of planning and assessment to ensure that learning intentions are clearly identified and that these are specific to individual children's learning needs
- provide more opportunities for mathematical problem solving in everyday situations and allow children further opportunities to independently initiate their own creative learning
- provide parents with information about how they can support their children's learning from home.

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)