



Rocking Horse Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY283280
Inspection date	15 September 2005
Inspector	Anne Walker
Setting Address	Kingsway Primary School, Kingsway, Kirkby in Ashfield, Nottinghamshire, NG17 7FH
Telephone number	01623 408330
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Registered person	Rocking Horse Nursery Ltd
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.

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?

The Rocking Horse Child Care Centre at Kingsway is one of nine family owned nurseries. It opened in 2004 and operates from three rooms in a purpose built single storey unit on the grounds of Kingsway Primary School, in Kirkby in Ashfield. A maximum of 50 children under 8 may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 - 18:00 for 52 weeks of the year excluding bank holidays. The nursery operates a breakfast and after school service. There is an

enclosed outdoor play area consisting of hard and soft surfacing.

There are currently 67 children aged from 0 to under 8 on roll. Of these 21 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with special educational needs.

The nursery employs 12 staff of whom 8, including the manager, hold appropriate early years and play-work qualifications. There are 4 staff working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health benefits from the good hygiene strategies which protect them from cross infection. These include procedures to keep the nursery and toys clean, serving food or changing babies nappies. Through daily routines children learn how to safeguard their own health. Children know they must apply sun cream and wear their hats in the outside play area to protect them from the sun. Older children can wash their hands and flush the toilet without adult supervision.

Children are developing an awareness of healthy eating. Through planned activities they learn the benefits of eating fruits and vegetables and are willing to try a broad range of new tastes. They eat a range of meals and snacks which are nutritionally balanced. Babies have pureed vegetables and fruits as part of their meals. Individual dietary requirements are known and respected. Staff liaise with parents to ensure that ongoing needs, such as weaning, are fully agreed so that children's needs continue to be met. Drinks of water, milk or squash accompany each meal and snack. Additionally children always have access to drinking water. They learn the importance of drinking fluids after physical activity due to the encouragement of the staff who provide water when they have been running, skipping and jumping.

All the children in the nursery have frequent opportunities to play outdoors in the fresh air throughout the year. They play actively using the climbing apparatus, bikes and hoops and toddlers enjoy jumping in puddles after the rain. Weekly dance lessons and music and movement, also contribute to their growing awareness of the benefits of exercise on their health. Children in the after school club request outdoor play, following their day in school, and are provided with a broad range of equipment to use. Indoors babies are encouraged to be active, for example a child learning to walk has frequent encouragement and practice using push-a-long toys or holding a member of staff's hand.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Risks of accidental injury to children are minimised as a result of the good

procedures in place and because the adults working with children implement them each day. Floors are swept and wiped and space is organised so that children can move safely. Harnesses are used to secure babies into high chairs and pushchairs. Staff are deployed well and supervise children vigilantly both indoors and in the outside play area. Sleeping children are always watched over by an adult whether they are in a cot, on a sleep mat or in a pushchair. They are safe when moving between the different areas of the nursery and on outings because of the effective strategies employed by staff. All toys and equipment are of good quality and safe for the children who access them. Children participate in nursery life safely because staff use the equipment effectively to meet the differing needs of children for example, toys in the baby room are safe for them to explore using their hands and mouth.

Children's safety and welfare is promoted because the required documents and policies are in place and understood and effectively implemented by staff for example, staff know who can give medication and what must be done prior to any being administered. Staff have a secure knowledge of child protection procedures and know who to refer their concerns to within the nursery and externally.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children settle well at the nursery and are able to separate from their parents because of the individual attention given to them and their parents. When children arrive in the morning they are happy to be there and quickly settle to play and talk easily with their carers. Babies respond to the warm interaction of the staff. They allow themselves to be fed, settled for rest and engaged in play. They benefit from staff's good awareness of their needs which increases their sense of well-being and security. Babies enjoy a wide variety of toys and activities that encourage them to use all their senses, for example they splash in the water trough and enjoy feeling it on their face. Their increasing mobility is fostered because staff place toys within and just beyond their reach, or hold their hands to allow them to walk. Young children's early communication is well supported by adults who respond to them verbally and with facial gestures. Children aged 2-3 years are confident and have increasing independence in their environment. They understand the nursery routines, make choices in their play by helping themselves to play materials in boxes or selecting from what staff have prepared. They show increasing confidence and verbal abilities to make their needs known, such as when they are thirsty or would like second helpings of dinner. Children aged 2-3 years are cared for alongside the older children but use the various rooms at different times. Staff working with the 2-5 year-olds plan the play together. In most instances activities for 2-3 year-olds offer the appropriate level of challenge. This is because they are suitably adapted and changed regularly to maintain children's interest and ensure their play is purposeful however, on occasions their specific needs are not identified so that an activity is too challenging. Staff working with the 0-3 year-olds have recently begun to plan with and implement 'Birth to three matters'. The children attending the breakfast and after school club have a good, planned range of activities. Additionally, staff consult with them and take account of their ideas to ensure that they are involved and that the play is relevant to their interests. They have their own outdoor and indoor space so that they

can play freely and access toys and materials suitable for their age range.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and children's learning are good. The staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage Curriculum and use this to plan a broad range of activities which children find interesting and stimulating. The day is well paced so that children have opportunities to explore ideas and try out new skills. Children work independently, alongside an adult, or as a group as a result of a good variety of teaching methods. For example, as they learn French they work with a small group of their peers and then take part in action songs. When they paint and draw they work alone to create their ideas but often talk to their peers and carers about what they are doing. The children have good concentration skills, listening attentively to stories and responding appropriately to the questions posed by the adults. They persist and concentrate to create models using a range of construction materials. Children's communication skills are developing well as a result of the new language introduced by staff and the opportunities they give to children to express themselves verbally. They are keen mark makers and older children are beginning to form letters. They recognise familiar words such as their name and begin to understand the written language because of the good opportunities to see it around the playrooms. Children self select maths play, exploring shape and pattern. They enjoy a broad range of mathematical activities including number and counting, however they do not get enough opportunities to consolidate and practise these skills through daily routines such as counting how many cups needed for snack. Sometimes the deployment of staff in the pre-school area does not best support children's participation with the well planned maths activity. Children are developing a good awareness of the world around them due to the frequent, practical and varied activities. They practise road safety alongside an adult as they play outdoors, visit the fire station and are visited by the police to learn about their roles. They talk about their feelings when visiting the dentist or hospital. Children also learn about the natural world by growing plants or making feeders for birds. Their large muscle skills are promoted through regular dance, movement and use of outdoor equipment. Good activities to develop hand-eye coordination enable the children to become competent in using scissors and pencils.

Overall children make good progress in all areas of learning. There are systems in place to track children's progress which are consistent with the Foundation Stage stepping stones. Staff observe children on a regular basis and use the information gathered to guide their activity planning to support children's next steps in learning. On occasions they do not make the best use of the systems available to them to identify and implement children's individual learning needs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The individual needs of children who attend are met well. Good records and regular, ongoing dialogues with parents ensure that staff know the children well, can settle them to rest, reassure them if they are unhappy and support their all round

development with appropriate activities. There is a wide range of resources and displays that positively represent the children who attend as well as people from the wider community. This helps children develop a positive sense of themselves and others. Suitable systems are in place to support children with special educational needs to ensure they are fully included in the nursery day.

Children behave well due to the positive strategies used by staff which help them understand acceptable behaviour. Toddlers and pre-school children receive consistent messages about sharing and taking turns and older children are able to do this, much of the time. They learn to cooperate with each other and their carers, as they help tidy away or take it in turns to contribute to a conversation at story time. The adults vary their strategies appropriately dependent upon the age and stage of development of the children in their care. This ensures that children always understand why they are being asked to do something, or why their action was unacceptable. The children are learning to manage their emotions and feelings appropriately because their carers are good role models who talk to them respectfully. Pre-school children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Older children who attend after school are kind and considerate when mixing with the younger children during some tea times, so that the younger children enjoy their company.

Parents of younger children are provided with daily written information about their child's day. Staff have regular dialogues with parents to discuss ongoing issues such as potty training and weaning. This consistent care ensures children's welfare effectively and helps them feel secure. There is a wide range of written information at the outset and ongoing, that ensures parents are kept informed and involved. The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. There is a wealth of information when the child enters pre-school that informs parents about the curriculum and how it is implemented. Notice boards and newsletters keep them informed of current topics. Additionally at the beginning of each new topic parents are sent information about key stepping stones the children will be working towards, with ideas of how parents can support this learning at home. Parents are able to talk to staff on a daily basis and there are more formal opportunities, such as an open evening, for staff and parents to discuss the child's progress. In addition at the end of each topic parents complete an 'All about me' form in order to record the progress they believe their child has made. These contribute to staff's assessment and future planning for individual children's learning needs.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's development and welfare is promoted as a result of the appropriate systems being in place to ensure that staff have the commensurate skills and are suitable for their post. Managers employ good systems to identify training needs. They provide regular opportunities for staff to develop their skills, post qualification, to ensure that the nursery as a whole has the range of appropriate skills to meet the needs of the children in their care. For example, two-thirds of the staff hold a first aid qualification and staff are learning how to implement the guidance 'Birth to three

matters'. Advance planning and clear contingency arrangements ensure that good staffing levels are in place and adult to child ratios are met at all times of the day, thereby safeguarding children's welfare. Children are settled and able to take part in purposeful activities because staff are deployed appropriately in room teams which reflect a balance of experience and skills. The nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. There are effective systems to record all the required information and store them confidentially.

The leadership and management of the setting, with regard to children receiving funded nursery education, is good. There is a clear line of command within the nursery and among the chain of nurseries, so that all staff have good support, including the manager. Through training, team meetings and professional resources managers have ensured that staff working in the pre-school have a suitable knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum. There are clear systems in place for managers to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching that is being delivered and the progress children make. These include overseeing the play planning and spending time in the nursery rooms on a daily basis to observe what children and staff are doing. There are regular opportunities for managers within the nursery chain to share good practice and continue to improve the nursery education children receive.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last care inspection recommended that the nursery improve some aspects of their record keeping and ensure that all staff were fully aware of their child protection responsibilities. Effective measures have been taken to address all issues and ensure children's welfare is effectively promoted. Parental signatures are sought wherever necessary and there are clear procedures to share required information with parents on the day. The fire log has been suitably adapted so that it is clear when drills have been undertaken. In-house child protection training has taken place and all staff questioned were fully aware of the steps they must take to safeguard children's welfare.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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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 planning to improve the outcomes for children aged 2-3 for example, by using guidance such as 'Birth to three matters'

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):

- further support children's awareness of number and counting using opportunities in the daily routines so that children practise and consolidate what they have learnt. Improve staff deployment to ensure that children are encouraged to take part in the planned maths activity
- continue to improve staff's use of current assessment systems in order to fully use the information gathered about children's individual next steps in learning.

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