

Rock Cottage Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	218478
Inspection date	20 November 2007
Inspector	Valerie Thomas
Setting Address	Breach Road, Brown Edge, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST6 8TR
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Registered person	Anthony Julian Green
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?

Rock Cottage Day Nursery opened in 1991. It is situated within the grounds of Rock Cottage Nursing Home in the village of Brown Edge. The nursery operates from two buildings within the grounds. Children under three years are accommodated in a two-storey detached building with four rooms available for children's use. Children aged three to 11 years are accommodated in six rooms, in an annexe within the nursing home. There is access to an enclosed outdoor garden area. A maximum of 101 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday all year round from 07.30 until 18.00. The nursery provides out of school care and takes and collects children from St Luke's, St Anne's and Endon Hall Primary schools.

There are currently 77 children from three months to four years on roll for the nursery and 28 children from four years to 11 years on roll for the out of school club. Of these, 20 receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs 23 members of staff. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards a further qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a healthy and nutritional diet. Their needs are fully discussed and staff are aware of any specific needs that children have. Healthy options are always available. Children enjoy eating the slices of apple and orange at snack time. Children in the fun club are able to make choices from the 'healthy eating café' where they can select items such as fruit and raw vegetables. Lots of praise given by staff as children sit and eat their lunch and explaining how food can make them strong, encourages a positive attitude to healthy eating. A new initiative implemented in the setting ensures children are accessing healthy drinks. All children bring their own bottle of water each day and they are able to help themselves. Babies' specific routines are implemented into the nursery day which helps them to settle into the nursery.

There are generally good procedures in place to promote children's health. Routines for older children ensure they develop a clear understanding of good personal hygiene. They know that their hands are clean when they wash them with the soap and that there are germs on their hands when they have been to the toilet. Effective routines for nappy changing such as staff wearing aprons and gloves and cleaning all surfaces between changes help prevent the spread of infection. However, hygiene routines for young babies are not totally effective as their hands are not always cleaned before they eat their snack. This has the potential to compromise their good health.

Children have very good opportunities to play outside and have a wide range of activities inside to encourage a positive attitude to healthy exercise. Older children have lots of fun as they run around outside, climbing confidently on the frames and wooden equipment and are constantly moving around keeping themselves warm. Young babies develop their mobility as they pull themselves up on the equipment in the baby room and staff help them to walk to the table. Dance sessions take place each week and children join in with 'Fun Fit' activities to help develop their coordination. This contributes to children developing a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

There is good space within the setting to enable children to play comfortably with the toys and equipment. Areas are maintained well and any refurbishment takes place as and when needed. The nursery and fun club provide a welcoming environment with posters and children's artwork displayed. The outdoor area offers a varied range of surfaces for children to play on, with a designated area for climbing frames which are placed on a safety surface of bark. There is a good range of safe, developmentally appropriate resources for indoor and outdoor play which offer challenge for children. Most are organised well to ensure good accessibility. Although toys in the tweenie room set out by staff are changed regularly, children are not able to make other choices and develop their curiosity as learners as other resources are not easily accessible.

There are good and effective processes in place to promote safety within the setting. Risk assessments are completed regularly for each room and daily observations by staff help to identify any areas that need attention. For example, finger guards are now fitted to doors to prevent children trapping their fingers. Security is very good and staff are extremely vigilant and monitor access at all times with a record of any visitors kept. Staff are proactive at ensuring children learn how to keep themselves safe. They talk to children about not running around

too fast outside as they may slip on the wet leaves and sitting carefully on their chair or they will fall. Children fully understand that they need to hold hands with their partner and listen for cars when they go to the play area and older ones in the fun club know that they must keep their seat belt fastened when they go in the minibus to school.

Child protection procedures are fully understood by staff. They know the correct procedures for reporting any concerns and there is a clear whistle blowing policy which helps to protect children. They have a sound knowledge of the indicators of abuse and training in child protection is fully promoted to further develop staff understanding. This ensures that children's welfare is safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children experience a wide range of activities with good support from staff to ensure their learning and development is promoted. Staff make good use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and use this to guide their planning and recording of progress for children under three. Regular observations as children play inform progress records and ensure they are enjoying and achieving.

Babies' early language skills are developing well as staff encourage them to learn animal sounds with young ones imitating the roar of a lion. Sensory play is a key strength of the setting with many opportunities to explore textures such as jelly, sand and bubbles. Babies become excited as they put their hands in the gloop, smiling as they move their fingers around. Painting and playing with the pasta helps children in the Tot Rockers room to develop their fine manipulative skills. They enjoy holding the brush to paint Santa Claus and concentrate well as they thread the pasta tubes onto the spaghetti. Early mathematical skills are encouraged as children try to fit the different shapes into the right holes and staff introduce numbers as children play with the jigsaws. Young children in the Tot Rockers room thoroughly enjoy listening to the story before lunch. They call out 'I want my potty' together when they learn about a child in the story who is being potty trained. Children join in well with songs and lots of praise and clapping by staff helps children to feel good about themselves. Staff provide good support and are caring in their interaction with children. They constantly engage in children's play on the child's level, building positive relationships and ensuring their interest is maintained. This contributes to children feeling relaxed and enables them to enjoy their time in the setting.

Discussions with children attending the fun club show that they enjoy their time in the setting. They express how they like to play with the construction and creative activities and have fun when playing outside. Children are enthusiastic when they talk about their trip to the zoological park where they saw the otters and little crocodiles. Planning demonstrates that there is a varied range of activities to maintain children's interest.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Staff demonstrate an effective understanding of the Foundation Stage and use activities well to extend children's learning. Planning clearly identifies the learning intention which is linked to a specific stepping stone with good detail to inform all staff. The assessment system is robust. A record is kept of children's recognition of letters, numbers and shapes and regular observations and assessments of each child shows how they are making good progress towards the early

learning goals. Staff use successful methods to maintain children's interest, engaging in their play and promoting language, enabling them to relax and feel confident. Challenges for children are good in the majority of areas. However, children's independence in selecting activities and managing their self-care is not fully extended. Behaviour management is exceptional and children respond positively at all times. There is a good range of resources to promote children's learning in all areas, although there are limited opportunities for younger children to develop their understanding of information and communication technology.

Children's attitude to learning is good and their concentration is developing well as they join in with activities. They sit well for circle time and spend time building models such as a giraffe with the construction kit. They play well together as they play with the prams in the role play area and build with the train track. Children are beginning to develop their self-care skills as they wash the cups after lunch. However, there is little opportunity for children to pour their own drinks or serve their own food. Children's language skills are good and they communicate with confidence. They talk about their home experiences as they hold Winston at circle time and are confident to sing a song to the group. Children's literacy skills are developing very well. They handle books appropriately showing good interest and are beginning to recognise their name as they find their towel to dry their hands. They have a writing book where they learn a letter each week and a writing area within the room enables children to practise their skills.

Children use and understand numbers well. They confidently count up to four, as they count how many legs a giraffe has and count their fingers pointing to each one as they do this. Progress records show that older ones can recognise numbers up to 13 and nine different shapes. As children play with the threading activity they are able to distinguish between the circle and the triangle. Opportunities for children to develop their exploration and investigation skills are varied. They take part in floating and sinking activities and explore how magnets and spoons stick together. They learn about the features of natural objects as they scoop out the pumpkins and learn how ingredients change when they make pumpkin cakes. Children have very good opportunities to learn about the world around them. They visit the pet shop to buy a goldfish and regular visits from services such as the fire and police extend children's learning further.

Children are making good progress in their physical development. They pedal bikes competently as they negotiate pathways around the play area. They thoroughly enjoy kicking the ball to staff showing good control and planning shows how children imitate the dance teacher as they wobble like a jellyfish. Their fine manipulative skills are good. They thread the shapes with ease and samples of work show that they can follow the letters well. Children show a good knowledge of colour as they confidently name the colours in their chalk picture. They have lots of fun developing their imagination as they play in the home corner taking the babies for a walk in the prams. Planning shows that children regularly access musical instruments and creative activities which enable them to express themselves freely.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

There is a vast range of resources to raise children's awareness of diversity. For example, there are books, puppets, home corner equipment and crayons and paints in different colour skin tones. Posters are displayed throughout the nursery which show positive images of different cultures, gender and disability. A wide range of festivals are celebrated such as Diwali, Eid and the Chinese New Year. Staff promote children's understanding even further by using various languages throughout the nursery as captions to label different pictures and objects.

Consequently, these extensive methods ensure children are actively developing their understanding of diversity. Staff are committed to ensuring children have substantial opportunities to become involved in the local community. Children collect items for harvest and take them to the local church, they visit the nearby school to see the Christmas play and visit the residents in the adjoining care home to sing carols and show them their Easter bonnets. Support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is excellent. There is an identified Special Educational Needs Coordinator who has a superior understanding of the 'Code of Practice' with a very effective system in place to meet children's needs. Successful relationships with external agencies are actively developed and staff place high importance on involving parents at every stage to ensure all children are included and fully supported.

Children benefit from the very successful methods staff use to manage behaviour. Staff talk to babies about sharing and being kind to each other. As children become older they work towards a 'high five' programme and respond exceptionally well to the boundaries set. They put their hands in the air to reach for the stars which helps to focus their attention and tell their friends they are sorry when they have put sand on them. Children in the fun club make their own rules and therefore fully understand that they should not run around in the rooms or slide down the bank in the woods. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Excellent use of praise and encouragement by staff for using their manners and sitting well for the story builds children's self-esteem well.

Staff promote excellent relationships with parents. There is a very professional prospectus and parent pack which provides very detailed information on how the setting operates. There is a clear complaints procedure in place and a record of any complaints is kept. Children's individual needs are fully discussed and recorded with parents and individual routines are obtained. Management and staff are highly active in ensuring that parents are fully informed of their child's well-being and development. Parents' evenings are held twice a year to share details of progress records and daily discussion takes place when parents bring and collect their children. Consequently, this enables parents and staff to work together to meet the needs of the child.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. Details of the educational programme and the types of activities provided are available in the parent pack. The setting actively involves parents in their child's learning through displaying what letter the children are learning each week and what the topic will be. As children get older they take reading books home to share with their parents. This enables parents to be involved and support their child's development and learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

There is a high level of qualified staff who work with the children and additional training is actively promoted. For example, the majority of staff are trained in first aid, child protection and 'Birth to three matters'. Other training attended includes 'Behaviour management', 'Vision and hearing' and 'Music skills'. This helps to broaden children's experiences and develop staff knowledge of childcare issues which contributes to the quality of good care provided. Recruitment procedures are effective and ensure all staff are appropriately vetted with clear processes in place to assess ongoing suitability. Documentation for attendance, accidents and the administration of medication meet all requirements and all records are stored securely. This promotes children's welfare.

The setting is organised well on the whole to ensure children's needs are met. Staff are caring and attentive with clear routines in place to help children feel secure. Comfort is given to young babies who are upset because they do not like noise and staff support children's learning well as they sit on the floor and engage in their play. As a result, children are happy and relaxed in the setting. Overall, children's needs are met.

The leadership and management of funded children is good. Induction procedures are effective and there is a clear appraisal system in place which management oversees. Informal staff meetings take place regularly and there are clear job descriptions for the various staff roles. Reviews of practice take place through advice from external agencies and the setting is currently working towards a quality award. Children's progress is monitored systematically by staff and management. As a result, children are making good progress towards the early learning goals.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to: develop staff knowledge of the 'Special Needs Code of Practice' and ensure the supervisor for the fun club obtains an appropriate qualification. In relation to the inspection for nursery education the provider was asked to consider allowing more flexibility within the routine to enable children to make their own decisions about their play.

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator has attended training and works closely with external agencies to continue to develop her knowledge. Consequently, this ensures there is an excellent system in place to support children and inclusion is very much promoted. The supervisor for the fun club now has a level 3 qualification. As a result, children's welfare is promoted.

Staff have made some progress in developing the routine to allow children to make decisions about their play. Children are now informed that they have five minutes to finish what they are doing before they move on to choose another activity. However, on some occasions children are not able to access the activities they wish to take part in. This does not fully enable them to become independent learners.

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

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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):

- improve hygiene procedures further for young babies
- improve the accessibility of toys in the tweenie room to offer greater choice and create a more stimulating environment for children.

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):

- extend further the opportunities for children to increase their independence in selecting activities, managing their self-care and developing an interest in information and communication technology.

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