

Roadend Farm Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109310
Inspection date	30 January 2008
Inspector	Liz Margaret Caluori
Setting Address	Roadend Farm Nursery School, Udimore, Rye, East Sussex, TN31 6BY
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Registered person	Louise Mair
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?

Roadend Nursery opened in 1988 and operates from a converted barn on a working farm on the outskirts of Rye.

A maximum of 35 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.30 to 15:15 during term time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 50 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll; of these 26 children receive funding for their nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area as the nursery serves a number of rural villages and nearby towns. They may attend morning or full day sessions.

The nursery is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities as well as those who speak English as an additional language.

There are six staff working with the children, of whom over half either hold, or are working towards, a recognised childcare qualification. The setting offers a mix of traditional and Montessori play and learning opportunities. Staff qualifications reflect this mix.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in clean, attractively presented premises. These are maintained throughout the day by the staff team. They regularly check the toilets and wipe down tables after messy activities and before children sit down to eat their packed lunches.

Children are given a very good level of support to develop their personal hygiene practices. Most visit the toilets independently and remember to wash their hands. Staff offer support and encouragement where necessary and ensure that children also wash their hands when coming in from outdoor play and before eating. Older children are learning about the need to protect against germs and use tissues to blow their noses.

Those who stay all day bring in a pack lunch from home and enjoy a very sociable meal time with their friends. They speak knowledgably about healthy eating and are encouraged by staff to eat the most nutritious items in their lunchbox first. They also sit as a whole group during the morning to enjoy a piece of fruit and a drink. Whilst staff have regard for children's individual dietary requirements, they are not routinely offered any choice and do not help in the preparation or serving of snacks. Drinks are constantly available to all children.

Staff with first aid qualifications are present each day to ensure that children can be effectively treated in case of a minor accident and records are generally well maintained. The arrangements in place to care for sick children and to administer medication are entirely appropriate.

Extremely good arrangements are in place for outdoor play. The staff team make extremely good use of the rural environment. Children are taken on inspirational walks around the owner's farm returning with twigs and similar items collected along the way. They are also provided with a very good range of equipment to encouraging them to develop their physical skills. This includes a large wooden climbing structure with a slide and sheltered area. This apparatus is very popular and offers a high level of challenge, particularly for the youngest children. It is very well maintained and is sited on a thick safety bed of bark chips. Staff are attentive in their supervision but skilfully encourage rather than inhibit children's development and enjoyment. Other resources available include ride-on-toys, space hoppers, a small trampoline and additional low level climbing equipment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are protected by an effective range of safety precautions throughout the setting. There is a safety gate on the doorway of the ground floor group room and covers are fitted in all unused sockets. The setting has good arrangements in place to protect children in case of a fire. Emergency exits are clearly identified and free from obstruction and fire fighting equipment is in place. Children take part in regular practise evacuation drills and a written record is made in the register.

Children are well supported to learn how to keep themselves safe. The short width of farm track between the nursery building and the outdoor play area is used to teach children how to cross the road safely. Great care has been taken in the organisation of the setting and staff are vigilant in their supervision. This allows children to develop a very good level of independence in a safe and secure environment.

The manager takes responsibility for co-ordinating child protection issues within the setting. She has attended training and is clear on the responsibilities attached to this role. All the relevant contact details needed to make a referral are held on site; as a result children are effectively safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children thrive in the marvellously child-centred environment. They all thoroughly enjoy their time at nursery. The few children who experience difficulties separating from parents and carers are very well supported to settle and are playing happily with their friends within a very short time.

Staff and children engage in wonderful and often charmingly ludicrous conversations. This results in an easy going, fun atmosphere in which children feel free to express themselves. Children's individual emotional and care needs are very well understood and respected. As a result, they are happy and secure.

Children are cared for in two group rooms; the two to three year olds on the ground floor and the pre-school children on the first floor. Both rooms are set up with a range of activities when the children arrive. These are very well resourced and are extremely appealing to the children.

The younger group of children form very positive relationships with the staff and with their peers. They are beginning to play very co-operatively. This was evident in a spontaneous game which involved working together to shovel bark chips on to the bottom of the slide and shrieking in delight as a volunteer slid through and scattered the pile. In addition to outdoor games, activities which are currently popular with this group of children include free painting, gluing and sticking and dancing. Planning for the younger children follows the Birth to three matters framework. Staff demonstrate a good knowledge of the developmental levels of each child. They skilfully adapt activities to meet their individual needs although this differentiation is not routinely included in the written plans.

The routines and general organisation of the day allows a good deal of interaction between the two age groups. This benefits all children greatly.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Adults working with the children have a thorough understanding of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum. They use extremely clear and effective system to monitor individual children's progress and plan for their next steps. Activities are well planned and interesting and children take part with great enthusiasm.

Children are making very good progress in all areas of learning. Whilst they are largely free to choose the activities they wish to take part in, they also enjoy a wide range of adult led topic work.

Children are developing tremendous vocabularies and benefit from the freedom they experience to share anecdotes, express opinions and ask questions. Whilst some are attempting to write their name they are not routinely encouraged to label their own art work. However, they make very good use of the recently revamped mark making table and many are beginning to form recognisable letters. Children also enjoy looking at books and clearly understand that print

carries meaning. They use good story telling language both when sharing books with their friends and when putting on puppet shows.

An extensive range of resources are available to support children's mathematical development including Montessori equipment. Children count confidently and are becoming very proficient in skills such as matching, sorting and measuring. They use a lot of mathematical language in their everyday activities and are beginning to understand concepts such as addition and subtraction.

Children are particularly well supported to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. They take part in activities covering a wide range of interesting topics which sometimes includes welcoming visitors such as the police or a doctor. They also enjoy opportunities to investigate their local environment. Regular walks around the farm help them to learn about the natural world including the life cycles of the farm animals.

Children benefit from a great many opportunities to plan and design, make models and problem solve. The computer provided for use by the children is currently not working although there are plans to obtain a replacement.

Creatively children are also progressing well. Many choose to paint pictures and produce extremely individual and expressive pieces of art. They also make very good use of the well equipped role play area. They laugh together as they invent comical characters and situations such as a squad of police officers, all of whom wear two wobbly hats.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. Their behaviour is extremely good. They are kind, thoughtful and polite and are developing good social skills. They respond very well to the good humoured, relaxed manner of the staff team. Children's individual personalities and developmental needs are very thoroughly understood and respected within the setting. This ensures that they are developing very good self-esteem. They are well supported to learn about a wide range of customs and beliefs through topic work including the festival of Diwali, Christmas, the Chinese New Year and a study of Africa. They have access to a range of resources which promote positive images of people from throughout the community and the wider world. There are also a range of figures depicting people with disabilities although these are not generally available for children to select in their free play.

The manager and staff team have a very positive attitude towards meeting the needs of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Effective systems are in place to identify and address children's individual needs. The group is also able to support children who speak English as an additional language.

Partnership with parents is good. Those whose children receive funding for their nursery education are well supported to understand the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum. They have regular opportunities to discuss their child's progress and to contribute any observations from home. All parents are provided with a good range of written information about the setting when their child first attends. In addition they are provided with regular newsletters. Staff are always available to speak with parents as they drop off or collect their child. There are also satisfactory arrangements in place to investigate any complaints that may be made and to maintain a written record.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management is good. The owner of the nursery works as the manager and has a very strong commitment to monitoring and improving the service provided. Questionnaires are sent out to parents asking them to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. These are used to devise action plans which are then made available to the parents. The group is also working through the EYE for excellence quality assurance programme.

The staff work extremely well together as a team and this creates a very harmonious and positive environment for the children. All staff are vetted to ensure their suitability and are inducted in all policies and procedures.

There is a range of clear written policies and procedures in place, many of these also outlined in the prospectus for parents. All required documentation and records are maintained although the system for recording children's attendance does not always clearly indicate late arrivals and early departures.

Space within the setting is very well used to allow an extremely wide range of activities to take place. The outdoor play area is particularly well planned. Similarly, time is also well managed. The routine of the day and the deployment of staff is organised entirely around the needs of the children.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection it was recommended that some policies be amended to accurately reflect the arrangements in the setting. These have now been updated which contributes to the effective running of the service. Improvements were also suggested in the system for recording children's attendance although minor weaknesses remain in this area.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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.

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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):

- review the arrangements at snack times to offer children an opportunity to help prepare and serve food and to provide more choice
- extend the support for children to develop a knowledge and respect for others by providing resources and activities which promote positive images of people with learning difficulties and/or 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):

- continue to promote the mark making and writing skills of the more able children by offering greater encouragement to attempt to label their own art work

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