

Red Squirrels Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY350376
Inspection date	15 July 2008
Inspector	Diane Roberts
Setting Address	Warcop C of E School, Warcop, APPLEBY-IN-WESTMORLAND, Cumbria, CA16 6NX
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Registered person	The Trustees of Red Squirrels Nursery
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?

Red Squirrels Nursery is run by the Trustees of Red Squirrels Nursery. In the present location, it opened in September 2007 and operates from purpose-built premises in the grounds of Warcop Church of England Primary School. It is situated in the village of Warcop, Appleby, Cumbria. It formerly operated as North Stainmore Nursery in the village hall at North Stainmore, Cumbria, since 1988. A maximum of 19 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 09.15 to 15.30 during term time. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 29 children on roll from 2 to under 5 years, of these, 17 children receive funding for early education. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties or disabilities.

The nursery employs five members of staff, of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications. The manager has early years professional status.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally aware of the importance of adopting good personal hygiene routines. For instance, they remember to wash their hands after using the toilet and they know to wash their hands before eating. However, the procedure for hand washing before lunch means that children sit on the floor after having washed their hands and before eating. This means children risk contaminating their hands before eating. This could adversely affect their health. Nappy changing facilities are clean. However, there is no clear nappy changing procedure in place. This means that staff risk cross contamination by not wearing suitable protective clothing, such as aprons, thereby high standards of hygiene are not maintained. Children's welfare is protected as staff hold a current first aid certificate. This means they are able to promptly administer first aid in the event of an accident because they have the relevant knowledge. Most accidents are clearly recorded and signed by parents when they have read them. However, accident records are not always completed promptly and comprehensively. This means that important information about a child could be lost and thereby affect their welfare.

Children enthusiastically take part in a range of physical activities both indoors and out. This helps children gain increasing control of their bodies. For example, they show skill and dexterity as they balance on logs or play with a wide range of bats and balls. They demonstrate good co-ordination skills when throwing a basketball into the basketball stand, and beam with success when they score a goal. For a good part of the session, children benefit from the choice of playing in the fresh air or not. A wide range of equipment invites children to play outdoors and the canopy covering the outdoor patio area means they are protected from rain or sunshine. Equipment under the canopy is an impact absorbing material, thereby children can safely learn how to learn to negotiate the steps of the slide or climb on the interlocking blocks. Children like using the fast wheeled resources, such as bikes and scooters, when they have access to the school playground. Playing with these resources encourages the development of their gross motor skills.

Children enjoy healthy snacks of fresh fruit as part of the nursery's weekly theme. However, on the whole, snacks and lunches are provided by parents. The setting offers advice in the prospectus to parents about what constitutes a healthy lunchbox. Eating times are sociable occasions where children enjoy engaging in conversation with their friends and staff. They are encouraged to open and close their own lunchboxes. The zipping and unzipping of the boxes helps the development of children's small muscle development whilst promoting their independence. Children have access to drinking water throughout the session allowing them to respond to their bodily needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a safe, welcoming and well maintained environment. Displays of children's work and bright informative posters are well presented which helps to promote a strong sense of belonging for the children. Children are able to safely access a good range of fine quality, clean and well maintained toys and equipment. They safely select their resources independently from around the room or outdoors in the enclosed covered play area. The premises are safe and secure, and the setting keeps a record of visitors, ensuring children are kept secure at all times. There are clear procedures for evacuating the premises in the event of an emergency,

which is supported by regular fire drills to ensure that children understand what they have to do to keep themselves safe.

Regular risk assessments carried out daily by staff generally ensure the environment is safe for children. Most risks have been identified and minimised in the indoor play area. However, the position of the computer is too high to be comfortable for children when they are seated and the touch screen cannot be safely reached by children who are smaller in stature. Risk assessments are in place for outdoor play. However, they do not include the use of fast wheeled resources, such as scooters, or the impact the sloping playground has on the speed of these vehicles. This means

children are riding bikes and scooters at fast speeds without brakes and without wearing suitable protective wear, such as helmets. Although staff advise children to slow down, there are limited means of safely doing so. This means that children are not consistently learning to keep themselves safe.

Children are generally well protected against harm through staff's thorough knowledge of child protection issues. They have completed relevant training and demonstrate a clear understanding of their responsibilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their play in an environment that is stimulating, well organised and fun. All children enter the nursery confidently, showing a keenness and willingness to engage in the activities which are available. They have good opportunities to freely select resources and enjoy free flow play alongside focused activities.

Children enjoy close relationships with staff and receive positive interaction and support from them. Children enjoy times when staff play alongside them, which helps children to play co-operatively and inspires them to have fun in their learning. There are good opportunities for children to initiate and express their own ideas. For instance, as they extend their role play by enjoying time in the village store and home corner in the playroom.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and use this to plan a broad and balanced range of activities and experiences for all of the children. The learning environment is well planned and the programme of activities covers the six areas of learning. Staff have taken time to identify children's specific interests through observation. However, this information is not yet used to determine activities for each child. Although activities are not always directly linked to individual interests of children attending, they do reflect the rural community in which they live. For instance, children have made patterns using tyres mainly from farm vehicles. Around the room are good quality pictures of farm animals with well written descriptive text. Very good use has been made of pictures cut from the local newspaper of farming shows and events.

The teaching interests children and helps them focus, persist and resist distraction. Staff are attentive to the children, constantly interacting with them without stifling their independence. They are skilled in extending children's learning at every opportunity. Staff give high priority to nurturing children's personal, social and emotional development. Children are developing good relationships and behaviour is of a high standard. Around the room there are many

photographs of the children attending. Lots depict children with their special friends at nursery, displaying their affection as they have their arms around one another.

Children use initiative and are creative and imaginative. They are able to acquire new knowledge and skills through the wide range of planned activities and spontaneous events, which support their development and overall learning. Children are given time to explore the environment and resources independently and at their own pace. For instance, outdoors, children can access dressing up clothes, writing materials, water and sand trays and a range of cardboard boxes to name but a few. Children play cooperatively together with resources in the water tray as one child holds a bottle still whilst another uses a jug to fill it with water. They have good fun making the water pump work and are happy to share the many resources available. Children and staff have a great time fitting into the different sized cardboard boxes. Staff are skilled in encouraging mathematical language, such as the adults being 'too big' or the box being 'too small'. Indoors, children can use the weighing scales to weigh different sized vegetables. This means that children are learning about mathematical concepts through play.

Good use is made of props to further promote children's learning, good behaviour and participation. For instance, staff use props when telling a story. On the day of the inspection, children especially like the tale about five little monkeys and a crocodile. Following the story and after their snack, children spontaneously repeat and recreate the story for themselves using glove puppets. They give a wonderful enactment of the tale using intonation well and virtually repeating the story word for word. Staff extend children's vocabulary through everyday activities. For example, at lunchtime staff encourage children to talk about the carrots they are eating being crunchy and other likes and dislikes. Children are developing their creativity well and are able to express their own ideas through art, music and imaginative play. For example, children have many opportunities to create music. They have easy access to musical instruments, such as drums, tambourines and recorders. Children skilfully and spontaneously beat out tunes on the drums, taking pride in their achievement and in the resulting praise bestowed on them by staff.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are developing an awareness of their own and other cultures through a range of resources and planned activities. For instance, there are attractive photographs and pictures around the room depicting different families from around the world and scenes from a Brazilian carnival. All children are fully engaged at tasting time when they talk about different fruits and where they grow. Children are engrossed as the manager talks about the country she was brought up in with examples of what the weather is like and why some fruit is able to grow there and not here. This provides a good comparison for children as they talk about the differences between Brazil and the country in which they live. On other occasions children learn, alongside older children attending the adjoining school, about food traditions in India or China. This encourages children to feel confident and helps them develop a positive attitude towards diversity.

Children are confident and happy and the staff clearly value children's individuality. All children are included in activities thereby promoting an inclusive provision. They have the freedom to follow their own learning agendas as activities are not too adult-led. This good balance leads to good levels of self-esteem and secure children. Children receive constant recognition for their achievements and good actions through the praise and encouragement given to them by staff, which promotes the caring and nurturing environment they all enjoy. For example, children

receive abundant praise when they score a goal whilst playing basketball. They smile widely demonstrating their pleasure.

Children behave very well. Respect for others is fostered throughout the setting. Children show a willingness to take turns and understand the need to co-operate with each other to enable them to play and work together harmoniously. On one occasion at the inspection a child picked up a piece of paper for another child without being prompted. The second child thanked the first for their considerate behaviour. Children interact very well with each other and adults. For instance, at the inspection, two children worked in harmony on interlocking large floor puzzle pieces. Their imagination was inspired as they worked together chattering throughout with their ideas. Children's spiritual, moral social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children are valued as individuals as information is obtained from parents regarding their personal development and welfare. Staff are fully aware of all children's care and educational needs. This ensures that children's well-being is promoted on a daily basis. Parents are fully informed about the care and nursery education provided. For instance, a well presented prospectus details all aspects of nursery life. Clear policies and procedures are readily available and the use of newsletters and well positioned noticeboards provide information about activities and events. Opportunities are available for parents to discuss their children's progress formally and informally. This means children's needs are recognised and met.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from a happy, well organised setting. The daily routine enables children to undertake a balanced range of stimulating play and learning opportunities both indoors and outside. Children can access their play materials easily, due to the effective organisation of resources. All activities are well prepared by staff, allowing children to enjoy and take part in all that is available to them. For example, they have good opportunities to select resources of their own choosing, become fully involved in free flow play and participate in planned focused activities.

The conscientious staff team work very well together and are committed to updating and developing their knowledge and skills, in order to provide children with high standards of care and education. Robust recruitment procedures are in place to ensure all staff undergo appropriate vetting procedures before they work unsupervised with children. All legally required documentation, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being, is in place and regularly reviewed. All children's records are stored confidentially and securely. Policies and procedures work well in practice which ensures the efficient and safe management of the setting.

Leadership and management are good. Trustees and leaders have a clear vision for care and education with a strong focus on personal development and achievement of all children. Trustees, management and staff work closely together to ensure children make good progress towards the early learning goals and are developing positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning. The trustees have set clear directions, leading to improvements in the organisation and outcomes for children. The provision is well managed and monitored with clear systems in place for management and staff to thoroughly evaluate the service provided. This reinforces the commitment to creating a rich learning environment for all children.

The setting maintains strong links with the adjoining school. This is of great benefit to children as they make the transition from pre-school. For example, there are visits between the school and the pre-school each summer term. Each pre-school child moving to the school in the autumn term enjoys the privilege of having a buddy within the school. These opportunities help children become familiar with the school environment and thereby settle more easily.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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):

- Review procedures for recording accidents to make sure children's welfare is protected and review hand washing and nappy changing procedures to make sure good hygiene standards are always maintained
- Review risk assessments to make sure children can safely use the computer and fast wheeled resources such as bikes and scooters

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):

- review planning to make sure children's individual interests are linked and observations are used to plan for children's next steps in learning.

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