

# Little Rascals Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY290553
<b>Inspection date</b>	10/03/2009
<b>Inspector</b>	Sally Ann Smith

<b>Setting address</b>	Ground Floor, Print House, Northgate, Aldridge, Walsall, West Midlands, WS9 8TH
<b>Telephone number</b>	01922 455060
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Type of setting</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

## **Description of the setting**

Little Rascals Day Nursery was registered in 2004. It operates from a single storey building in Aldridge. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outdoor play. The nursery opens each weekday for 51 weeks of the year and sessions are from 07.30 to 18.30.

A maximum of 62 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 94 children aged from birth to under eight years on roll who attend on a full or part-time basis. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

There are 32 members of staff, 23 of whom have early years qualifications to at least NVQ level 2 and six members of staff working towards a recognised qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## **Overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding. Children follow their own interests and also have access to a wide range of stimulating and imaginatively planned activities which supports their welfare, learning and development well. Their individual needs are exceptionally well fostered as staff establish excellent partnerships with parents and others. Extremely effective processes are in place to monitor and evaluate the setting and target specific areas for improvement which are continuous and ongoing.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- develop further children's awareness of languages and writing systems other than English and opportunities to see signs and labels that take into account children's different home backgrounds and cultures.

## **The leadership and management of the early years provision**

The setting continually strives for improvement and has exceptionally high aspirations for the quality of care and learning it provides for children. Practice is regularly evaluated to ensure that staff are focused on meeting the needs of all children. Self-evaluation considers the views of staff, parents and children in identifying areas for ongoing improvement. The setting listens to the views of children and promptly responds to their suggestions wherever possible. Significant improvements have been made since the last inspection, particularly in the area of outdoor play which provides wonderfully stimulating play opportunities for children. However, opportunities are sometimes missed for children to develop awareness of

languages and writing systems other than English or to see signs and labels that take into account children's different home backgrounds and cultures.

The managers are very proactive in supporting all staff with regard to training and getting the absolute best out of them in terms of utilising their skills. A wealth of training both external and 'in house' is used to enhance staff's knowledge and understanding in all areas of child development. As a result many staff are qualified to NVQ level 4 or above. Staff visit centres of excellence and are inspired to develop their practice. They reflect on their own practice in addition to exploring how the environment and organisation impacts on children's behaviour. Staff have observed that by making small changes there is a significant impact on the way children behave. It has also helped to plan for individual children's learning. For example, some children do not sit well at circle time so they receive individual support from staff. The area Special Educational Needs Coordinator is so impressed by this scheme that it is shared with other professionals as best practice. Staff recognise that boys have different learning styles so planning takes this into account so that their development is excellently fostered, for example, through 'super heroes' topics.

Those in charge value staff's contributions and recognise their commitment in ensuring the setting runs smoothly and practice is of a consistently high standard. They work very effectively to ensure that the routines are seamless and children are very happy and secure. They are aware of their roles and each have their own responsibilities to ensure that children's welfare and learning needs are promoted well. They deploy themselves very effectively to ensure that children are interested in their play. Staff have an excellent understanding of the setting's policies and procedures and implement these effectively. Children benefit from a cohesive staff team who are highly motivated, enthusiastic and very committed to providing a stimulating environment for the children. The staff work with the utmost professionalism at all times.

Staff go to considerable lengths to establish positive partnerships with parents and as a result this is a key strength of the setting. Parents receive comprehensive information about all aspects of their child's welfare, learning and development. Their views and opinions are sought and incorporated into the routine and planning so that the individual needs of children are met. Questionnaires, surveys and consultation groups provide further opportunities for parents to put forward suggestions. These are always acknowledged by staff even if they are not feasible at the time. Parents receive weekly information about how they can support and consolidate their child's learning at home. Parents are encouraged to share 'wow' moments of something special their child has achieved and staff are developing systems to display these on notice boards around the nursery. Excellent systems are in place to share information with other settings and ensure consistency for children's learning and development.

Policies and procedures are comprehensive and detailed to ensure that all the relevant criteria have been met so that they effectively promote children's welfare. Documentation is comprehensive, detailed and well organised and a full range of policies is available for parents to view in the main entrance. Daily checks are undertaken of all areas used by the children to minimise any potential hazards and

these further inform comprehensive monthly risk assessments. Staff are very proactive in taking appropriate action ensuring children's safety is paramount. Effective procedures are in place for emergency evacuation and those children old enough confidently discuss how they exit the building and where to assemble. Staff knowledge of safeguarding procedures is good and they are familiar with potential signs of abuse and know how to report concerns appropriately.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

Staff have an excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements and ensure that these are firmly embedded in daily routines and practice. They instinctively exploit learning opportunities across all areas of learning throughout the activities as they develop to ensure all children reach their full potential. They use schemata to organise each child's current knowledge and provide a framework for their future understanding and learning. Children are given time to complete tasks, particularly when they are fully engrossed and absorbed in their play. This means that the routine is very flexible in all rooms to respond to children's interests. Activities are very much led by the children themselves and they are fully encouraged to develop their critical thinking and creativity. Whilst playing with cars a child decides he wants to make a road. Staff ask him to consider what a road looks like and the child then proceeds to get some black paper, lay it along the floor and chalk white lines down the middle. As his play progresses he creates car parks and car parking bays. Some children show a real interest in cars so staff take them to visit a local garage. Whilst continuing with the transport theme, older children thoroughly enjoy a trip to Birmingham airport, travelling by bus and then mono-rail to reach their destination.

Children develop excellent communication skills as staff engage with them, ask lots of open-ended questions and listen intently to what they have to say. Babies and younger children have lots of eye contact with staff who respond to their gurgles and early attempts to form words. Older children take turns to take Teddy home and on his return his adventures are told to the other children. A 'special occasion' book enables children to talk about significant events such as birthdays, new pets, holidays and other family events. At registration, children talk about the importance of this and why it needs to be done. They know that it is so they know who is present in case there is a fire. Children are asked to consider whether it is morning or afternoon and why this may be. They know it is morning 'cos we've just had our breakfast' or 'we've just got up' whilst one child says 'It's before 12.00'. All children confidently use Makaton to say good morning, signing appropriately. A visit from the fire service proves very popular and children listen intently as the commanding officer discusses the importance of keeping safe and not playing with matches. Great fun is had as children use the hoses to squirt water and wear the firemen's hats. The firemen are so impressed with the children's behaviour and the quality of questions the children asked during their visit that they write a letter to the children to tell them.

Children use a variety of materials, painting and printing techniques to develop their creativity and imagination. There is a wealth of art and craft materials to choose from. Children adore being able to make their own mixtures which include

a variety of ingredients such as shaving foam, lentils, kidney beans and sand. Children spend a great deal of time creating their concoctions and concentrate hard as they mix their ingredients together. They use large bowls for their creations and some children choose to transfer the mixture into cups and plates for a tea party. Other children take theirs in cups to the den where they sit and have a picnic whilst looking at books. They are completely able to develop their own train of thought without any intervention from staff. This also applies to some cooking activities where children use any edible ingredients of their choice to make a cake. These are put into the oven to cook and then taken home for all to enjoy! Younger children also explore with a variety of messy play, covering themselves in the process but thoroughly enjoying themselves. Children enjoy dressing up and on occasions are given money to spend at the local charity shop in order to replenish their dressing up box. They return with an array of old shoes, hats and ties which they enthusiastically try on.

Excellent use is made of the outdoor play area which is continually evolving and developing. Staff have included some inspirational and innovative ideas to engage children's interest. A water feature with various taps, tubing and an old toilet cistern which the children can flush provides lots of play and learning opportunities. Children plant and grow their own fruit and vegetables in hanging baskets and plant flowers in the borders. They learn how to make compost which in turn feeds their plants and use water from the water butt to give their plants a drink. Tree stumps are used to build and construct with or as balancing beams. A large wall mounted chalk board and paint board enable children to develop their mark making skills. Many of the resources used inside are replicated outside and children play in all weathers. For example, in the snow, children wrap up warm and have great fun squirting various food colouring into the snow to make lots of colourful patterns. In continuing with the outdoor theme, children visit the local forest where they are met by the warden. They go on bug hunts, look for different birds and follow animal tracks. Some children go looking for tigers. They are shown different wooden signs which give direction and attempt to make their own signs using sticks. They learn that this is a different method of communication.

Healthy and nutritious meals are freshly prepared daily and menus are varied and extensive to cater for all tastes. Ingenious methods are used to encourage children to eat different foods. All kinds of festivals and religious events are celebrated along with days to recognise the culinary specialities from different countries such as the Caribbean. St Patrick's Day sees children making Shamrock biscuits for snack, whilst having Irish stew and soda bread for lunch. The children regularly eat fresh fruit, yoghurts and wonderful home-made cakes and sponges to ensure children also have adequate carbohydrates. Children know why they need to wash their hands before they eat their lunch. They learn that germs can be transferred to food and make them poorly. Stories, role play and regular discussions ensure children know how to stay healthy and safe.

Children's behaviour is exemplary and effective systems are in place to manage challenging behaviour. Children are polite, courteous and respond extremely well to staff direction when required. All children have an enormous variety of exciting learning experiences and opportunities which develop skills that contribute to their future economic well-being. They are excited, motivated and very eager to learn.

Activities are approached with great enthusiasm, gusto and sheer delight by the children.

## Annex A: record of inspection judgements

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	1
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	1

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	1
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1

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## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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