

Denim Outdoors at Ragley

Inspection report for early years provision

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Type of setting 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 report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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

Denim Outdoors at Ragley is one of seven out of school settings run by Polkadot Nurseries Limited. It opened in 2008 and operates from one main room and a number of outdoor and indoor classrooms within the grounds of a stately home close to Alcester and Stratford in Warwickshire. The holiday club is open each weekday from 08.30 to 18.00 during most school holidays. Children have access to a wide variety of outdoor play areas and parkland.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 42 children may attend the holiday club at any one time. There are currently six children aged from four to five years on roll. The holiday club also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties. There is clear access to the various indoor and outdoor facilities within the site, with ramps, lifts and disabled facilities provided.

Four members of staff work within the setting. Two hold appropriate early years qualifications, while two are working towards a teaching qualification. The manager is a qualified teacher and is Forest School trained.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding. Children make excellent progress towards the early learning goals in relation to their starting points, capabilities and interests. Staff offer exciting and challenging opportunities for boys as well as girls to equally experience the challenge of problem solving, making decisions and thinking critically within a unique, rich learning environment. Extensive steps are taken to safeguard children and their welfare is promoted to an exemplary level. Those in charge have a clear vision for high quality provision and staff work collaboratively with parents and others to ensure that all children's experiences are both positive and rewarding. Self-evaluation lies at the heart of the setting's success, with extensive reflection and forward thinking ensuring that the action plans made for improvements are effectively implemented.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to develop the opportunities for outdoor mark making.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting is exceptional and is the result of close collaboration between a well established childcare provider and the Ragley Hall Estate. Although, the club has

only recently opened, the setting is one of seven similar out of school facilities run by the same provider and so benefits from the sharing of expertise, resources and additional staff when necessary. This ensures that staff are well supported in their roles and are helped to consider new ways of working. Continual improvements are made based on best practice, new initiatives and the needs of children and self-evaluation is used to best effect in providing outstanding outcomes for children that enhance their future potential and learning. The manager uses her extensive knowledge of teaching, Forest School activities and outdoor learning to develop new initiatives for the group and detailed information about children is gained prior to opening periods. Staff have fully embraced all aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are respectful, set clear boundaries for children's behaviour and actions and allow children the freedom to choose how they want to spend their time during the school holidays.

Safety and safeguarding is given an exceptionally high priority. Staff are vigilant and aware of the location of all children and other staff at all times and particularly when children are outside and in areas used by the public. Employment and checking procedures are extremely thorough and risk assessments and security arrangements are maintained to the highest level. Children feel valued because they are treated as individuals, are consistently listened to and their contributions are appreciated. Morning planning meetings allow children to make close friendships and key person groups are organised to reflect the children's individual backgrounds, ages, abilities and interests. Clear rules and expectations provide the basis for children to learn to respect each other and the environment and they see a variety of positive images through photographs, displays and resources. Arrangements for supporting children with additional needs are exceptional. Careful planning, collaboration and the sharing of information enables staff to adapt activities and teaching styles so that challenge is still offered, but in small steps and within the scope and ability of the child. From the outset, strong relationships are established with children's families and other professionals so that there is effective continuity and sharing of information about children before they start at the club. Flexible attitudes, policies and everyday practices are extemporary in promoting children's welfare, while careful tracking of children's progress and development promote inclusion and ensures all aspects of children's learning and development needs are met with success.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

All aspects of children's learning and development are promoted to an outstanding level so that they gain enormous satisfaction in learning and practising a wealth of new skills. Children thrive and are excited by the exceptional learning environment that provides them with a wonderful mix of challenging and exciting opportunities set within a historic stately home and an idyllic rural landscape. Each child is allocated a key person who ensures they are safe, making friends and having fun and the youngest children benefit from learning and playing alongside their older friends. Staff use observation and assessments extremely well to analyse the progress the four and five year-olds are making, link these to the early learning goals and incorporate both the needs and views of individual children into planning future activities. Records of achievements are provided for each child in pictorial,

electronic and written form so that at the end of the holidays, these assessments can be shared with the child's parents and school teachers.

Staff are extremely skilled in knowing how to unlock children's potential. They give them opportunities to develop trust and autonomy, embrace new challenges, take risks and act with initiative. For example, children learnt fencing skills from a qualified professional, toasted marshmallow over an open camp fire, made dens and discovered the joys of pond dipping. Children are developing exceptional social and life skills as they plan, learn to take responsibility for their own safety and health and are given lots of choice over how they can best spend their time. They build positive friendships and strong communication skills as they interact with others, negotiate and plan. They listen carefully to guidance on how to maintain their own safety in the adventure playground and have extensive conversations with adults and each other. Children use their early writing skills to make badges, draw and colour, although the opportunities for children to make marks while outside are less well developed. Four and five year-olds use their developing mathematical ideas to solve practical problems such as working out which pieces fit together on large scale construction kits or finding the number on the water bottles that tells them which is their drink. Children learn to appreciate, respect and care for living things as they interact, watch and explore the wide range of nature around them. They investigate in ponds and woodlands and learn about the cause and consequences of fascinating activities such as making pulleys and buggies.

There is a high emphasis placed on using the outdoor environment to promote children's learning and Forest School activities, walking in the woods, rolling down hills and climbing trees are all part of children's everyday experiences. An adventure playground provides challenge as children climb, use rope bridges, slide or test themselves in the maze. Children love being creative both indoors and outside. There is a sculpture trail to follow and this helps them to gain ideas for creating their own environmental art work using logs and natural materials taken from the surrounding woods and parklands. They dress up and sometimes make up their own plays for the entertainment of their parents. A true partnership with parents is developed as they talk to staff at arrival and collection times, discuss information about their children's needs and achievements and share in the holiday club experience during open afternoons.

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

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

Leadership and management

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

Quality and standards

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

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

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

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

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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.