

# The Rocking Horse Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY366697
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<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).

## Description of the setting

The Rocking Horse Nursery opened in May 2008. It is a privately owned Nursery which is located in a quiet residential street in Finchley Central. The provision operates from a semi-detached Edwardian house which has been fully converted to meet children's needs. The nursery has access to seven base rooms which include a library on the ground floor and a sensory room on the first floor which has been designed for the youngest children in attendance. All children have access to a large secure outside play area. The nursery serves the local and surrounding community. It is open all year round offering both full and part-time places to children. The provision is open from 07:45 am until 18:15 pm each weekday.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register to provide care for a maximum of 56 children aged from birth to five years, of these 24 children may be under two years, and of these 9 may be under one year at any one time. The nursery provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds. There are currently 86 children aged from six months to under five years on roll. There are 22 members of permanent staff working with the children of these 19 have early years qualifications and three staff are working towards an early years qualification. The manager has a Level 4 qualification and is due to complete her early years foundation degree this summer.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Children are making excellent progress in their learning and development as they independently access a bright and stimulating environment. There is a strong focus on valuing and respecting the uniqueness of each child which can be demonstrated through the personalised learning and assessment processes in place to monitor and plan for their individual progress. This coupled with the successful partnerships that have been established with parents support staff in providing continuity of care for children. There are many positive policies and procedures in place to promote children's welfare, the majority of which are effective in monitoring their safety. The provision has an enthusiastic approach to continuous improvement which is demonstrated within their ability to self-evaluate their practices.

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

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop further risk assessments to ensure that they include all resources within the garden, this refers to children's photographs that are displayed with the use of staples.

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

Children are cared for by an experienced and well-qualified team of staff. Although the provision has only been established for just over a year, the owner has worked extremely hard to ensure that she has a committed and motivated workforce. Staff clearly values the many opportunities to update and develop their knowledge and skills which is evidenced within their attendance at many ongoing training courses. The owner and her new manager demonstrate a common sense of purpose with regards to providing inclusive good quality care and education for children. They have recently worked on improving planning and assessment systems within the nursery to ensure that these are more personalised to individual children's needs. They have signed up to many positive schemes such as the 'Happy Project, Change four Life and the Traffic Club, all of which help to promote better health and well-being outcomes for children. Following a significant event within the nursery last year the provision has recently strengthened its procedures to ensure that Ofsted are kept abreast of all required information. Consequently they are continually reviewing their practices to bring about improvements.

There are robust recruitment and vetting procedures in place to ensure that all staff have the required skills and are deemed suitable to work with children. The provision's safeguarding policy is effectively implemented within staff induction training. The staff team demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and of their responsibility to work in partnership with parents and outside agencies to protect children from potential harm or neglect. The provision have in place a comprehensive range of records, policies and procedures that are required for the safe and efficient management of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Risk assessments are in place for all areas of the nursery alongside effective procedures to be implemented when taking children out of the nursery on trips and on local outings. However, risk assessments do not currently take account of the way photographs are displayed in the garden area. Children love to observe themselves and their peers in these photographs, however, little ones also like to pull these off the wall which results in staples sticking out and posing a potential hazard.

Children benefit from a well-organised child-friendly environment where they are able to independently access an excellent range of resources which are suitable to their age and stage of development. Older children have good opportunities to move freely from their classrooms to the outside play area as the nursery promotes free-flow access. The staff team are well-deployed ensuring that children receive effective support and attention not only to keep them safe but to ensure that they have plenty of challenges and experiences throughout their day.

The provision has established excellent partnerships with parents who ensure a regular two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise between all partners involved with children's overall care, and learning and development. Although there are no children in attendance with learning difficulties and/or disabilities the provision has established positive liaisons with outside professionals, consequently systems to seek advice and support are already in place. Parents are provided with

high quality information about the early years setting and the curriculum followed. They have a bright and informative notice board in the main entrance along with a suggestion box where they can bring forward any ideas to the staff team. Regular newsletters keep them abreast of what their children have been doing alongside plans for the future. Open evenings are another avenue where parents are invited to come in and talk to their child's key worker. Through discussion and parental questionnaires it is evident that parents are extremely happy with the care and education their children receive. Parents' comments include: 'I am so happy with the nursery, the staff give excellent feedback about my child's day, what he has eaten and what activities he has enjoyed. They have even chased me out of the nursery because they wanted to tell me something special he had done that day' and 'I love this nursery it is so inclusive in that they value all the children. I am really impressed with the web cam access so I can see my daughter each day and see what she is up to.'

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

The staff team demonstrate a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. Staff plan an exciting and stimulating range of activities and experiences for children which clearly motivates them to learn. Individualised planning is geared around their abilities and interests whilst ongoing assessments map children progress and highlight their future learning opportunities. Staff are skilful at following children's interests and sensitively extend their learning in a natural way. For example, when children are delighted to find a snail in the garden, staff share in their enthusiasm and use this as an opportunity to discuss where snails live and what they like to eat. When this experience is fed back to the manager she too is excited to extend children's learning as she brings out planning materials which can be used to extend children's knowledge and understanding of the habitats of snails. Children have extensive opportunities to learn about nature first hand as they spend large amounts of time in the outside environment. Children have a designated digging area and help to take care of the colourful plants in the garden.

Children are extremely happy and busy within the nursery; they are thrilled to participate in creative activities both out in the garden and within their own rooms. Painting, mark-making, water, sand and cornflour are all very popular pursuits. Staff sit with the children at their level so that they can fully engage and support children's exploration. For example, they inspire children to describe how the cornflour feels as this slips through their fingers. They allow children to explore with all their senses and making a mess is seen as fun rather than a hindrance. Children confidently communicate their feelings and their obvious enjoyment of this experience as they stay on task for extensive periods of time. The garden is a hive of activity as children develop their muscles and coordination skills as they climb, run and jump with confidence. Further challenges are offered when staff create obstacle courses and encourage children to participate in races. Babies also enjoy the garden as they have their own designated area where they can play safely. Their physical skills are further promoted through weekly Gymboree sessions where they learn to move their bodies to music, and enjoy singing and dancing sessions. Consequently children have excellent opportunities to develop

their physical skills.

Children are cared for in a rich and inclusive learning environment. All children are fully included in activities regardless of their abilities. For example, a member of staff is playing an alphabet bingo game with a couple of older children; the aim of the activity is for them to learn their letters by sight and by sound. It is evident that a younger child wants to join in as she pulls out a chair and sits at the table pointing to the bingo card and counters. The adult immediately responds by giving the child the relevant resources and offers her the opportunity to spin the spinner which depicts the letter the children need to find. The younger child is delighted to be of assistance and feels included although it is clear that she cannot play at the same level as her peers. Weekly Spanish lessons are also inclusive; older children are making impressive inroads in developing their language skills whilst little ones enjoy moving their bodies to the songs that are sung in Spanish. The teaching not only focuses on learning Spanish, but also on learning all aspects of the early learning goals as these are successfully implemented within the lessons. One example is how children must not only know their colours in Spanish but that they must also find these on a large mat and then proceed to either jump on the colour or put their hand or head on the appropriate colour. Instructions are all in Spanish, children demonstrate great skills in playing this game not only in their knowledge but also in their physical skills.

Children have considerable opportunities to problem solve as they enjoy building with a variety of construction resources in the garden. Younger children are confident to build towers with bricks and are encouraged to count with support how many they have achieved. Older children are able to complete complex puzzles with growing confidence. Planned cooking activities further support children's opportunities to explore numbers, weight, capacity and measurement as they make pizzas, sandwiches and fruit salads for their tea. Children are learning superb social skills as they learn to work cooperatively and to take turns when playing games. Staff present children with positive role-models and clearly treat their charges with respect. In return staff have high expectations for children's behaviour. The impact is that children are polite and display exemplary behaviour.

Children's welfare is promoted through many positive practices within their daily routines. They are developing important personal hygiene skills as they brush their teeth after lunch and learn why this is important to their good health. They are cared for in a clean and comfortable environment, where good attention is given to their ability to eat and sleep in comfort. Children are provided with wholesome and nutritious meals, all special dietary requirements are met and vegetarian options are available everyday. Children eat extremely well and confidently request for more food when they have finished. They are delighted to take on the responsibility of serving their own food at lunch times; this is made possible as food is brought out on small serving trays which support them to be independent. Children remain well-hydrated throughout the day as they have access to drinking water at all times, whilst babies are offered regular refreshments. Children are developing a good knowledge and understanding of how to keep safe, for example, they participate in regular evacuation drills of the building and learn why this is important. Through topics and visits from outside professionals such as the police, children learn about the importance of personal safety. Children are

supported to feel a strong sense of belonging within this setting. Their art work and photographs of themselves are displayed around the building. There is a strong focus on valuing children's home backgrounds and their individual cultures. This is further supported by good quality resources which promote a positive approach towards diversity and inclusion. Overall, the children are developing many outstanding learning and development skills which set secure foundations for their future learning.

## 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>	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	2
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?	2

### 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>	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
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?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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