

Rigg Farm Montessori Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Rachael Flesher

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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.

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Description of the setting

Rigg Farm Montessori Nursery was registered in 1994. It is privately owned and is set in a purpose-built, single storey extension of a farm house in the rural village of Beckwithshaw near Harrogate. The nursery serves the families within the local community and surrounding villages and towns. Children have use of a large room and there are cloakroom and toileting facilities in an adjoining area. Children have access to a very large outdoor play area, including a field, and extensive gardens with some areas housing farm animals which are cared for by the staff and children.

The nursery is open weekdays, term time only, between the hours of 9.15am and 4.00pm. Children attend on a full and part-time basis. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register to care for 18 children aged two and a half to five years. The nursery is also registered on the Childcare Register to provide care to 18 children up to the age of eight years during the summer scheme which runs for two weeks in the school holidays. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four. There are currently 56 children on roll and the nursery support children with English as an additional language.

There are six members of staff, including the provider who is the manager of the nursery. The manager has an honours degree and a level 4 Montessori International Diploma. The majority of the other staff members hold a Montessori qualification to Level 3 or above.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The manager has an ambition for excellence and a clear vision for the nursery, through her passion for the Montessori approach to education, the primary goal being, to support each child to reach their full potential in all areas of life. This is shared by all staff who work extremely effectively as team, placing the child at the heart of the nursery, to successfully achieve this goal. As a result, all children make exceptional progress in their learning and development and achieve outstanding outcomes. Strong leadership and links with the local community, parents and other professionals coupled with the teams engagement in reflective practice and robust planning ensures children's individual needs are fully met, their safety assured and their welfare promoted.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- reappraising systems for engaging with parents by ensuring they are fully

informed of policies and procedures and their views are sought on all aspects of the provision and practice

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager and staff place the highest priority to safeguarding children. All the required checks have been carried out to ensure staff are suitable to work with children and a clear recruitment and induction procedure is in place. The designated staff member responsible for child protection regularly accesses up to date training and information and cascades this to the team to ensure all are fully informed. As a result, staff are confident with the procedures to follow if they had concerns about a child. Extremely organised records, policies and procedures required for the safe and efficient management of the Early Years Foundation Stage underpin this exemplary provision. These are implemented, regularly reviewed and shared with staff to ensure the welfare and well-being of the children. Many of these are explained to parents at the initial visit and are available to view upon request. Children are cared for in an extremely safe and stimulating environment, where risks are fully assessed and minimised whilst enabling children to actively learn how to keep themselves safe and take risks. Highly effective steps are taken to promote children's good health and well-being, and prevent the spread of infection through extremely effective hygiene procedures which children quickly learn to adopt.

Highly positive relationships are established with parents and generally effective communication systems in place. They are kept very well informed of their child's achievements, well-being and development and staff help parents to support their children's learning at home. The nursery is highly committed to working in partnerships with other providers and external agencies and takes a lead role in establishing effective working relationships. This ensures children receive the support they need, particularly during times of transition and promotes continuity of their learning and care.

Extensive support for continuous professional development of all the staff is provided by the manager to ensure all are highly qualified and skilled. The manager and staff have an ambitious vision and strive for improvement to provide the highest quality care and education. The provision and outcomes for children is closely monitored through regular and robust self-evaluation and reflective practice. This includes seeking the views of the children and parents on particular areas, and using external perspectives for example Ofsted, the local authority and other providers. From this, clear identification of targets for further improvement are identified and addressed and the impact closely monitored to ensure all children's welfare needs are met and all achieve as well as the can.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

The exceptional quality of the provision for children's welfare, learning and development is highly successful in promoting the outcomes for children. Children are actively learning how to be healthy, keep themselves safe and make a positive contribution through the interesting and exciting play and learning opportunities provided. They help to grow and harvest their own produce in the vegetable patch and collect freshly laid eggs from the chickens. Children are encouraged to take safe risks, and enjoy climbing trees, balancing on a bench as they reach to pour water down the bamboo piping and use window polish to clean the windows. At lunch time tables are brought outside and children help to set out the place mats and table decorations. Children and staff sit together to enjoy their healthy packed lunches and each others company in the sunshine and fresh air, waving to the helicopters and aeroplanes that fly overhead. Children have highly developed social skills, exceptional manners, are forming strong friendships and demonstrate high levels of independence. They are extremely confident and are learning exceptional self-care skills. Behaviour is managed very well and children have an excellent understanding of what standards of behaviour are expected and apply these in order to keep themselves and others safe. The setting has an extremely welcoming, warm and calm atmosphere and staff work hard to ensure all children and their families feel valued and included.

Children clearly enjoy their time at the setting and are extremely motivated and interested to learn. The manager and staff have successfully created an enabling, richly-resourced environment, both indoors and outdoors, based on the Montessori principles. Indoors they busy themselves with their work, and move around the setting with purpose, selecting resources and activities that interest them. They show high levels of concentration, determination and ingenuity as they become deeply engrossed in their chosen pursuits, practicing and refining their skills, solving problems and experimenting and investigating outcomes. Staff are highly skilled at knowing when to sit back and let children solve problems or consolidate their learning, and when to step in to provide support. Staff and children engage in highly effective sustained shared thinking, with staff supporting and challenging children's thinking, working together to develop an idea or skill. For example, outdoors a member of staff works with children to scaffold their understanding of where animals live as they draw on the patio with chalks. She skilfully poses questions to promote discussion as they consider where different animals may sleep.

Children have ample opportunity to explore and investigate the outdoors and all available resources are well utilised to extend children's learning. For example, the manager notices a frog on the patio outdoors and brings it inside for the children to observe. Some choose to gently touch it and comment on it feeling cold, others prefer to watch excitedly from a distance. Whilst playing in the garden children find a snail and spend time watching it move on the spade before putting it back in the garden and monitoring where it goes. On another occasion, a parent studying bee keeping came in to talk to the children about how bee's made honey and they explored honeycomb and tasted the honey. Children assist staff to feed the pigs,

goats, chickens and ducks. They are taught that animals need to be cared for every day and in all weathers and are keen to help to do this. They are also actively learning how to sustain the environment for example learning about composting.

All planning starts with ongoing information from parents and by observing each child in order to understand and consider their unique skills and abilities. Staff make systematic observations and assessments of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles and use this information to identify learning priorities. They carefully plan their next steps to ensure they are mastering the particular skills and knowledge to enable them to move forward whilst ensuring they remain excited and motivated to learn. Records are used effectively to successfully monitor children's progress through the Montessori stages and towards the early learning goals. These records clearly demonstrate the exceptional progress all children are making in relation to their capabilities.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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

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