

Monkey Puzzle Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY390728

Inspection date

09/11/2009

Inspector

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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

Monkey Puzzle Day Nursery at Potten End was registered in May 2009 with the current owners although it has been a nursery since January 2003. The nursery forms part of a larger Monkey Puzzle Day Nurseries Ltd group but is owned and run under a license to trade as Monkey Puzzle by Muddy Puddles Childcare Ltd. The provision is situated in a rural location near Potten End village, close to Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire. It serves the local and wider community.

The nursery operates from two single-storey converted barns which are separated by a car park. Part of an additional barn is also included in the registration and is used as a staff room and by older children who attend the Holiday Club. Secure outside play areas are provided and staff accompany children on local rural walks in the immediate proximity.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. The provision is registered to care for a maximum of 72 children under eight years at any one time, of which no more than 62 may be in the early years age range. Children can attend a variety of sessions including full day care and the nursery offers a holiday club for children aged from five to under eight years during some school holidays. The nursery currently has 82 children in the early years age group on roll and of these 16 receive government funding for early years education. There are 11 children in the later years age group on roll.

Monkey Puzzle Day Nursery is able to support children who have English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 6.30pm. It operates for 51 weeks of the year, closing only for Christmas and two inset days, one in March and one in October. The provision currently employs 18 staff who work directly with the children, the majority of whom hold appropriate early years childcare qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The setting provides very effectively for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Partnerships with parents and carers ensure children's individual needs are met and an inclusive and welcoming environment is provided to all. A committed staff team effectively implement the setting's policies and procedures to ensure children are safe and their welfare is fully protected. Children's learning and development is promoted and children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. The provision has a very positive attitude to improvement and is aware of their key strengths and some of the areas needing further development. Systems to effectively monitor the quality of the service offered and to ensure continued improvement are in the early stages of development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further a quality improvement process, such as self-evaluation, to monitor and extend effective practice and ensure continued improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Arrangements for safeguarding children are robust and children's welfare is protected because highly effective procedures are in place to safeguard children. For example, an informative safeguarding policy is available along with child protection publications. Staff have a secure knowledge of safeguarding procedures as they regularly update their knowledge through training and there are two designated members of staff responsible for ensuring the correct procedures are followed if any of the staff team did have a concern. Children are safeguarded because systematic recruitment and vetting procedures ensure staff are suitable. Detailed risk assessments ensure the environment is safe and any potential hazards are identified and minimised immediately. Staff ensure children's safety and well-being are protected. For example, children are closely supervised and the security of the premises ensures no unauthorised person can gain access and that children cannot leave unsupervised.

Staff are guided by a strong management team who have a clear vision for the setting and strive for continuous improvement. Through regularly reviewing and checking how well plans and policies are implemented they secure consistency and effectively stimulate the enthusiasm and support of staff. Effective systems, such as staff induction and regular staff meetings ensure staff are clear on their roles and responsibilities. Consequently, they work well together as a team which has a positive impact on outcomes for children. Staff appraisals identify staff training needs and continuous professional development is encouraged with staff regularly updating their knowledge through attending appropriate courses. This is the settings first inspection since registration and the whole staff team are committed to fully implementing the EYFS. They have worked hard to develop a secure knowledge and understanding of the framework and this is reflected in their practice. The setting is aware of its key strengths and the areas they wish to develop further and some processes are in place to monitor and assess the quality of the provision. For example, parental feedback is actively sought through the completion of parent questionnaires. A self-evaluation system to reflect on and extend effective practice has been introduced and is in the early stages of development. The setting aims to actively use this as a way of ensuring continued improvement.

All required documentation to ensure the safe and efficient management of the provision is in place and records, policies and procedures are informative and well organised. Good use of space, resources and effective staff deployment ensures an

environment that is safe and fully inclusive. All children and families are valued and included. Children's individual needs are met because staff have developed positive relationships with parents and carers which ensures information is effectively exchanged. For example, a key person system is in operation and daily verbal and written communications with parents and carers ensures children's individual needs are met and children receive continuity in their care. Notice boards and newsletters are other ways used to share information and the setting's policies and procedures are made available to parents. A highly effective settling-in policy is implemented and as a result children are happy and confident in their play and develop a strong sense of belonging as they feel included and welcomed into the nursery. Parents are kept informed of their children's progress and achievements. For example, parents evenings are held and children's development records are shared with parents on a regular basis. The nursery actively promotes equality of opportunity and works closely with parents and others to support and meet the individual needs of children. For example, the setting liaises with other agencies and professionals such as the area special educational needs co-ordinator and speech and language therapists. The setting also has plans to develop links with other early years providers to ensure continuity and to promote the full integration of care and learning.

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

Children's learning and development is promoted and children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff closely monitor children's learning through regularly observing and assessing individual children to identify their progress and achievements over time. Children's individual development folders show how they are progressing and this information is shared with parents. Staff understand that every child is unique and have systems in place, such as an effective key person system, to ensure they work closely with parents to meet children's individual needs. Planning is overall informative and staff use the EYFS framework to plan activities and play experiences. Staff effectively support children in their play and overall create a child-centred environment. Adult-led and child-initiated activities are well balanced to encourage children to be active learners.

The environment is welcoming and children's personal, social and emotional development is fostered and their independence skills encouraged. For example, resources are organised so they are at child height and easily accessible for children which encourages them to make choices. Also, a rolling snack time has recently been introduced and children are able to independently choose when they have their snack. Children have regular opportunities to express themselves creatively and to explore varied materials and media on a daily basis, such as painting, sand, water and play dough. For example, children make patterns with paint, using rollers and their fingers, and enjoy exploring the feel and texture of the paint on their hands. Children have opportunities to experience music and to use their imaginations and listen and respond with enjoyment when listening to stories. Children have regular opportunities to become familiar with the written word. For example, toy boxes are labelled and children's names are on their coat pegs. Writing and drawing materials are easily accessible. Children's physical skills

are fostered with opportunities to exercise planned into the daily routine. Children have access to resources that develop their knowledge and understanding of technology and staff promote a positive awareness of diversity through discussion and some activities. For example, children learn about the wider world and other cultures and religions such as Divali when they made lamps out of salt dough and participated in Rangoli finger painting. Children learn about the local community. For example, for a recent topic called 'People who help us' the police and the fire brigade were invited in. Children develop confidence and understanding in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy with mathematical concepts reinforced through a range of activities which involve numbers, shapes, patterns and problem solving. For example, children's numeracy skills are fostered when singing songs that involve numbers and children learn about volume and quantity when playing with sand and water.

Staff are proactive in implementing some effective strategies to promote and safeguard children's health and well-being. For example, staff ensure high chairs and tables are cleaned thoroughly before and after mealtimes and good hygiene procedures are consistently followed when changing nappies. Consequently, the risk of cross-infection is minimised and children's health is protected. Through discussion and some activities children are learning how to stay healthy and about personal care routines. For example, children learn about good dental hygiene and understand the importance of washing their hands before eating or after going to the toilet. Children are provided with a balanced and nutritious diet with a six week rotating menu in place. Daily menus are displayed and shared with parents. Children are encouraged to try new foods and have regular opportunities to learn about the benefits of healthy eating. For example, they have grown some vegetables such as carrots and sweetcorn and enjoyed a food tasting activity when they were encouraged to taste a variety of different fruits. Children demonstrate a strong sense of security and are confident and self-assured in the setting. Positive relationships between staff, children and parents enable children to feel secure. The environment is safe and children are learning how to keep themselves and others safe. For example, children are sensitively reminded not to run when indoors in case they fall and hurt themselves or others. Children participate in regular fire drills and therefore learn how to stay safe in an emergency. Children behave well with behaviour managed in a positive manner with clear boundaries set by staff. Consistent praise and encouragement from staff ensure children develop high levels of self-esteem. Staff reinforce sharing and respecting each other's feelings and regularly discuss how children's behaviour can have an impact on others. Children are respected and highly valued as individuals and in turn are learning to respect each other's differences and to manage their own behaviour.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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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