

Monkey Puzzle

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY320769
Inspection date 21/09/2009
Inspector Angela Cole

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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 opened in 2006. It operates over three floors of a building close to the centre of Cheltenham in Gloucestershire. The ground floor is occupied by the pre-school children, 'tweenies and toddlers' are based on the middle floor and the baby unit is on the top floor. Children have access to an enclosed, outdoor play area with decking and safety flooring. The nursery is open from 07.30 to 18.30 for 51 weeks of the year, except for Bank Holidays.

The nursery is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 57 children in the early years age range may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 80 children aged from three months to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and a number of children learning English as an additional language.

There are 14 members of staff, of whom two are working towards a qualification and 12 hold appropriate early years qualifications. Of these, two have gained Early Years Professional Status and one has achieved qualified teacher status. The setting provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds and operational links are in place with other early years providers.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The nursery effectively meets the needs of all children through recognising their uniqueness to provide an inclusive, welcoming and caring service. Most aspects of documentation are in place, while well developed knowledge of children's individual needs ensures that many aspects of their welfare and learning are successfully developed, including outstanding skills for the future. The excellent partnership with parents and carers is a key strength while links with other providers and agencies contribute significantly to ensuring that children receive the support they need. The manager and leaders are exceptionally successful in inspiring the staff team to work towards or sustain ambitious targets. Continuous self-evaluation ensures that priorities for future development are identified and acted on, resulting in a service that is responsive to the needs of families.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- consider how to maximise children's independence through routines and access to outdoor learning
- administer non-prescription medication only with the prior written consent of the parents that includes a health reason to do so.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The nursery is well organised to ensure the safety of children. It is effective in helping them to feel safe so that they learn in a welcoming atmosphere that focuses on individual children and their families. Particular emphasis is placed on settling new ones and easing the transition as each becomes ready to move on to the next stage. Safeguarding children is prioritised, for example, through vetting of adults and repeated checks to ensure that staff left in sole charge of children are suitable. Staff receive training in child protection so that any welfare concerns may be identified and responded to appropriately in consultation with their parents. The management takes effective steps so that children are safe indoors and outdoors, and furniture, equipment and toys are suitable. Occasionally, prior written permission is not obtained for non-prescription medication, though parents are always telephoned before this is given. Other records required for safe and efficient management to meet children's needs are well maintained. These include detailed risk assessment that is regularly reviewed with effective action taken to reduce hazards, for example, when children go on outings into the local community.

Staff actively promote equality of opportunity so that all children make good progress in their learning and development. Children's family backgrounds are valued and staff sensitively foster their understanding of differences. The partnership with parents and carers is excellent. When parents first make contact, they are fully informed of the nursery's policies and procedures. Details about the children's progress are then exchanged each day with key persons and shared in learning journeys and the under two's daily diaries. This two-way flow of information ensures that parents are fully informed and involved and that each child's individual needs are well met. The nursery actively seeks parents' views about the provision, for example, through questionnaires, which are fully considered and used to improve the service offered. Parents highly praise the staff for the quality of care they provide for their children.

The nursery deploys its resources well so that all children make good progress in relation to their starting points. The premises are well arranged to provide large, airy playrooms with attractive, suitable resources that are accessible for each age group. Adults are well deployed so that children's personal care is the responsibility of their key persons wherever possible, and senior staff are flexible to provide cover. The management uses ongoing reflective practice to help extend the service offered to children and their families. The adults are highly committed and use a very detailed rolling programme of areas to develop further. For example, the professional development of staff is continually promoted and the nursery has plans to extend the current outdoor area and to use staff/peer evaluations to further enhance their knowledge and skills.

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

Children are well supported to achieve as key staff have, or are gaining, a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. For example, when painting a tree, young children are supported to access paint for themselves and challenged to recall the rough bark on the park trees. Babies are very well supported to develop. This is because responsive staff continually interact and talk with them, following their lead as they play with the wealth of exciting resources, including many 'treasure baskets'. For example, a baby is very interested in shaking a balloon so staff offer a shaker to each child for a highly enjoyable, impromptu music session. The indoor learning environment is made interesting with well labelled, low-level storage of toys, such as small world play and construction. This effectively helps children make very good progress towards the early learning goals. All children have good access to creative play and natural materials as, for example, toddlers eagerly explore soapy water and print shapes in peat with pinecones. Throughout the nursery, there is effective planned, purposeful play and exploration with a supportive balance of child-led and adult-initiated activities. Children are creative and think critically because of the good emphasis on spontaneous learning and following their own interests. For example, children are keen to develop role play based on 'camping', while others are engrossed in a recorded story. During timetabled outdoor play each session, children are active learners, making good use of the defined space with well-maintained equipment and a variety of rotated toys for each age group.

Staff are conscientious and worked hard to closely observe children's play so their needs and interests are included in future planning. Assessment is clearly evidenced and recorded in their learning journals to show children's very good progress towards each early learning goal. Parents are well involved in their children's learning so they can share progress at home. In particular, children gain excellent skills for the future. They hold sustained conversations and develop highly expressive language to tell lengthy stories, for example, about a ship in the night. They are keen to solve problems for themselves, for example, volunteering which are the larger shells and knowing one less in number songs, such as 'Five green bottles'. From a young age, children learn how to operate technological toys so that two-year-olds confidently access computer programs and using these to support their learning. Children are immediately willing to take on responsibilities, including helping to set up activities and preparing snack foods for the others. Older ones are committed to sustaining resources as they separate plastic and paper within their base room and enjoy frequent trips to the recycling banks, while feeding ducks on the way. They are highly prepared for the transition to school as they confidently use a wide range of self-care skills.

Children gain a good understanding of a healthy lifestyle. Babies use ample space to develop their movement skills and have daily fresh air in the garden or walks around the locality; older ones enjoy their times outdoors, including planting vegetables. Freshly prepared snacks and meals are well balanced and take good account of the individual and cultural needs of all babies and children; families who send food are made aware of healthy requirements. Children are cared for in a

well maintained environment where they adopt healthy routines that are suitable to their stage of development and discuss, for example, how and why they wash in clean water. Children gain a good sense of how to keep themselves safe. Babies are often reminded about how to play safely, toddlers gain confidence to take appropriate risks, including frequent negotiating of stairs, and older ones discuss any hazards for risk assessment. Children develop good habits and behaviour appropriate to their own learning needs and to the needs of others. They make firm friends at the nursery and are considerate towards each other and the younger ones, for example, in the shared garden space and at sleep times. From a very young age, children are effectively encouraged to make decisions and choose from the available resources for their own play. They are well supported to learn how to manage their own behaviour as they are polite and explore ways of taking turns and sharing the toys.

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	1
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	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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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	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