

Rathlee Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Michele Anne Villiers

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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

Rathlee Nursery School is run by a private provider and opened in 2007. It operates from several rooms on the ground floor of a two-storey building. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is situated in a residential area of St. Helens, in Merseyside. It is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6pm all year round.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on both parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 36 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 68 children aged from birth to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There are 14 members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least NVQ level 2. The setting provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children make steady progress in their learning, development and welfare because staff provide a variety of challenging activities and have started to suitably monitor their progress. Most safety measures are in place and visitors are closely monitored to ensure unknown persons do not enter the premises. However, playrooms are not always appropriately organised to minimise potential hazards. Partnerships with parents are being established in order to meet the needs of individual children, although parental contribution to self-evaluation has not yet been fully implemented. The provider is keen to maintain continuous improvement and has identified future plans in order to benefit the outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure risk assessments cover all areas and anything with which a child may come into contact, in particular the organisation of stored materials in playrooms and opening doors, that pose a hazard to children
- develop further systems to monitor the children's progress based on initial profiles, and use the information to clearly identify their next steps and plan future activities linked to the early learning goals
- use self-evaluation as a basis of ongoing review to identify areas for improvement and meaningfully involve staff, parents and carers.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a good understanding of child protection issues in order to safeguard children, and follow written policies and procedures should they have concerns about a child. There is a robust recruitment procedure and all staff are vetted prior to working with the children. The premises are secure and staff conduct regular risk assessments. However, the storage of items within playrooms are often untidy with limited space, and files are stored precariously on open shelving, posing a possible risk to children should they fall. Solid doors open into the playrooms with no vision panels, thus posing a risk to children should they be the other side of the door, in particular, the baby room where there is not a safety gate in place to enable staff to leave the door open.

Parents are warmly welcomed into the nursery and information is shared through daily discussion and written documentation. Parent evenings have been organised in the past, along with questionnaires, to obtain parent feedback. Parents speak positively about the nursery and care provided. Staff link with other childcare professionals and are aware of sharing information with other settings that children may attend.

The manager has started to record self-evaluation to monitor her provision and demonstrates a keen commitment to continuous improvement. She has introduced healthier eating, made alterations to the provision to provide extra play space and installed a flat screen monitor for parents to view photographs of their children playing. Staff make use of recycling resources, using disposable items for art and craft activities. An inclusive environment is provided for all children and male childcare staff help to promote positive role-models for children.

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

Staff provide a good balance of play opportunities and written plans identify focused activities, taking into account the children's interests. Children enjoy their play and form close relationships with the staff. Babies and young toddlers receive cuddles and affectionate interaction from the staff. Playrooms are welcoming for children with attractive wall displays and suitable toys and resources. Various textured and tactile toys are available for babies and there is continuous provision of various activities, including construction, art and craft, sand and water.

Children concentrate well to complete tasks and learn to share and take turns. Staff promote their communication and literacy skills, constantly talking and listening to children. Babies and toddlers imitate sounds, making animal noises when staff ask them, 'What does the cow say?' Older children sing the alphabet song and recognise the letter that represents their name. Children enjoy looking at books and listening to stories. They make patterns in sand and practise drawing, helping to foster their emerging writing skills. Staff incorporate number into play and children learn to competently count and begin to recognise numerals displayed

on toy mobile phones and large toy clocks.

The children's imagination is fostered during role-play and they express their emotions through 'Red the Robot' puppet. Some displays and toys represent diversity, such as posters reflecting different cultures and dolls with walking aids, helping children to learn about differences. Children learn to respect and help others and they grow daffodils to raise money for charity. They become aware of information technology, playing with electronic and programmable toys and have access to a computer. Outside, children currently only play in a small section of the garden due to refurbishment. However, they confidently manoeuvre wheeled cars and develop balance and co-ordination on the climbing frame.

Staff monitor the children's progress through observation and record their findings in assessment profiles with identified areas of learning. However, there is not a clear initial profile detailing the children's abilities when they start the nursery and the children's next steps are not clearly identified with links to future planning. During play children learn to keep themselves safe with gentle reminders from the staff to be careful when running around, and they have visits from local services, such as the police and fire fighters. Children adopt healthy eating habits with choices of fresh fruit each day. Their personal hygiene is fostered well and children know when they need to wash their hands. They also learn about dental hygiene, cleaning their teeth after meals, with visits from the dental nurse.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

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	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
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	3

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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