



Office for Standards  
in Education

## NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 219974

DfES Number: 597142

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	05/08/2004
Inspector Name	Jill Hunn

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Rocking Horse Day Nursery
Setting Address	21 Mill Lane Greens Norton Towcester Northamptonshire NN12 8BB

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Miss Victoria Hunt
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## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

### Information about the setting

The Rocking Horse Day Nursery opened in 1997. It operates from purpose built single storey premises in the village of Greens Norton. The nursery serves the local area.

There are currently 64 children on roll. This includes 11 funded three-year-olds and 14 funded four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are no children currently attending with special educational needs, or children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days a week all year round with the exception of bank holidays and a week at Christmas. Sessions are from 8:00 to 18:00.

A total of 17 staff work with the children. Over half the staff have an early years qualification to NVQ level 2 or 3. Five staff are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Northamptonshire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PSLA). The nursery is currently working towards the 'Aiming for Quality' PSLA quality assurance scheme. Senior management are members of the South Northamptonshire Early Years Liaison Group.

## INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

### How effective is the nursery education?

The Rocking Horse Day Nursery provides high quality nursery education which enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff have a secure knowledge of the early learning goals and how young children learn. Planning is clear, linked to the six areas of learning and identifies learning intentions. Short term plans are used flexibly and take account of suggestions from parents. Staff provide an exciting curriculum which captures children's interests and challenges them well across all six areas of learning. Staff develop warm relationships with children and are aware of their individual needs. There are clear routines to the sessions which help children feel secure. Children behave well and are polite. There are suitable systems in place to support children with special educational needs and children who do not speak English as their first language. Staff make very good use of questioning to develop children's thinking skills and help them move on in their learning. They explain things clearly. Staff assess children's learning against the stepping stones and use this information to plan what children should do next.

The leadership and management of the nursery is very good. The owner provides strong leadership and has a clear vision for the nursery. Staff work very well together as a team and are committed to providing a successful educational programme for the children. They review their practice regularly and regard further training and personal development as a priority.

The partnership with parents is very good. A range of good quality written information is available so that parents are aware of the Foundation Stage and how the nursery operates. Parents value being regularly updated about their children's progress. Parents take part in events at the nursery and are given suggestions of how to continue children's learning at home.

### What is being done well?

- Staff consistently praise and encourage children and value them as individuals. They plan sessions with clear routines which help children feel secure. They allow children time and space to explore their own ideas, needs and interests.
- Staff successfully foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the use of the 'kind hearts and helping hands' scheme and by helping children raise money for charities. Children are awarded stickers each week for helping others and for being sensitive to the needs of others, for example, for tidying away after an activity without being asked or for pouring a drink for a younger child at snack time.
- Children use their emerging writing for real purposes. They take orders in the

café on pads, name their own work and write the name of the daily helper on the board. Staff show children how lists are used to find out how many children like the characters in a story and when choosing from the menu in the café.

- Children explore why things happen and how things work with a variety of interesting materials which stimulate their curiosity. They learn about space and what lives under the sea and look at the night sky with a telescope. They observe the change from a liquid to a solid when making jelly and ice cream and investigate why things float and sink.
- The nursery works very effectively with parents to support children's learning. Parents speak very positively about the nursery, the staff and what the children are taught. Parents are regularly updated about their children's progress through play mornings, parents evenings and regular informal discussions. They are encouraged to make comments about their children's progress and future activities that are planned.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- the methods used to incorporate assessments of children's progress and learning styles into the planning.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

Very good progress has been made in implementing the action plan drawn up to address the five key issues raised at the last inspection. Improvements have been made in all areas which have had a positive impact on children's learning.

Specialist staff have been appointed to coordinate the care and education of children who have special educational needs. They have attended training to develop their knowledge of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice and a policy and procedures have been developed by the nursery to support this area. The system for planning future activities has been revised and includes information about grouping children and staff deployment to ensure children are appropriately supported and challenged for focused activities. Assessment records have been developed and are now linked to the stepping stones so that children's progress towards the early learning goals can be judged. This information is discussed at planning meetings and used to plan the next steps in learning for individual children. The curriculum has been developed and activities and resources now include opportunities for children to learn about other cultures and beliefs, and past and present events. The introduction of a computer and programmable toys has enabled children to use technology to support their learning. Further mathematical resources have been purchased, such as jigsaws, games and books to provide opportunities for children to develop an understanding of simple addition and subtraction.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children are very confident and independent. They are interested, excited and keen to learn. Some children persist at activities for periods of time. Children successfully maintain attention and sit quietly when appropriate. They proudly share their achievements with others. Children form strong relationships with adults and peers. They learn to share and are sensitive to the needs of others. Children behave well and are polite.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children speak very confidently and have an interest in new words. They listen attentively and with enjoyment at circle time and eagerly respond to questions and what they have heard. Children successfully link sounds to letters and recognise words and names from cards. They regularly share books. Children attempt writing for different purposes. Some younger children write recognisable letters. Older children write all of their name with some letters correctly formed.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children recognise and regularly use numbers during practical activities. They compare groups of objects. Older children solve simple number problems and explore the concepts of addition and subtraction. Children confidently recognise shapes and investigate the properties of shape using a variety of construction materials. They competently re-create patterns. Children use language to describe position, weight and size and explore capacity as they play with sand and water.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children investigate a variety of interesting objects and materials using all their senses. They build and construct to their own design and use technology to support their learning. Children differentiate between past and present events in their lives. They find out about their environment through a series of visitors and local outings. Children develop an awareness of the wider world. They begin to know about their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children move with confidence, control and coordination. They experiment with different ways of moving and respond to music. They develop new skills as they creep like crabs, dance with ribbons and balance on the obstacle course. Children develop an awareness of the importance of good health. Children use a range of tools and equipment with increasing control to challenge and develop their fine and gross motor skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
<p>Children explore a variety of textures and materials and experiment with mixing colours. They create in two and three dimensions and on a large and small scale. Children sing a repertoire of songs and rhymes. They use musical instruments to tap out rhythms and explore how sounds can be changed. They listen and respond to a range of different styles of music. Children make connections in their learning through a variety of role play situations, such as the café and the travel shop.</p>	

**Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.**

### **OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION**

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

### **WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT**

*There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:*

- There are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- develop the methods used to incorporate assessments of children's individual progress and learning styles into the planning.

*The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.*