



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 136100

DfES Number: 511274

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	16/10/2003
Inspector Name	Dawn Biggers

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	The Rocking Horse Day Nursery
Setting Address	c/o The Grange School Tower Road North Bristol BS30 8XQ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Mrs Julia Davies
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ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and 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 February 1992 and is independently situated within the premises of the Grange School, in Warmley. Mrs Julia Davies is the proprietor and also owner of two other Rocking Horse Nurseries situated in Bristol. The Day Nursery serves the local area.

There are currently 69 children from six months to four years on roll. This includes 12 funded three year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The Day Nursery supports children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The Nursery is open five days a week, most of all year round, except for bank holidays. Sessions are from 08.00 to 18.00. Children attending are grouped into five areas according to their age and stages of development.

Five full time and four part-time staff work with the children. All the staff have early years qualifications. One staff member is currently on a training programme. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. The Nursery has adopted an element of the High Scope approach to learning.

How good is the Day Care?

The Rocking Horse Day Nursery provides good quality care for children.

The staff provide an organised, welcoming and relaxed environment where children feel safe and secure. The staff develop good relationships with the children who appear settled and happy. There is a key worker system in place, who monitors children's development and progress. Children are provided with a varied selection of well maintained toys and equipment for indoor and outdoor play.

The staff encourage and support children's independence and decisions through active learning, which enables them to make choices about their play. The nursery

provides a good range of freshly prepared meals. The staff provide consistent routines for eating, resting, playing and opportunities for physical exercise. The staff promote good health and hygiene practices and develop children's awareness of this. Most aspects of supervision and safety inside and outside are satisfactory.

The children over two years old start to plan the activities with the adult, implement these and then reflect on their experiences. The staff focus on the children's development, age and use themes to help them learn about their environment and themselves.

All children are involved in a wide range of interesting and stimulating activities for inside and outside. The staff manage children's behaviour by being positive in their approach. Staff liaise with parents and other professionals to meet the needs of children who may have special needs.

The staff have good relationships with the parents. They share information about the children and discuss activities and children's achievements regularly. Parents attend reviews about children's progress. Parents are given clear guidance about the care provided to children through discussion, documentation and the sharing of policies and procedures which are of a good standard. These continue to be updated and reviewed.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection, the Day Nursery agreed to provide evidence that staff have been vetted to ensure their suitability. Individual staff files are now available with evidence of vetting to ensure their suitability.

What is being done well?

- The staff provide many opportunities for children to make choices about their play. They also make excellent use of the garden to enable children to explore, investigate and enjoy physical play.
- The staff provide a good range of toys, equipment that are organised, clean and safe. The children explore and play enthusiastically with these.
- The staff have a good understanding and experience of supporting children with special needs. The children participate in all the activities and feel fully included and supported.
- The staff have good relationships with the parents and make information available to them. The parents understand about how the Day Nursery works and are confident and clear about how their children are being cared for. They feel able to talk with the staff about their children

What needs to be improved?

- further improvement in the supervision and safety of children whilst playing inside and outside.

Outcome of the inspection

Good

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

<i>All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.</i>
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<i>As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.</i>

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
6	further develop suitable arrangements to ensure children are safe and well supervised whilst playing indoors and outside.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Children at Rocking Horse Day Nursery are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The provision is acceptable and of good quality overall.

The standard of teaching is generally good. The staff team have worked hard to develop resources that stimulate children and encourage them to make choices in an 'active learning' environment. There are clear expectations of children's behaviour, which is managed well. Systems are in place to enable staff to regularly discuss and plan individual children's progress. Staff's sound knowledge of the early learning goals is reflected in detailed planning, but is not fully demonstrated in teaching.

Leadership and management is generally good. There is a strong commitment amongst the staff, supported by the manager, to improve the care and education of all children including those with special needs. This involves the regular evaluation of practice, including the use of resources, and the formation of in-house action plans. However, the effectiveness of recent changes in practice, such as the extended use of resources outdoors, is not yet fully achieved.

Partnership with parents is very good. A wide range of information to support children's education is provided to parents. This includes regular newsletters and a running record of each day's activities displayed on the noticeboard. Parents are consulted and their ideas sought on proposed changes, for example, extended use of the outdoor play area. In addition to informal daily discussion, parents and staff formally review children's progress twice a year and together set an action plan.

What is being done well?

- The ongoing commitment by staff to develop resources and plan activities to stimulate and interest children.
- The provision of an 'active learning' environment which encourages children to think for themselves and plan their work.
- The provision of independent access to resources by children including craft activities, natural materials and computers.
- The partnership with parents which includes actively involving parents in decision making.

What needs to be improved?

- Organisation of small group times to enable children's spontaneous contributions to be developed more effectively.

What has improved since the last inspection?
<p>The setting has made generally good progress in the two areas identified at the last inspection.</p> <p>Planning for mathematical development continues to be reviewed to ensure it receives sufficient emphasis in daily activities. Regular opportunities for structured small group work are built into the programme with a more specific focus on maths during the winter term. However, spontaneous opportunities are not always taken to reinforce ideas during children's free play.</p> <p>Activities to extend children's climbing skills have been improved by the construction of a wooden climbing frame which children use regularly. Staff, with parents' support, continue to develop and evaluate resources for outdoors.</p>

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are confident and have a positive approach to new experiences. They are involved in planning their own activities and can work independently for significant periods. A set routine increases children's sense of belonging and security and includes familiar songs like 'planning time'. Children behave well, reminding each other of ground rules and receive regular praise. However, opportunities for children to share their discoveries with staff during 'work time' are limited.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are developing writing skills and make marks on paper and in other media using a range of implements. The setting includes many labels and children regularly use their name tags when planning work. Children are imaginative and comment freely during work time to each other. They develop new language and ideas, introduced by staff, through structured small group activities. However, opportunities for children to freely contribute to group times are not extensive.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Thoughtful planning for small group activities enables children to regularly count and discuss shapes. They confidently match numbers up to four in computer games and count to six while voting on the weather in circle time. Children show interest in patterns when creating art work and many identify circles and triangles. However, opportunities for children to have mathematical ideas reinforced by staff during free play are limited.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children use a wide range of resources to investigate the world around them. They take time to explore the effect of water on soil, creating puddles in the garden. They show an interest in everyday technology, using mobile phones in imaginary play, and confidently use computers to support their learning. Children are familiar with their surroundings and go on occasional walks around the grounds. Small group time does not sufficiently enable children to develop ideas in their own way.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children enjoy combining and repeating a range of movements when using the climbing frame and slide outdoors. Music and movement provides opportunities for children to respond imaginatively to music and follow instructions. Children use tools, scissors and other small equipment effectively. They show an awareness of routines, such as handwashing, to keep their bodies healthy. Children's development of large muscle skills is, however, restricted at times by availability of staff support.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Children explore an imaginative range of resources which they can access easily indoors and outside. They readily develop ideas and discuss them with each other during free play, for example, creating zigzag patterns spontaneously with their boots. They make imaginative use of the home corner to create meals for each other and 'phone friends. However, children's discoveries and experiences are not consistently acknowledged and extended by staff.	

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

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally 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: THE KEY ISSUES

- Ensure the organisation of small group times is sufficiently flexible to allow for children's spontaneous contributions to be acknowledged and to impact on activities.

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.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.