

Red Balloon

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date 05/10/2010
Inspector Amanda May

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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

Red Balloon nursery opened in 2004. It operates from an old converted telephone repeater station. There are three group rooms plus a baby sleep room. All rooms have access to individual and shared outdoor areas. There is easy access to the setting with all of the children's base rooms being available on the ground floor with disabled toilets on site. The nursery serves families from the local and surrounding villages and is registered under the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 90 children on roll in the early years age group, this includes 30 funded three year olds. Children attend for the full day. The setting makes provision for children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days a week. Sessions are available from 7.30am until 6.30pm all year round excluding Christmas and Bank Holidays. There are 22 members of staff working with the children, 16 members of staff hold a recognised early years qualification and three members of staff are on training programmes. All staff are either qualified first aiders or are booked to attend a first aid training course. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA) & Pre-School Learning Association. The setting currently holds the NDNA quality accreditation and an investors in people award.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Every child's individual needs are met at all levels as they benefit from a welcoming and safe environment where they make constant progress in all areas of their learning and development. Children who have additional needs are exceptionally well supported and the staff team show complete dedication to ensuring that all children are able to reach their full potential. An excellent system of evaluation by all levels of management and staff is carried out and parents and children are always included in this to ensure that target areas are constantly improved and developed. Children thrive in this setting and obviously enjoy spending time with their friends and a dedicated staff team who are all passionate about ensuring each child's experiences are exceptional.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- continue to develop methods of seeking children's views of the setting in an interesting and interactive way to further develop excellent provision of

activities which inspire and motivate the children to learn.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Robust and thorough procedures are in place and are understood fully by all members of staff which ensure children are safeguarded. The partners of the setting and manager develop ongoing risk assessments which staff implement consistently to ensure that children benefit from a safe but stimulating environment. Children learn about taking risks during play and staff are constantly on hand to provide additional support and encouragement to the children who would benefit. Excellent recruitment procedures are in place which are robust. Staff members who have been recruited benefit from monthly meetings with their head of room to ensure any training issues can be discussed and individual action plans are reviewed. New members of staff benefit from a detailed induction package and confidently describe what they would do if they had concerns regarding a safeguarding issue.

Security to the setting is second to none. A fingerprint recognition system is in place to ensure the security of the children, and visitors access the setting through a number of security gates and by being met by a senior manager at the door. Webcam facilities allow parents to view their child while at the setting and this is arranged to ensure that access is fully encrypted and that only the child's base room can be seen by parents.

The deployment of resources and staff are effective throughout the nursery and staff are very aware of how to position themselves to ensure the safety of the children as well as being able to support individuals and groups in their play. All staff take responsibility for developing the provision and staff are all involved in evaluating not only their own practice but also that of their colleagues and the manager. Parents are actively encouraged to share their views and those spoken to at the inspection are passionate about the work of the setting. Parent consultation groups ensure that pathways for parents to communicate and work in partnership with the nursery work extremely well at all levels, and partnerships with other early years provisions and professionals are also secure to ensure that each individual child is provided with the best possible care and support. Children's individual needs are identified through the expertise of the staff and through discussion with parents. Staff are dedicated in helping children learn about their own cultures as well as those of other people. Babies are encouraged to look at their reflections in low-level mirrors and older children begin to learn about other people's beliefs as they learn about festivals from around the world.

The senior management team are obviously passionate about the nursery and catering for each and every child within it. Staff feel very well supported and eager to be involved in developing the provision further. They take ownership for smaller improvements, such as planning to make story sacks and developing resources in their own rooms to provide further innovative and exciting opportunities for children to learn. The setting currently seeks the views of the children who attend, particularly in how they would like their nursery to be improved. This is a key area the staff are currently working on and plan to provide more visual opportunities for children to be involved, such as through using cameras to take photographs of their favourite areas of the setting as well as the least well utilised parts. The

garden area has been a recent development project for the staff and management team and now completed is the focal point of the setting, with each age group having an individual garden area, as well as shared access to a larger space which includes a large sand and water feature. Children love using this area which is utilised very well to support them in all aspects of their learning and development.

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

Children are all making exceptional progress in their learning and development due to the expertise of dedicated staff and a qualified teacher who provides support and her experience to the pre-school room. Staff all demonstrate their understanding of each child's interests and this is used to develop activities which are imaginative and innovative and cover a wide range of learning opportunities. Children are eager to lead their own learning and staff support their interests as they decide that they want to build a boat out of large wooden blocks in the garden. A large group of children work together tirelessly to build the boat. They all cooperate and work hard without the need of direction from staff. Once the boat is built children sit together and decide where they will sail to, it is decided that they will travel to an island and children start to pretend to row, as they sing 'Row row row your boat'. Staff are on hand to extend children's interests further although also understand the benefits of allowing children time to discover and explore without their support.

Babies are equally well supported in their play and staff offer lots of warm and loving attention as they explore books together after lunch, or when investigating natural objects such as dried leaves and conkers in the water tray. Staff add small but imaginative touches to the baby room, such as displaying babies artwork on the ceiling above the nappy changing area to give the babies something bright to look at when they are being changed. This demonstrates the staff's skills of seeing the setting through the child's eyes.

Older children enjoy learning about natural resources as they work together to roll conkers in a large tray of paint and watch as they tilt the tray at the different patterns they make. Children work very well together and support one another as they aim to achieve a similar goal. The teacher who works with the children focuses predominantly on supporting individual children's progress in communication, language and literacy as well as problem solving, reasoning and number. Through innovative activities children develop their vocabulary as they make witches' potion and mix in a range of ingredients, such as witches' fingernails (dried pasta). Children talk about their recipes and the textures of the potion exclaiming that their witches' potion would make a witch feel very poorly if she drank it. Another child suggests that if that happened the witch could make a spell in her tummy to make herself feel better.

Children understand how to be healthy and enjoy access to the outside at least once a day, with free-flow provision being provided for toddlers and pre-school children. Children learn about their bodies as they talk about feeling hot and cold and confidently decide when to help themselves to a healthy snack and drink from the snack bar area. Babies are supported fully in their health care needs as staff take account of individual routines and ensure that meals are provided which are

based on their weaning needs. Older children explain as they wash their hands before lunch that it is important to use soap to 'wash the germs away', demonstrating their full awareness of the reasons behind good self-care. Children are further supported in learning about keeping themselves healthy as they bring toothbrushes into the setting to support them in learning to brush their teeth. Babies are also encouraged in this to help them prepare for when they are teething and to help relieve sore gums.

A delicious range of meals and snacks are provided for the children who attend the setting and each child's dietary needs are always respected by staff who use seat labels with photographs of children advising if they have any allergies or specific dietary needs. This ensures that all adults are fully aware of the health needs of each child. Meals include organic meat and dairy products and children enjoy home baked cookies for a dessert. The senior management team work closely with the chef to ensure that menus are wide ranging and staff are currently consulting parents about their ideas about appropriate foods and sources of products to ensure that their preferences are met.

As children enjoy all the many experiences provided for them they play exceptionally well together. There are obviously very close friendships being formed and children help one another as they get a snack or when building a tower outside of rubber tyres. Their excellent understanding of how to behave ensures that children learn about keeping themselves safe while having lots of fun.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
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