

Rocking Horse Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY392107
Inspection date	30/11/2010
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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

Rocking Horse Kindergarten is one of a small chain of registered provisions which is privately owned. It was registered in 2009 and operates from purpose built premises within the grounds of Hodge Hill Girls School. The setting serves the local area. It has strong links with the local school. The children have access to an enclosed area for outdoor play. The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round, except for public bank holidays and one week over the Christmas holiday period. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6.00pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is registered to care for 98 children at any one time. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 80 children on roll in the early years age range. The setting receives funding for free early education for children aged three and four years. The setting supports children for whom English is an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are 12 members of staff who work with the children. Of these, all have appropriate early years qualifications to at least Level 3. The manager is currently working towards Early Years Professional status (EYPS). The setting receives support from the local authority early years advisory team.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

There has been significant improvement in practice within the nursery resulting in a provision that offers very effective support and care to all children and their families. The highly skilled and confident management team is working very positively to develop the enthusiastic and passionate staff team with a shared vision for future development. This ensures that the delivery and implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage enables every child to make strong progress in their learning and development. The partnerships with parents, carers and other professionals are key strengths in the provision, as all work cohesively and offer a consistent and individualised programme for each child according to their needs.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- explore strategies for developing non-verbal communication
- develop the self-evaluation process to reflect the views of the children in contributing to identifying and improving practice.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Strong leadership and management are driving the improvement in nursery practice. This is the result of a skilled and confident manager being supported by

the owner in motivating staff and prioritising further development. A shared and collaborative approach to improving outcomes for children is evident in the ways in which staff understand their key roles and responsibilities. Their knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children is secure and robust, ensuring that any child protection concerns are monitored and managed in the best interests of the child at all times. The procedures for the recruitment and selection of staff are rigorous and highly effective in assessing suitability, experience and identifying individual skills which enhance the experiences planned and offered to the children. Children's safety is a high priority, with detailed risk assessments conducted and recorded both on and off the premises. The development of partnership working is exceptional. Liaising closely with NHS teams and community workers, the setting has delivered a range of innovative workshops and health-based activities. Parents and carers are invited to join their children in cookery activities as together they prepare healthy and nutritious meals and snacks, learn about the benefits of baby massage and enjoy art and creative activities with their children. Parents express their delight at such events commenting on how they have gained awareness of the various food groups, what food alternatives to offer children and how they have enjoyed making play dough and using it with the children. Parents' questionnaires include comments such as "extremely friendly staff who have formed good relationships with my child"; "excellent staff who make parents feel welcome in the rooms". Parents also contribute positively in sharing their children's achievements in their learning journals. This promotes a strong sense of how children's successful early development and learning is a true partnership between the setting and the family. This process is further enhanced by the setting's introduction of home visits. Staff speak confidently of how these visits assist in developing the partnerships and help to ease children's transition into the setting. Staff operate a very effective key worker system, ensuring that suitable levels of information are exchanged regularly. Where an individual child requires additional support, staff build firm working relationships with other professionals and consider a range of strategies for ensuring that each child can participate and achieve through the well-planned activities. The linguistic skills of some staff are used efficiently to promote effective communication with families where English is an additional language and this is reinforced by the use of pictures and symbols. Whilst some staff are aware of sign language, such as Makaton, this is not yet being fully utilised within the setting to further enhance communication. Processes for evaluating the impact of the practice on children's attainment and development are well-implemented. The current assessment is an accurate analysis of strengths and areas for further development which is focused and targeted. All staff contribute to the document and their views, skills and attributes are valued and respected by the management. This results in a staff team that is eager to attend training, share individual skills and interests and integrate some of the research they have done to extend experiences for the children. For example, there is highly effective use of different genres of music to enhance children's moods. Parents, carers and other professionals are also involved in the evaluation process, ensuring a broad perspective is gained in order to identify and prioritise on-going improvement. The setting has not yet fully explored various strategies for engaging the children in this process and reflecting the voice of the child in the assessment of the environment. Staff have, however, used observations of the layout of some rooms to consider how this can affect children's behaviour and interaction. There is a wide and varied array of resources

and equipment, which is effectively presented in each care area, to encourage independence and self-selection as well as enabling every child to have some choice in their activities.

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

Children throughout the setting enjoy the activities and routines that are planned flexibly to take account of their individual needs and welfare. Staff have a thorough knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and implement it effectively in each care base, taking account of individual needs, capabilities and interests. Intuitive use of the environment and resources enables all children to make very strong progress in all areas of their learning and development. Observation and assessment is used effectively to monitor children's progress and informs the planning and differentiation necessary for individual children to achieve and enjoy their activities. Learning opportunities for promoting communication, language and literacy and numeracy are woven into each child's day, from singing number rhymes to calculating how many children are present at circle time. Babies and toddlers enjoy mark-making using a wide variety of mediums including sand and paint, soap and cornflour gloop. Older children show emergent writing skills and staff respond to individual children's prowess as they extend the activities. Close and caring relationships between children and staff ensure that children feel secure and seek out familiar adults for support and engagement. Staff are intuitive in comforting and settling babies and young toddlers as, for instance, a member of staff rocks and sings to a child in order to settle them off for sleep. Detailed work has been undertaken to employ effective strategies for managing behaviour. There is a strong emphasis on acknowledging the varied and often strong emotions which children can display including anger and frustration. Older children are able to indicate how they feel during their day by using the set of their own photographs of differing facial expressions. This leads to discussion between the children and their peers and with the adults who also indicate their moods too. Parents are involved in reinforcing the expectations and boundaries at home, leading to a consistent and positive approach to raising children's self-esteem. Children's home cultures are celebrated and valued in the setting as they visit different places of worship and delight in participating in activities such as Bangra dancing. They learn about diversity and respecting differences in society, sharing photographs of themselves and their families and look at similar photographs of the staff's families too. Home languages are acknowledged and used where appropriate to enable all children to develop a sense of belonging. Children are encouraged to explore and investigate their environment indoors and outside. They dress eagerly in preparation for playing in the snow, donning 'Wellingtons' and warm clothes, knowing that these are important in keeping them warm and healthy. Much work is being done to promote healthy eating and parents attend workshops to gain awareness of various nutritious options. Fresh midday meals are cooked on site with attention paid to any specific dietary or religious requirements. There is a strong commitment to encouraging children to become aware of their own safety, as well as diligent supervision by staff. Children know why tidying away their toys helps to maintain safety and they use tools and implements with care. Participating in regular fire drills also reinforces their awareness and they

understand the importance of donning high-visibility tabards when walking out in the community.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
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	1
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	2

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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