

Rocking Horse Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY412686
Inspection date 13/12/2010
Inspector Veronica Sharpe

Setting address St Mary's Church Hall, Chadley Lane, Godmanchester,
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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 Day Nursery is privately owned and was taken over by Clarence House Day Nurseries Ltd in July 2010. The nursery operates from a hall belonging to St Mary's Church in Godmanchester, Cambridgeshire. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is open five days a week from 8.30am to 5.30pm all year round, except for the Christmas week.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It can accept up to 36 children under eight years and, of these, no more than 12 can be under two at any one time. There are 26 children on roll aged between two and five years. A small number of children attending have English as an additional language.

The nursery employs six staff and, of these, three have relevant early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards an early years qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The new management team have made a positive start in assessing and implementing improvements to the provision. Staff are developing sound, professional relationships with parents. Children make adequate progress in their learning and development, although assessment procedures are not yet fully effective. Children generally access a reasonable range of resources and activities but the outdoor area lacks variety. Underpinning documentation is in place to help staff meet children's individual welfare needs and keep them safe from harm.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the use of observations in order to plan effectively for each child's learning needs so they can be challenged according to their individual capabilities; provide parents with increased opportunities to contribute what they know about their children
- improve the outdoor provision to offer a full range of activities that cover all the areas of learning
- improve further the deployment of resources to ensure all children can develop their independence and follow their interests.
- increase children's opportunities for sensory experiences on a daily basis.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Adequate recruitment procedures ensure staff who work with the children are safe and suitable to do so. Any adults within the nursery who have not yet had checks completed, such as students, are fully supervised to keep children safe. Some staff are suitably trained and know what action to take in the event of allegations of child abuse. A training programme has been planned to bring all the staff up-to-date with safeguarding issues so they can effectively protect children. The premises are secure and staff deploy themselves suitably so children are supervised effectively. Written risk assessments and daily checks ensure hazards are identified and minimised, for example, the garden is checked before children go outside. Staff help children learn to keep themselves safe, for example, they encourage children to hold hands and stay together as they walk to the church. All areas of the setting are adequately clean and hygiene procedures, such as when nappy changing, are implemented consistently in order to avoid cross infection. Required documentation is in place; policies and procedures are appropriately shared with parents.

Settling in visits give parents time to become familiar with the setting and enable children to feel safe and comfortable with their key person. Flexible sessions help to meet the needs of working parents. Staff collect information about the children, such as medical or dietary needs and this enables them to meet their individual welfare needs. Parents say their children enjoy their time in the setting. Daily conversations with staff help parents share in their children's experiences. The setting is building links with other providers, such as the local school, to promote continuity of care. Although there are no children currently on roll with special educational needs and/or disabilities there are appropriate systems in place to support them. Staff would liaise with other agencies, such as specialist teachers, in order to meet children's individual needs.

The new manager and the senior management team demonstrate an enthusiasm for their work and are developing their ideas for the future. There is a commitment to professional development for staff, so they have opportunities to increase their qualifications and therefore improve the outcomes for children. Managers and staff show sufficient understanding of the priorities for improvements and action plans are gradually being implemented. Recent changes have had a positive impact on children, such as the implementation of risk assessments and a secure lock for the entrance gate. Generally the setting is suitably organised so children have a range of age-appropriate experiences and staff are deployed efficiently to ensure children have adequate support. However, the deployment of resources in all areas of the setting does not enable children to fully develop their own interests and therefore become active, independent learners.

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

Relationships between children and staff are warm and friendly, staff sit down with the children to share their activities and engage them in lively chatter. As a result children feel valued and secure; they move around the setting confidently and their behaviour is good. Staff know the children well, which enables them to generally provide adequate learning opportunities for the children. Systems for observation and assessment are still at an early stage and planning is not yet personalised enough for the individual learning needs of the children. In addition, parents do not contribute what they know about their children on a regular basis. As a result learning opportunities lack challenge for some children.

Children benefit from a bright and cheerful room, with ample space for exploration. Older children have access to a reasonable range of toys to stimulate their interest, such as puzzles and games on low level shelving. However, these are not organised effectively to encourage children to be active learners; resources are not clearly labelled to assist children in making informed choices. Toddlers have fewer opportunities to select their own resources and rely on staff to plan and provide their activities and resources. This limits their ability to develop their own interests.

Staff encourage children to be active and understand the benefits of healthy exercise, for example, they play in the outdoor area several times each day. However, outdoor resources lack variety and the area is unattractive and generally under utilised. Children show they can count reliably and they use a computer with confidence. Staff help children learn to share and take turns as they play matching games with coloured dice. Children are positively encouraged to attempt their own names on their drawings and these are sometimes displayed to promote their self esteem. Wall displays and other resources, such as dressing up clothes, help children develop an understanding of diversity. Children sing familiar songs together and enjoy listening to stories. They are confident communicators and relate well to adults. Although children have some planned opportunities for sensory experiences, such as painting using an easel, they are unable to spontaneously explore, for example, sand, water or dough on a daily basis.

Children learn about the importance of healthy and nutritious food. Meals are prepared on site and are interesting and varied. Snack time enables children to take an active part in food preparation, for example, as they peel and cut up bananas. Hygiene in the setting is promoted well; staff follow rigorous cleaning routines so that resources and furniture are clean and safe. Children show a clear understanding of the importance of washing their hands prior to eating, or after using the toilet, because staff provide consistent guidance.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	3
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