

Rocking Horse Montessori Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

Jo Graham

Setting address

26 St. Peters Avenue, Caversham, READING, RG4 7DD

Telephone number

0118 947 7644

Email

avincent@dfi.pipex.com

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 Montessori Nursery School registered in October 2006 and is on the Early Years Register and both parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery follows the Montessori ethos and is privately owned. It operates from dedicated rooms within a residential property in Caversham, near Reading. The children have access to an enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The nursery is open every week day morning from 9.15am to 12.15pm and for a full day on Wednesdays until 3pm, during term time only. A maximum of 16 children aged from two to five years may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 21 children on roll, 18 of whom receive funding for nursery education. The setting supports children who speak English as an additional language and has systems in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There are five members of staff who work directly with the children. Of these staff, three hold Montessori teaching qualifications and all hold early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff provide excellent support and the child-friendly, exciting environment assists the children's individual learning and development. Children stay safe as staff manage entry into the setting, make sure visitors' details are recorded and ensure persons not vetted are never left alone with the children. The staff have a positive approach to self-evaluation and how to develop their practice. Children's uniqueness is acknowledged and supported effectively. Staff's high praise and reassurances boost children's self-worth and sense of belonging.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- implement procedures to make sure staff skills and training needs are updated regularly to ensure these meet the requirements of the nursery.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is promoted and safeguarded. Staff have a good knowledge of child protection procedures if they have concerns about children in their care and new staff are aware of their roles before their satisfactory checks are completed. Paperwork is in place to record relevant details to keep children safe and promote their well-being. These are well maintained and stored securely. The setting always ensures there is a staff member present who has first aid training during operational hours and the first aid box is easily accessible. Fire exits and assembly points are clearly marked helping to keep children and staff safe when they need to evacuate the premises. The named person, responsible for ensuring staff and children practise emergency evacuation procedures has left and not been replaced. Consequently these evacuation practices have become less regular; this is not sufficiently meeting the requirement to ensure all children and staff are aware of what to do in an emergency.

The setting uses the self-evaluation process to evaluate and monitor their strengths and areas to develop. This has a positive impact on children's care and learning. However, although management supports training, there is no clear programme in place to make sure staff's training and skills are updated regularly. The setting demonstrates it has the capacity to improve and has the aspiration to strive to achieve a high quality provision.

Staff ensure the toys, equipment and environment support the children's needs effectively. Staff make sure these resources are in good condition and developmentally appropriate. Written risk assessments are in place to promote children's safety and are reviewed annually. Staff have a very good knowledge of children's heritage and family. They make sure children have a named place to hang their belongings and they adapt activities to promote inclusion for all children. This enables children to play an active role in the setting. Staff complete observations during the child's familiarisation days and then use these details to establish children's developmental starting points and abilities. Regular observations are completed and well documented. Staff used these details to inform the children's continual developmental plans.

Relationships with parents are good and contribute to the continuity of care and learning with the children. Parents expressed their pleasure in their child's progress and why they chose this provision during the inspection process. Parents are able to comment on their child's achievements when they receive the termly reports, as well as sharing their news verbally with staff. Notice boards and newsletters also keep parents updated. Staff build relationships with other early years settings children attend through verbal discussions and information sharing with parental consent. Children benefit from these good relationships.

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

Staff enthusiastically welcome all the children on arrival and help them to settle quickly. Children confidently initiate their own play and carry out their chosen tasks with increasing skill and concentration. They select these from the low open shelving and then transfer these to their mats, following the Montessori ethos very well. Staff interventions significantly contribute to the children's learning and continued enjoyment. Staff ask children questions to help them think, to move their learning forward and to foster their curiosity. The outdoor areas are used effectively to extend seamlessly the curriculum opportunities. For example, children confidently fill up the large watering can with the hosepipe and then skilfully pour this water into smaller child-sized watering cans. The children then use the water on the crops they are growing before harvesting the tomatoes and runner beans to eat for snacks. This helps develop the children's understanding of sustainability as well as life cycles.

Children develop skills for the future by accessing a wide range of activities. They are lively, confident communicators who express their ideas, thoughts and views with self-assurance in the knowledge that these points of view are valued. They mark make within their play, gaining emergent writing skills and access some programmable toys regularly. Children's behaviour is good and consistently and sensitively managed. Staff use positive reinforcements and discuss the 'golden rules' with the children, giving examples they can understand. Children cooperate, share with one another, follow rules and tidy away well. They respond to staff's high expectations of acceptable behaviour and staff are good role models. Children build up strong relationships with their peers and staff. Through sensitive support from staff children learn to respect one another and to value diversity.

Celebrations are held to mark the cultural festivals of the children attending and also to help children to learn about the wider world. For example, children examine world globes and maps, food from different countries and also resources reflective of each country, as part of their 'food festival' celebration. Children are active, inquisitive and independent learners, benefitting from staff's skills and effective support.

Highly effective practice ensures the good health and well-being of the children. Staff actively minimise the spread of infection through procedures such as hand washing, cleaning surfaces thoroughly and wearing slippers when inside. Tissues are easily accessible for children to use and through excellent support children's independent self-care skills are promoted extremely well. Children make healthy choices about what they eat and drink. The 'snack helpers' select choices for snacks by checking what is available in the fridge and by collecting produce from the garden. The garden produce is the result of children's planting and tending. In

this way children learn about healthy fruit and vegetables and also know when produce is ready for harvesting. Children are able to access snacks when they choose to and self-register once they have eaten these. They pour their own drinks and wash up their cups and plates after using. Fresh water is always available. This supports children's welfare and also their independence.

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	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

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	1
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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