

# Ragamuffins Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

205334

**Inspection date**

17/02/2011

**Inspector**

Christine Williams

**Setting address**

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**Telephone number**

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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**

Ragamuffins Nursery School is one of three settings run by the same provider. It opened in 1994 and operates from a large converted house within the Headless Cross area of Redditch. Children under the age of two are cared for on the first floor. Children attend from the local area and have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 33 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 60 children aged from three months to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

There are 8 members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least NVQ level 3. One member of staff is qualified to degree level. Another is working towards a degree. The setting provides funded early education to three and four-year-olds and receives support from the local authority.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

All areas of the nursery's practice are strong, with some aspects being exceptional. Children make outstanding progress, are well integrated and are given the support they need to develop fully as individuals. Flexible attitudes, policies and everyday practices are used well to promote children's welfare and safeguarding procedures are effective. There are highly positive relationships with parents, although there is room to do more to ensure the links with other settings children attend are fully developed. Leadership and management are strong and there is a clear vision for high quality provision. Effective evaluation and a commitment to developing new ways of working is raising standards and ensuring the nursery is fully focused on providing high quality outcomes for children.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

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

- extend the arrangements for sharing information about children who attend more than one setting so that there is a regular exchange of knowledge about progression and improved continuity of care and learning.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Safeguarding arrangements are effective. Staff have a thorough knowledge of how to protect children. They receive regular safeguarding training, are all appropriately vetted and work to clear guidelines for reporting issues and sharing relevant information. Staff work closely with parents to ensure they gather information about such things as access, collection arrangements and who has parental responsibility. Best practice guidance over issues, such as, the use of mobile telephones and social network sites, has recently been introduced. Good security arrangements and thorough risk assessments ensure children's safety at all times. For example, sleeping babies are carefully monitored through the use of CCTV and listening devices, and staff make sure the garden is a safe place to be, without limiting children's access to exciting outdoor learning opportunities.

Those in charge of the nursery are forward thinking and responsive to new challenges. There is a sharp focus on improving standards and working towards securing the best outcomes for children. Good quality improvements have been made since the last inspection. These have been achieved through improved evaluation, action planning and the use of local and national childcare strategies. Some areas of developing practice are beginning to have impact, particularly in the area of helping children to develop healthy life styles. For example, the nursery is working towards 'Healthy Setting' status and is continuing to develop its outside areas so that children learn about growing healthy foods. However, some of these developments have only recently been introduced. As a result, although the arrangements for promoting children's learning are exceptional, other aspects of the nursery's practice have not yet reached their full potential. Teamwork amongst staff is strong and morale is high. They are well qualified and experienced and the owner is supportive and firmly committed to the nursery's ongoing development. Staff recognise children's varying learning styles and provide a wealth of outside learning and exploration activities which offer the kind of experiences that fully support boys, as well as girls. For example, the nursery's 'Ragaden' and growing areas are a real strength and add richness to children's exploration and physical and creative play. The nursery is well equipped and care rooms are colourfully decorated so that they provide a place where children can develop to their full potential.

Staff take great care to understand and learn about the particular needs of each child. They gather the views of parents and work cooperatively with outside agencies and professionals when necessary. Lines of communication are also beginning to be formed with other settings who share in the care of individual children, although this is new and not yet fully developed. Strong relationships are fostered with parents as staff work closely with them to support, guide and nurture children. Parent's knowledge about their children is gathered and used effectively to provide the right support for each child. Daily discussions, newsletters and regular parent evenings all help to keep parents well informed and their views and ideas are sought regularly through informal conversations and formal evaluations. These are then acted upon. For example, newsletters and topic sheets have been introduced at the request of parents.

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

Children have excellent opportunities to learn and experiment and so make outstanding progress. They show great enthusiasm and enjoyment in all they do and sustain their interest and concentration for lengthy periods. Children develop a strong sense of belonging, are confident, behave well and have exceptional relationships with staff and each other. The nursery's outside learning areas are a particular strength and encourage discovery, healthy living and an appreciation of the natural world. Planned learning activities are based on a thorough knowledge of what children already know and can do and build on children's own fascinations and learning preferences. Progress is monitored through ongoing observations and assessments and these are used exceptionally well to ensure children develop the skills they will need for the future.

Children show exceptional independence and are eager to take on new challenges and to explore new things. Important social skills, such as, sharing and turn taking are given priority and children learn how to use handshakes and hugs appropriately and to be nice to each other. Independence is taught from an early age and results in three and four-year-olds willingly taking on responsibilities. For example, they line up to choose what they want for lunch and skilfully scrape unwanted food into the compost bin. Children show excellent communication skills as they talk, negotiate and discuss their experiences. Early reading and writing skills are practised and all children's communication is aided by effective use of signs, symbols and photographs. Older children link sounds to letters through a phonic system and some are beginning to know how to write their own names. Numbers and reasoning are threaded through all children's activities and they quickly show they know how to count, match and sort with everyday things, such as pebbles, pegs and bottle tops. Outside areas fully support children's learning across all areas and they show exceptional curiosity when digging, building with large blocks or investigating with magnifying glasses. Imaginary and messy play provides children with lots of opportunities to express themselves freely. They often make up their own games, using such things as the outdoor climbing equipment.

Children enjoy good health because they are developing positive attitudes towards the importance of exercise and healthy eating. Fun aerobic exercises are carried out to music each morning and these encourage strong muscles and help children become alert and ready for the busy day ahead. Children learn about food as they help to grow vegetables, such as carrots, in the nursery garden and there are regular cooking activities to extend and build on children's knowledge about food. Excellent physical skills and coordination are developed as children climb, balance, dig and hang upside down on tyre swings. Children show they feel safe and well protected. Clear explanations and gentle reminders ensure the youngest children know important safety strategies; such as holding on tightly to the banister when coming down the stairs. Three and four-year-olds act with increasing safety awareness and clearly understand the limits set for such things as how high they can climb.



## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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