

Animal Crackers

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Setting address

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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

Animal Crackers was registered in 1999. It operates from premises in Fradley, Staffordshire. The nursery serves the local area. The nursery is accessible to all children and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6.00pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. A maximum of 86 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 116 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The nursery also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery provides funded early education for three and four year olds.

The nursery employs 24 members of child care staff. Of these, 18 hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children within the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy their time at the nursery. They make good progress in their learning and development and overall their welfare is strongly supported. Outstanding opportunities are in place for outside play which ensures that all children's needs are fully met. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures is in place to support the safety and welfare of children. Continuous improvement and evaluation is being developed.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- use observations and assessments consistently throughout the nursery to identify learning priorities and plan relevant and motivating learning experiences for each child
- develop evaluation systems to ensure the quality of children's learning, through identifying the settings strengths and priorities for development to improve the provision for all children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are well-protected as there are clear safeguarding procedures and staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities in protecting children. Parents are well informed about all aspects of safeguarding through an informative display.

Detailed risk assessments and daily checks are carried out in all areas and equipment and resources are in a good condition. Robust recruitment and vetting systems ensure that all adults working with children are suitable to do so and a commitment to training and development informs and promotes up-to-date practice. A comprehensive and detailed range of operational policies and procedures is in place and regularly reviewed.

Security of the setting is ensured by key code pad used by parents, and buzzer system with a reception area to protect children from unauthorised visitors. The staff have created a vibrant, exciting, challenging environment where children enjoy innovative planned and spontaneous opportunities to learn through their play and exploration indoors and outside. The routines and resources are arranged effectively to offer stimulating play and learning opportunities within easy reach to promote independent choice and child-led activities.

Good communication and information to parents helps to ensure that they have a clear understanding of the operational and regulatory responsibilities of the setting and the services provided to children and their families. Children benefit from their parents' involvement in their learning. Parents further enhance topics as they come in for various sessions to talk about their work or hobbies. Every effort is made to work with all agencies involved in the children's care and welfare and positive partnerships are established. As a result systems are in place to ensure that contact is made with schools the children are transferring to in September and arrangements made for the teachers to visit the children in the nursery. This supports children's overall development and progress.

All recommendations made at the previous inspection have been addressed. Consequently the outcomes for children are continually reviewed. Ongoing self-evaluation by the management and staff currently is limited. Priorities for future development are not clearly identified and action planned to drive improvement throughout the nursery.

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

Staff have a good awareness of the Early Years Foundation Stage and understand how children learn through their play. They spend time getting to know each child, their likes, dislikes and interests. Careful attention is paid to keep up-to-date with details of children's interests and significant events in their lives. Systems to observe and assess children's progress is not consistent throughout the nursery. The information gathered is used efficiently by key persons when planning for individual children to ensure that each child is offered targeted and relevant opportunities to extend their learning. Key workers know their children well which means that most children become confident and eager to join in as they develop positive attitudes towards learning. However, although available, important information about children's achievements is not kept consistently up-to-date throughout the nursery to efficiently inform all staff working with the children.

Children are very happy and settled at the nursery. The learning environment effectively supports children's progress towards the early learning goals with children's learning promoted throughout. Play is purposeful as the children confidently self-select and enjoy activities alone, in small groups or with an adult. Children skillfully use the CD player as they make choices on what music they want to play. Staff are skilled at encouraging children's critical thinking as they present challenging questions. For example, asking children about what tools they would need to fix the broken keyboard. They are warm and caring, providing positive interaction between themselves and the children. Children's communication skills are promoted well, as staff and children hold detailed conversations about their experiences, family and lives. The setting is rich with a wide variety of photographs of the children during activities and events.

Babies receive good levels of support as staff tempt and encourage them with carefully placed toys to promote rolling, stretching and crawling. Their smiles and giggles signal their pleasure as they experience, such as, early learning opportunities. Toddlers enjoy activities suitable for their age and ability, for example, they are learning to use small equipment to create pictures, models and collages which they proudly display. Spontaneous opportunities to practise problem solving or safe routines are captured well by staff to promote children's learning. For example the children's interest in Fireman Sam prompted a junk modelling activity of fire engines. Children later used tyre print painting to create the background for the wall display.

Older children are confident and eagerly settle into the daily routines, anticipating their indoor and outdoor activities with interest and enthusiasm. The pre-school environment is well-organised and thoughtfully arranged to offer children activities, equipment and resources kept at child height to support learning across the curriculum. Children are encouraged to select and move between resources both indoors and out as they play, developing their interest and extending activities. Number and name recognition is promoted well throughout the setting. Toddlers engage in a simple counting activity with staff and all children routinely see their names in print. Displays highlight numbers in everyday situations such as car number plates and how many children allowed on certain equipment and activities, to enhance children's learning. Children are skilled and confident in using IT equipment as they are able to inform the inspector what programme they are looking at.

All children are encouraged to explore and learn about the natural world, how things grow and the world around them and have hands-on opportunities to plant and cultivate vegetables and fruit. They anxiously wait for the first sign of growth from their plants. The excellent outdoor environment allows children to easily take their learning outside on a daily basis.

Staff demonstrate positive role models and intervene promptly and sensitively if required. They promote acceptable behaviour with praise and encouragement which leads to a happy, harmonious learning environment. They demonstrate good role models and help children learn about keeping safe and healthy as they practise appropriate behaviour in activities and daily routines. Older children particularly enjoy the cafe style snack time as they use this when want to, finding their name card afterwards to put on the wall, indicating that they have used the

snack area. Overall, children in this setting make good progress through the programme of activities provided.

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	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	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