

Merrydale Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Susan May
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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

Merrydale Day Nursery is one of 11 nurseries run by Complete Childcare Limited. This setting operates from a variety of rooms in a converted house situated on the outskirts of Wokingham. Children have access to enclosed gardens for outdoor play. Children come from a wide catchment area and attend for a variety of sessions.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is registered to care for a maximum of 42 children in the early years age range; of these, no more than 12 may be aged under two years at any one time. There is no provision for overnight care. There are currently 57 children on roll who attend a variety of different sessions. 19 children are in receipt of early years education funding. The nursery opens from 7.30am to 6.00pm for 51 weeks of the year. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak having English as an additional or bilingual language.

The nursery employs 10 members of staff to work directly with the children. Of these, eight hold appropriate childcare qualifications and two are working towards early years qualifications. French language and movement lessons are provided by peripatetic teachers. The nursery also employs a cook and cleaner.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The clear vision of the management and staff in understanding of their roles and responsibilities along with a strong commitment to improve promotes children's welfare well, provides a positive learning experience for the children who attend.

Staff follow a clear framework for good practice as they implement the regularly reviewed policies and procedures. Good risk assessments keep children safe with most procedures effectively followed. Children play in a child friendly environment with good access to a range of toys and equipment both indoors and out to help extend their learning. All children and families are valued and respected and the uniqueness of each child is recognized.

Staff have high expectations of children's conduct and children respond exceptionally well, demonstrating exemplary behaviour as they play. The setting has worked hard to build links with parents and with other carers and early years settings the children may attend. To ensure the standards of care are maintained and enhanced, self-evaluation procedures, with some input requested from parents, staff and children help identify the future development aims of the setting.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- seek ways to further include staff, parents and children in evaluating the setting and using their feedback to implement changes and make improvements where necessary
- improve procedures for risk assessing the garden by considering possible hazards such as prickly plants and nettles in areas where children play

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Standards of care in the nursery significantly support children's welfare, learning and development. A committed staff team, under the manager's clear leadership, ensure they seek to improve the provision through clearly outlined plans to benefit the children. Self-evaluation is used effectively, and assessment and advice from outside agencies, such as the local authority, is positively encouraged and implemented. However, systems to regularly seek input and feedback from all staff, parents and children enabling them to contribute to the evaluation process are in the early stages.

All required policies and procedures are in place, and are reviewed regularly and shared with parents. All staff are aware of their individual roles and staff deployment ensures all children receive appropriate levels of individual care and attention. Staff demonstrate an awareness of their responsibilities in safeguarding children and are knowledgeable of procedures to follow should they have concerns about the welfare a child in their care. There are secure systems in place to ensure all staff are checked and suitably qualified. Clear induction procedures, appraisals, in-house and external training ensure that staff knowledge is relevant and up-to-date. Procedures are in place to ensure that persons not vetted are never left alone with the children.

Children play in a warm friendly environment. The indoor and outdoor areas are effectively utilized with a covered decking area providing a good environment to teach the six areas of learning outdoors. This also allows children to progress their learning wherever they choose to play, regardless of the weather.

Children have access to a wide range of well-maintained age-appropriate resources from which to self select. Toys and resources are clean and well-maintained. Clear risk assessments ensure children play safely and these include daily checks completed on each area of the nursery and garden before children arrive. While these are comprehensive, possible hazards such as newly emerging nettles and thistles in some areas of the garden where the children play have not been considered.

Systems are in place to record children's individual abilities and achievements

include observations and assessments, information from parents and their next steps. Parents are provided with good quality information about the nursery and all required information is obtained from them regarding their child's needs at initial visits. Children's documentation and records are kept up-to-date and confidentially observed at all times. Information on children's learning is shared in daily conversations, through daily diaries and at individual parents meetings.

Parents express a high regard for the care and learning experiences their children receive and comment on the steps staff take to ensure they feel included in their child's learning. All children and families are valued and respected and systems to share relevant information with other childcare practitioners and health professionals help ensure that all children receive opportunities to reach their full potential according to their needs.

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

Children make good progress across all areas of learning and development as their individual learning needs are met well. The accessibility of the children's learning profiles and information about the early learning goals displayed around the nursery ensure that parents have clear idea of the aims of activities and their children's progress. Staff planning involves the child's key person, highlighting individual children's needs in order to offer a range of activities and experiences that will enable each child to move their learning forward.

Children are happy, and appear keen to join in with planned activities. They confidently participate in adult initiated activities, as well as instigating their own play. Staff recognize that children learn through play, are knowledgeable about the Early Years goals and steps towards them. They strive to increase children's learning experiences. For example, they use the outdoor areas as an effective means of extending all six areas of learning. Children within the daily routine enjoy "free flow" play and can access both the covered and garden area when they choose.

There are opportunities outdoors for children to mark make, sit at a table to play games or complete puzzles. Children make mud pies in the outdoor 'mud kitchen' and use their imaginations as they access a wide range of role play materials. They develop physical skills as they climb, slide, balance, ride wheeled toys and play with equipment such as hoops and balls. An outdoor sensory room allows children to enjoy a range of tactile experiences. A growing area provides children with the opportunity to find out about the natural world as they are plant and care for runner beans and other vegetables.

Children access healthy snacks, drinks and meals. Older children's independence is promoted as they decide on portion size and serve themselves. Children's dietary needs and preferences are well catered for and staff are fully aware of individual needs. Snack and meal times are a social occasion as children sit together with staff and chat; thus providing a opportunity to learn about social skills and about

cooperation with others.

Babies and very young children have their own separate area for play, sleeps and outdoor activities, enabling them to follow their own routines according to parental wishes. Cross infection is minimised due to clear hygiene practices that are followed by staff, for example, hand washing and nappy change procedures.

Staff encourage good communication skills as they listen to the children carefully and value their comments. Children make up their own stories and these are carefully written out by staff and displayed. This helps children's sense of belonging as they feel valued and respected. They also start to appreciate the connections between imagination and the written word. Children enjoy listening to stories as they sit together in groups, by themselves or with an adult to look at books. Written words in English as well as other languages help children begin to recognise that text has meaning.

Children's behaviour is exemplary; they are lively, courteous and show considerable respect for each other and the resources. For example, when a child requests some help with a construction toy, another child spontaneously shows the child what to do. They work together until they achieve the desired outcome. The children enjoy a wide repertoire of songs and rhymes, happily singing, completing appropriate actions, waiting patiently until it is their turn to take centre stage. Children work together to resolve any differences that arise with minimal or no intervention from staff. This demonstrates high levels of confidence and self-esteem, and the attention paid by the setting to 'getting along' skills.

Children begin to learn to keep themselves safe as they confidently explain what they need to do in the event of a fire. They move around the garden on their bikes taking care not to bump into each other, thereby displaying an awareness of each other's safety, not just their own.

Children are becoming aware of their own individual culture and those of others. They celebrate events important to them such as birthdays and festivals from around the world. A French teacher regularly visits the setting to teach the children basic vocabulary, thereby increasing their awareness of other languages. Books and resources support positive images of gender, culture, and disability.

Children develop their numeracy skills through every day events. For example, they handle money in the tills during role-play and recognise numbers and shapes on pictures around the room such as on the bus and road signs. Babies and very young children have access to a range of simple electronic toys with lights and sounds while older children have independent access to a computer.

Children's creative work is valued and displayed attractively throughout the child friendly environment that provides stimulating and challenging learning opportunities for all the children who attend.

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

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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	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