

Monkey Puzzle Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Type of setting

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Monkey Puzzle Day Nursery was re-registered under the most recent Monkey Puzzle ownership in May 2011. It operates from a converted school building in Tring, Hertfordshire. The setting is accessible to all children and there is a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

The setting provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds. It is open each weekday for 51 weeks of the year and sessions are from 7.30am to 6.30pm. Children may attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register to provide 40 places and there are currently 37 children attending who are within this age group. The setting serves a wide catchment area. A small number of children attend other settings such as pre-schools, childminders and the early years unit of the local primary school. The setting currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The setting employs ten members of child care staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and four at level 3 or above. One staff member is currently working towards a qualification. One staff member has achieved Early Years Professional status. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The setting owner, manager and staff demonstrate a genuine enthusiasm for their work, using thorough self-evaluation procedures to support the continuous review of this. They are therefore able to develop relevant action plans and implement improvements, thus maintaining a service which is responsive to children's needs. Staff work well with parents, carers and other agencies, exchanging information and gaining a thorough understanding of each child's needs. They ensure that these are consistently met and that children are offered appropriate support so that they are meaningfully included. Effective procedures for assessing children mean that staff have a clear understanding of their current developmental needs and can plan appropriate activities to promote children's development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review daily procedures and staffing arrangements to ensure that children's individual needs are consistently met
- take account of information provided by parents, offering further opportunities for them to contribute towards their child's assessment records.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting's good safeguarding procedures mean that children's welfare is consistently promoted. All staff have attended additional training in this area and there are robust procedures to ensure staff's suitability to work with children. This is further supported by a clear policy, ensuring that staff can work together to promote children's welfare. Thorough risk assessments and daily checks ensure that children's safety is promoted. Good daily practice and specific activities enable children to gain a clear understanding of safety issues. For example, police officers visit the setting to talk with children about issues such as road safety. The provision of relevant resources mean that children engage in role play that reinforces their understanding of this area.

The owner and all staff demonstrate a positive commitment to improving the setting's practice and, therefore, the outcomes for children. The continuous monitoring of their work supports the ongoing evaluation of the setting, ensuring that they have a clear overview of their practice and are aware of areas for improvement. For example, recent changes include the re-organisation of the play areas, ensuring that these are interesting and stimulating to children and that they are able to make free choices regarding resources and activities. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of inclusive practice. The setting's procedures are regularly reviewed to ensure that they reflect children's needs and that the setting is inclusive to all children and their families. For example, they have reviewed their practice to ensure that it is welcoming and inclusive to fathers.

Staff build good relationships with parents and carers. They ensure that parents are well informed of their children's progress and activities, for example, through daily communication books and regular consultation events. Staff have a clear understanding of the importance of working with others caring for the children. For example, children's communication books are extended to include other settings they attend. Resources are generally used well to support children's learning and development. For example, the indoor and outdoor play areas are well organised in order to offer children a wide range of play opportunities. Staff are kind and caring and show a genuine interest in the children. However, at times, staffing arrangements are not always organised to fully meet the individual needs of all children.

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

Children make good progress in their learning and development because staff have a secure knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They assess children as they play, using this information to inform future planning and thereby ensuring that children are offered appropriate activities that support their individual development. However, this is not fully promoted as there is no process for obtaining ongoing information from parents and using this to update children's assessment records. Children are encouraged to develop their own play and staff

make informed judgements about when to intervene in order to extend children's ideas and knowledge. Children are therefore supported in playing an active role in their learning and are developing positive attitudes to this.

Thoughtful procedures mean that children feel welcome and valued. For example, they are consulted about what they would like to do, and staff compile daily lists of what children say they have enjoyed, displaying these in the entrance lobby. The thoughtful provision of resources, particularly in the outdoor area, means that children are offered a wide variety of play opportunities. For example, they choose whether to sit in the 'outdoor classroom' or on a circle of logs, they plant and tend flowers and vegetables and have made log stacks and twig piles, where they enjoy looking for insects. Activities such as these extend children's knowledge of living things and provide creative opportunities to read, discuss and learn in an outdoor environment.

Children gain skills for the future and their understanding of appropriate behaviour is promoted as staff act as good role models. They explain to children the implications of their behaviour and encourage them to work together to resolve any disputes. Children's understanding of diversity is promoted as they access relevant resources and participate in activities and discussions. For example, they participate in activities related to 'One World Week', exploring associated story sacks and going on to discuss the different types of homes around the world. The good procedures for working with parents and carers mean that children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who use English as an additional language are offered appropriate support to enable them to participate meaningfully.

Children are encouraged to understand the relevance of healthy lifestyles. For example, they wash their hands before eating, discussing the reasons for this and referring to child-friendly posters to reinforce their understanding. Children's knowledge of healthy eating is extended as they participate in cooking activities, discussing the importance of eating a balanced range of food types. Children's development is promoted as staff make use of simple daily learning opportunities. For example, children enjoy putting together a large alphabet floor puzzle and staff encourage them to name the letters; children become engrossed as they hop from letter to letter, naming each one.

Good staff interaction enhances children's fun and encourages them to explore and experiment. For example, young children playing with sand are encouraged to use different scoops and containers, giggling as the staff member trickles the coloured sand over their hands. Staff make good use of children's interests to promote their development. For example, after noting that children are interested in dinosaurs, staff provide additional natural resources and work with children to make relevant landscapes to enhance their imaginary play.

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	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	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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