

Woodleys Farm 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

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Description of the setting

Woodley's Farm Day Nursery was registered in 2007. It is one of six nurseries operated by the same provider. The nursery operates from a farmhouse on the outskirts of the village of Roade, Northamptonshire. Care is provided on the ground floor and one first floor room. The latter is accessed via gated stairs and used for sleeping. Children have access to an enclosed play area outside and to extensive grounds, including farm animals.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register for a maximum of 40 children attending at any one time. There are currently 61 children on roll aged one to four years. Of these, 23 receive funding for early education. The nursery is open from Monday to Friday throughout the year. Children attend between 8am and 6pm for a variable number of days in the week.

There are currently 13 staff who work at the nursery, including a part-time cook. The temporary manager has a Foundation Degree in Early Years and all staff working directly with the children have an early years qualification to at least level 2 or 3.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are well looked after and clearly enjoy their time at the nursery. They make sound progress overall and good progress in developing the confidence to communicate as a result of staff attention and positive feedback. The setting makes good use of its unique farm environment and local visitors to support children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Partnership with parents is strong and parents report satisfaction with the care and education of their children. However, there is currently no system of self- evaluation involving all stakeholders to ensure that priorities for improvement are identified and acted on.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- secure ambitious and continuous improvement by ensuring that all stakeholders are clear about priorities and actions for improvement and by linking these to staff training and professional development
- review the system for tracking children's progress to ensure that it can be used to monitor children's learning and development over time and to support the nursery's self-evaluation and quality improvement strategy
- increase opportunities for children to develop their independence and use information and communication technology to support their learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are effectively safeguarded in the nursery because there is a clear policy in line with local safeguarding procedures. The designated person is appropriately trained and ensures that all staff understand what to do in case of concern about a child's welfare. All staff are checked and vetted before they have unsupervised access to children. There are very good systems in place to ensure that all staff are aware of children's health and medical needs. Key safety policies have been recently updated and future training needs have been identified and scheduled. Good staffing levels ensure that safety checks can be made on a daily basis and children are effectively supervised at all times.

Parents are happy with the service provided and have positive views of the opportunities provided by the relatively unique farm environment. Written information is provided to all parents and carers on a daily basis and this is clearly appreciated. The setting provides regular social events to ensure parents feel welcome and valued. There are formal and informal opportunities for parents and carers to discuss their child's progress with the key person. 'Learning Journeys', including observations, work samples and annotated photographs are shared at these meetings and parents can have access to these at any time throughout the year.

The new manager has already identified appropriate priorities for improvement and has a strong commitment to securing relevant training to support this. However, there is no system in place to ensure all stakeholders have a clear overview of what needs to be done to improve the quality of the nursery and outcomes for children, nor is this yet clearly linked to staff training and professional development. Very good use is made of visitors and the immediate environment to support children's knowledge and understanding of the world. This is supported by good use of displays including photographs and children's commentary linked to learning and development statements in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The outdoor space has great potential but there are some limitations to access and to resources which restricts children's self-initiated play and sustained interest. The manager is aware of this weakness.

There are good opportunities for children to express their individuality and they learn about the needs and interests of others through being involved in communication signing activities for example, and by hearing stories about the origins of Diwali and Chinese New Year celebrations.

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

Children enjoy their time at the nursery and make satisfactory progress overall in their learning and development. They make good progress in developing the confidence to engage in different activities and to communicate with each other and adults. This is a result of the high level of staffing and staff's active involvement in children's learning.

Children readily access books and turn pages in the right direction. They enjoy stories and rhymes and join in enthusiastically with a whole group activity based on 'Going on a Bear Hunt'. Younger children join in songs and rhymes as they prepare for lunch and are encouraged to name and talk about favourite characters as they engage in a cutting and sticking activity. Writing skills are celebrated in displays around the setting and younger children enjoy mark making with chalks outside. Children of all ages are confident to engage in mark making activities as a result of praise and encouragement from staff. Older children can write their name independently and talk and draw confidently to communicate their ideas, such as about favourite books and animals.

Numeracy skills are well supported through staff interaction and planned activities but some opportunities are missed because of the lack of resources to support children's independent learning. Children have very good opportunities for developing knowledge and understanding of food and farming through daily access to animals, such as goats, sheep and ponies and through visits from local tradesmen such as the baker and farrier. Younger children enjoy developing their senses by exploring sensory bags containing cinnamon sticks and lemon and by playing in the 'Reflective Corner'. However, resources for information technology are limited and not well maintained. This restricts opportunities for children to develop their understanding of how information communication technology and programmable toys can support learning. Resources outside to support role play, are also scarce and this limits children's sustained interest and creativity.

A high emphasis is placed on recording short observations about what children can do and say. The quality of these observations is good but the system of using them to track progress doesn't enable staff to see children's progress over time. Therefore there is no clear overview of learning and development to inform future planning and quality improvement in the setting. There is limited evidence of more detailed observations to ensure that there is a full and accurate picture of children's needs and interests to plan further learning experiences.

Children generally feel safe and secure because of the high level of adult attention but occasionally children become too dependent on the presence of their key person which means they are unsettled and unhappy. Children enjoy a wide and varied menu of food during the day and are often involved in cooking activities for example, making bread and hot cross buns. Staff are rigorous in reminding children to wash their hands before and after meals and there are regular opportunities for children to go outside and benefit from fresh air and exercise.

Children develop a positive attitude to learning as a result of staff enthusiasm and attention. But opportunities to develop their independence are limited by some organisational and access restraints. For example, although older children make choices between water and milk at snack time they do not have the opportunity to pour their own drinks or to spread and cut their own toast. Access to resources and activities outside are limited to particular times and so children cannot make independent choices about when and where they 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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
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	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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