

Railway Children Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Rachel Palmer

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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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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

The Railway Children Kindergarten opened in 1998 and is privately owned. The kindergarten has sole use of the ground floor of a detached property which was previously the ticket office for Epsom Downs railway station. It is situated in a residential area and serves families from the Epsom Downs area of Surrey. The kindergarten operates from Monday to Friday, during term time only and provides sessional care from 9am until 12.15pm, with an optional lunch club until 1.15pm on Thursdays and a longer session on Mondays and Wednesdays until 3pm. Children have access to three indoor areas, the main play room, a quiet room and an art room. There is an outside play area and car parking facilities for drop offs and pickups. There are three members of staff, plus two assistants who work when required. All regular staff have a recognised early years qualification. The kindergarten is registered on the Early Years Register to take 18 children in the early years age range from the age of two years, at any one time. The kindergarten is also registered on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. Currently there are 34 children on roll. The nursery is funded to provide some free early education to three- and four-year-olds. The kindergarten supports children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The kindergarten meets the children's needs well. They enjoy a wide range of resources and useful experiences that support their learning and development effectively, so they progress well. Systems to protect children are in place. Children are extremely capable and exceptionally independent in their learning. The kindergarten staff work outstandingly well with other agencies to obtain required support for individuals. Positive improvements have been made since the last inspection and the staff are consistent in self-evaluating their practice, showing a strong capacity to maintain improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve further the system to document children's individual targets to achieve consistency across the staff team, to provide better support for children if key staff are absent.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The kindergarten staff understand the safeguarding policy and keep all children safe and secure. The kindergarten has a well thought out procedure for dropping off and picking up children to maintain their safety at the start and end of sessions. All staff follow the safeguarding procedures consistently, having undertaken training to keep their knowledge up to date. They know how to proceed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff. Robust staff recruitment systems are in place, ensuring that all staff working with the children are checked as suitable to do so.

Staff implement the risk assessment carefully. They undertake thorough daily checks covering all stipulated areas in the kindergarten, so it is well prepared for the children in order to keep them safe. Since the previous inspection, improvements in maintaining separate documentation for each child also help maintain children's safety.

All staff are well trained, as a result of an effective staff appraisal system. They focus well on improving the nursery, which results in better outcomes for children. The nursery has a comprehensive system in place to evaluate practice in conjunction with advice from local authority staff.

Effective deployment of staff allows children the freedom to choose whether to play inside or out. Staff arrange spaces and suitable equipment so children spread out among three main rooms and an outside area, as they wish. This arrangement allows them to make frequent independent choices and participate in what activities they so choose, which maintains their interest.

Staff make sure that all children are included equally, regardless of their backgrounds or abilities. Girls and boys enjoy equal access to all resources and activities. Resources and activities reflect the full range of children's backgrounds because staff carefully select festivals through the year as a basis for different experiences. Children respond to harvest festival, Ramadan and the Chinese New Year, for example. Such planning helps all children feel welcomed and valued while learning that families differ.

The nursery has an enthusiastic approach in forming partnerships with other agencies, which improves outcomes for individual children successfully. The nursery is part of a local network of nurseries and works with the local authority and local schools to ensure continuity and progression to school through well-established channels of communication.

Parents benefit from a thorough induction programme, including introduction to the kindergarten's 'open door' policy during this time. Parents are encouraged to speak to staff themselves, at their convenience, to receive updates on their children's progress. A useful, regular newsletter and an informative board, written on daily, effectively keep parents informed of their children's activities; they

include details of upcoming events due to take place.

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

The kindergarten has a very warm and friendly atmosphere; children appear comfortable, happy and content, responding well to the established routine. The children benefit from a secure rapport with staff, who encourage them to talk about how they feel throughout their time in the kindergarten.

Staff gain a strong understanding of the children's development and achievements based on thorough and accurate assessment of what they do. This system starts when children enter the nursery, pinpointing their starting points accurately. Planning is of a high quality overall, although the actual documentation of individual targets varies, which means that there may be inconsistent practice when key staff are absent, as others supporting children cannot always read what children need to learn next.

Children show an extremely strong sense of security and belonging. This security allows them to explore the kindergarten with great confidence and independence. They enjoy the various areas, including the art room and quiet room. Children eagerly try out their early writing skills by making marks when painting and gradually gaining good hand control. They enjoy experimenting with water to discover which objects sink and float. The quiet room has a cosy corner and computer, where children play well-chosen computer games, showing they can use the computer independently and competently. All such activities show children acquiring useful skills for their future lives.

Children delight in using a wide variety of mediums and materials, such as play dough, sand and cornflour that support their imaginative and creative play well. They learn about their communities and exciting special events, such as the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, so developing knowledge of their heritage. Children use the outside space eagerly. This area includes a wide range of resources that help them gain physical control and new skills, including riding bikes, climbing and trying hula hoops.

Children practise good hygiene routines, such as washing and drying their hands thoroughly before eating, and learning why they do so. They bring healthy snacks from home, as staff encourage parents to provide appropriate food content in lunch boxes. The children benefit from regular physical activity and learn about taking precautions such as wearing sunscreen when needed.

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	1
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	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