

Rathlee Nursery School

Rathlee Nursery School, 14 Grosvenor Road, ST. HELENS, Merseyside, WA10 3HX

Inspection date	25/04/2013
Previous inspection date	05/02/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	4
	Previous inspection:	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		4
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		4
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		4

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is inadequate

- Assessments of what children know and can do are not always accurate. As a result, planned activities are sometimes inappropriate for the child's stage of development and/or are not achievable. Consequently, some children are not engaged or effectively challenged.
- The poor organisation of resources hinders the emotional and social development of two-year-old children and the self-help skills of older children at lunch time.
- Some children sleep on poor quality beds that are not washable. This presents a hygiene risk to children.
- The monitoring of practice and ability to target improvements is weak. As a result, the quality of teaching is inconsistent.
- It is not clear that the facilities and procedures in the log cabin meet the requirements of health and safety legislation, with regard to hand washing and the making of baby bottles of milk formula.

It has the following strengths

- Children form warm relationships with staff, who care about them. As a result, they are happy to attend the nursery.
- Children in the pre-school room are well mannered and behave well.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children's activities in the playrooms and the outdoor area used at the inspection.
- The inspector looked at children's records, planning documentation, evidence of suitability of staff working in the setting and a range of other records, policies and procedures.
- The inspector spoke with the manager, staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.
- The inspector and deputy manager conducted a joint observation.

Inspector

Lynne Naylor

Full Report

Information about the setting

Rathlee Nursery School was registered in 2007 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in St Helens, Merseyside and is managed by a private provider. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from several rooms on the ground floor of a two-storey building and a log cabin in the garden. There are enclosed areas available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 13 members of childcare staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and eight at level 6. One staff member has Qualified Teacher Status. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, from 7.30am to 6pm, all year round. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 66 children attending, who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. It supports children, who speak English as an additional language and those with special needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- improve assessments of what children already know and can do; use the ongoing assessment of children's achievements, interests and learning styles to plan and shape learning experiences, in order to effectively challenge each child
- organise toys and equipment, so they are sufficient in quality and quantity to support the development of two-year-old children's social skills and to promote the self-help skills of older children at lunch time
- ensure that suitable beds and an adequate supply of clean bedding are available for children who sleep
- implement effective and informed performance monitoring, and tackle under-performance through targeted support for, and the professional development of staff
- ensure the log cabin is fit for the purpose of caring for babies, in particular, be aware of and comply with requirements of health and safety legislation, including hygiene requirements.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children are generally working comfortably within the typical range of development expected for their age. However, children's progress is not good enough, given their starting points. Staff observe children, but their assessment of what children can do is not always accurate enough. Therefore, what some staff plan for children to learn next is not well matched to children's needs. Therefore, children's experiences are not always interesting or they are so challenging they are not achievable. As a result, some children are not appropriately engaged in learning.

Staff are trying to gain information from parents about what their children do at home. They now keep children's learning records in drawers, in order to encourage parents to read them more regularly. Some use is made of communication books and sheets, which parents of younger children take home nightly, although, information exchanged is mainly about children's care. Most information is exchanged verbally with parents as they drop off and collect their children. This means that some parents are better informed than others.

Children help themselves to appropriate toys because suitable ranges that cover all the areas of learning are readily accessible. For example, there are crayons for making marks on clipboards and chinks for chalkboards. Toddlers fit shapes into spaces while completing a range of puzzles. Staff play alongside children and offer some guidance but not sufficient challenge to help them to make sound progress. Children are occupied rather than actively engaged in learning. Older children play matching picture games, which helps to improve their mathematical skills.

Babies have good access to manufactured toys. They also sometimes handle everyday objects and natural items, such as metal spoons and sponges. Children develop some skills in their physical, personal, social and emotional development and in communication and language development. They have daily opportunities to be physically active outdoors. However, this does not always coincide with when they would like to as some children have to stay inside and wait for their turn.

Staff effectively foster children's speaking and listening skills. Baby room staff provide verbal commentaries on what is happening, which enables babies to link words with actions. They sing with young babies and encourage them to join in. Toddlers and pre-school children sing action rhymes and songs that require turn taking. This suitably supports their social development as well as their language development. Children are beginning to develop an appreciation of books and reading. They listen attentively to stories and visit the library. Some stories promote their awareness of similarities and differences between themselves and others. Children learn about the local community when they visit the park next door and talk to the rangers, who raise their interest in the natural world.

Some sound learning takes place, particularly when experiences are well linked. For example, pre-school children use tools safely and learn about nature as they plant seeds

in the garden. They begin to understand time and size as they check their indoor pots for growth. Children use their memory to recall the names of the gardening tools. The link to gardening continues in the art area as they are inspired, by the photograph attached to the easel, to paint pictures of sunflowers. However, the environment for children aged two years is less well organised and at times, they are not engaged in their play.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Some resources are of poor quality and some are not used well enough to provide challenge for children or engage their interest. The poor organisation of resources has most impact on the emotional and social development of two-year-old children. For example, they are unable to keep the sand in the tray as requested by staff because there are too many of them around it. Unnecessary squabbles occur because there are not enough implements to share.

Staff use information from parents about each child's health requirements, allergies, special dietary needs and their food preferences to meet children's unique needs. A range of fresh food prepared and cooked on the premises ensures children eat healthily. Children are beginning to learn about healthy foods as they plant and grow seeds, such as beetroot in the garden. However, the organisation of mealtimes limits opportunities to support children's independence. For example, plates, cups and cutlery are handed out by staff. Children spoon out some beef hotpot on to their plate but, as there is only one dish, some children are waiting for more before everyone is served. Water is provided in a large jug, which staff hold as children make attempts to pour, because the jug is too heavy. Therefore, self-help skills are not sufficiently promoted to support children's growing independence. Nevertheless, children form warm relationships with staff, who care about them. They enter happily and parents feel confident to leave them. Babies receive plenty of cuddles and good eye contact with staff. This helps them to develop a sense of security and well-being.

The beds are of poor quality and are not washable. This presents a hygiene risk. However, older babies are so secure in their routines that they independently lie on their beds after lunch and settle off to sleep. On waking, they are given time for a cuddle until they are ready to go off and play. This means that their emotional well-being is positively promoted. Older children behave well because staff's effective use of praise and positive reinforcement helps them to understand what they have done well and what is expected of them. They play cooperatively in small groups and have good manners. Children make sound physical development. They practise their climbing skills as they walk up the ladder on the slide. Children make a walkway from wooden blocks and planks and walk across with increasing balance.

Parents are given essential information about the nursery when their child enrolls. When it is time to move up to the next room, children are well prepared and supported. The new key person is provided with a transition report, so that they are aware of important information about the child. Parents are involved as they meet with the new key person and visit the child's next room. Children become familiar with their new room as they visit with their key person close by for support if required. The nursery has positive plans as to

how they will manage children's transitions to other settings, such as nurseries and school. They invite teachers to visit them in the setting. They recognise the benefits of sharing summaries of children's learning and development and have a meeting planned with a local school to discuss records of learning. The nursery is supportive of children, who have English as an additional language.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The registered person, who is also the manager understands her responsibility to meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The inspection took place following notification by the provider that a legal requirement regarding child protection had been breached. Following an incident, the manager carried out a full review of the safeguarding arrangements. This resulted in two new safeguarding officers being designated and both have places booked on a child protection training course. All staff have been re-briefed on how to identify and report signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity. As a result, the inspection found that the staff were fully aware of their responsibilities and knew what to do if concerned about a child. Appropriate arrangements for safeguarding children within the provision are now in place.

Staff care about the nursery and are taking steady steps to develop what they offer. Managers and staff receive support and guidance from the local authority early years advisor. They welcome this support, which has led to appropriately targeted action to improve the provision. Staff are involved in evaluating the nursery and have an action plan for each room. They have made some changes to the way they observe, assess and record children's learning, although, it is too soon for these to be affecting practice and improving outcomes for children. Arrangements for monitoring the progress of particular groups of children, for example, two-year-olds, are not well established and this results in some children not being sufficiently supported to make the best possible progress.

The manager routinely reviews risk assessments each year with the staff team to make sure that risks are minimised or eliminated. Staff visually check their rooms and the outdoor area are suitable and safe for children. However, there is no evidence that advice has been sought from Environmental Health regarding nappy changing and milk preparation in the log cabin. A robust recruitment and vetting process is in place to check and monitor staff's suitability to work with children. All staff and students receive induction training and a checklist monitors that they have been informed of all the relevant policies and practices. The use of mobile telephones and cameras is carefully restricted to protect children.

Regular team meetings are becoming useful for sharing ideas and for discussing any childcare issues. Staff meet as a team to improve their knowledge, understanding and practice. The manager recognises the need to monitor staff performance and the effectiveness of teaching. A structured way of supervising staff has been introduced but is not sufficiently targeted to identify weaker practice. Supervision is not firmly linked to the identification of training to improve the effectiveness of individual staff. Therefore, there are inconsistencies in the nursery with regard to effective teaching that are not yet being

addressed.

Since the last inspection, due attention has been given to meeting the recommendations raised. Increasing use is made of the outdoor area to promote children's development in most areas. Due attention has been given to evaluating the nursery, consequently, the management team is clearly aware of the nursery's strengths and areas for development. Implemented changes are beginning to drive forward improvements to raise the overall quality of the nursery. Parents, children and staff views are beginning to feed into the evaluation system. Staff work generally well with parents and other professionals to meet the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY363684
Local authority	St. Helens
Inspection number	915825
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	48
Number of children on roll	66
Name of provider	Kerry Joanna Maria Hughes
Date of previous inspection	05/02/2010
Telephone number	01744 613 427

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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