

Inspection of Rocking Horse Day Nursery

Rocking Horse Day Nursery, 2 Freemans Way, Greens Norton, TOWCESTER,
Northamptonshire NN12 8FR

Inspection date: 31 August 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are warmly welcomed into the nursery by friendly staff who show a genuine interest in them. They develop strong relationships with staff and seek them out for support and comfort. This helps children to feel safe and secure. Children are curious as they explore a wide range of toys and activities. For example, together they successfully build castles with wooden blocks. They share ideas and make suggestions, listening to one another's thoughts and opinions, which shows care and consideration for their peers. Children demonstrate positive, friendly behaviours. They engage visitors in conversations about their recent holidays. Children have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe as they remind each other of the rule to walk inside.

Outdoors, children enjoy exploring the large inviting garden. They develop their physical skills as they negotiate obstacles, play chase and use ride-along cars. Young children curiously explore textures as they play with pasta, shaving foam and herbs. Children thoroughly enjoy role play. They wash baby dolls and pour 'tea' for each other. This helps children to develop social skills as they re-enact real-life experiences. Children develop a love for nature and enjoy caring for the nursery pony that lives in the field next to the garden.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Together, management and staff create a sequenced curriculum that focuses on teaching children knowledge and skills to successfully move on to the next stages of development. For example, while babies are learning to verbalise their needs, older children are learning to form longer sentences to communicate. Staff skilfully use their knowledge of each child to engage them in activities, incorporating their interests and fascinations to focus their attention. Children's development is monitored and gaps in their learning are identified. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well through appropriate personalised planning methods.
- Staff support children to develop mathematical skills through everyday activities. They encourage younger children to count and use numbers in their play. Older children estimate how many bricks they have used to build walls. Children learn about shapes, colours and numbers during small-group activities.
- Children learn to be independent. Staff role model and teach young children to use cutlery independently to feed themselves. Older children learn to put on their own shoes and clothing unaided, demonstrating persistence when faced with challenge. Children learn the importance of oral health as they regularly brush their teeth after lunch.
- Children learn about the wider world outside the nursery. They explore the local community through visits to the parks, butchers and church. This helps to

broaden children's experiences.

- Books are accessible to children in cosy corners with soft furnishings. However, staff do not regularly promote the use of books and stories enough throughout the day to help children develop a love for books and reading.
- Transitional periods, such as settling in and moving on to school, are highly valued. Children and their parents are invited to settling-in sessions which are adapted to meet their individual needs. Managers work with feeder schools to ensure a smooth transition for children. Staff complete information forms and invite teachers to the nursery to meet the children. This helps children to become familiar with the adults who will be caring for them.
- The management team fosters a culture of positive and passionate staff who form a highly qualified and long-standing team. It supports staff's continuous professional development through training and supervision meetings, where it provides constructive feedback for improvement. This encourages staff to reflect on their practice and identify areas for further development.
- Parents give high praise to staff for the level of support their children and family receive. They say the nursery feels like an extended family due to the staff's welcoming and nurturing nature. They are fully confident in the care provided to their children. Parents appreciate the effective communication methods used to ensure they feel fully involved in their child's time at nursery. Staff share story sacks and activity ideas with parents to ensure children's learning is mirrored at home.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The management team ensures that staff's knowledge of child protection is current. It talks to staff about the signs and symptoms of abuse at staff meetings. The managers and staff know where to report concerns about children's welfare, to promote their safety. They understand the whistle-blowing procedure and what to do if they have a concern about a colleague. When appointing new staff, the managers follow thorough recruitment processes to assure themselves that staff are suitable. There are robust induction plans in place for all new staff. Effective risk assessments are in place to ensure children can play safely, inside and outside.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- enhance the use of stories and books throughout the setting to support children's love of books and reading.

Setting details

Unique reference number	219974
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10138475
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 4
Total number of places	64
Number of children on roll	72
Name of registered person	The Rocking Horse Day Nursery Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP535245
Telephone number	01327 351600
Date of previous inspection	22 August 2013

Information about this early years setting

Rocking Horse Day Nursery registered in 1997. The nursery employs 16 members of childcare staff, including the manager, who holds an early years professional status qualification. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, from 8am until 6pm, all year round, except for bank holidays.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Rachael Small

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The inspector and the manager completed a learning walk across all the areas of the setting to understand how the curriculum is organised.
- A joint observation of an activity was carried out by the inspector and the manager.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities, indoors and outdoors. She assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector held a number of discussions with staff at appropriate times during the inspection and spoke to children. She also took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.
- The inspector held a meeting with the provider and manager. She looked at relevant documentation, such as evidence of the suitability of staff working in the setting.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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