

Inspection of Rocking Horse Nursery

The Old Brewery House, Bath Road, Shaw, Melksham, Wiltshire SN12 8EF

Inspection date: 15 February 2023

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	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children settle quickly into their day at this welcoming and friendly nursery. They feel a strong sense of belonging. Staff greet children warmly when they arrive and chat as they help them to decide where to hang their coats. The older children find their name tag to put on their pegs before they go off to play in their rooms.

Older children freely explore the wide variety of toys and games before choosing what to play with. Staff provide well-thought-out activities that reflect the children's interests and needs. For example, in the pre-school room, children have pictures in a construction area to give them ideas and help them decide what to build. The staff in the baby room are kind and gentle, and they know the children well. All children develop their physical skills and a love of nature in the large, secure garden. Younger children enjoy climbing onto the toy tractors for a drive around the patio area, and the older children learn how to grow a variety of fruits and vegetables. They learn how to prepare the soil, through to enjoying the produce at snack or lunchtime during their forest school sessions.

Children understand how to keep themselves safe. For example, in the pre-school room, the children take it in turns to be a 'Safety Spy'. They eagerly check inside and outside for anything that might be broken or may hurt them.

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

- The manager and deputy have high aspirations for the children in their care. They have a well-thought-out curriculum with communication and language at the heart of the nursery. The staff are guided and supported in their practice by management who spend time in each room. This has led to a change in the toddler room. More neutral colours have been provided, meaning the children are able to play and focus on their activities in a calmer environment.
- Children's language and communication are well supported. In the baby room, staff offer simple signs as well as spoken words. Staff extend the older children's vocabulary during play. For example, when building a sandcastle, staff introduce the word 'moat' to a group of pre-school children. The children discuss moats and what they are for before deciding it needs to be bigger.
- Staff understand the importance of giving children time to think and discuss ideas. During a colour-mixing experiment in the pre-school room, the children work together to decide which colours to mix. They draw on previous learning to predict what may happen. By celebrating their successes together, children feel valued and gain in confidence.
- Staff encourage the children's independence effectively. The younger ones receive lots of praise when they find their coats and shoes. The older children serve themselves at snack time. They select their snack and drink and carry

these confidently to a table.

- Overall, staff interact well with children during play. For example, when outside, the toddlers play on the ride-on tractors. Staff guide and encourage the children to climb into the seat themselves. The children respond with big smiles when staff applaud their success. Staff in the baby room are caring and gentle. However, on occasion, they do not ensure all children are fully aware of the activities available or fully support them to become involved in what is on offer.
- Staff encourage children's developing mathematical skills. For example, the younger children count the eyes and ears on the guinea pig. The older children count how many strawberries they have for snack. They work out how many more they need to get to their desired amount and are challenged to consider whether this will leave enough for their friends.
- Generally, routines of the day work well. The babies pick up on visual clues for their daily routines. For example, when staff get the high chairs, they understand it is time for a meal. However, for younger children who may not routinely sleep after lunch, staff do not always make effective arrangements to meet their interests or learning needs fully. There are limited resources available for these children as they play in an area away from their sleeping friends.
- Parents speak positively about the nursery. They receive daily feedback from staff about their child's day. If their child has an accident at nursery, they know they will receive a phone call from management and sign an accident record when they collect their child. Parents are able to share their child's individual needs, such as dietary requirements, during their 'Getting to Know You' starter session.
- The management team holds the staff well-being in high regard. The staff benefit from a new staff room, a quiet space for paperwork and breaks away from the children. This gives them time to reflect quietly on their key children so that they can plan effectively for the children's next steps in learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a clear understanding and knowledge of how to report any concerns about the children's welfare. There are flow charts in each room as a reference for the staff to access if required. When scenarios were discussed with staff, they confidently knew the reporting procedures to follow, including those involving a colleague. Staff training is updated regularly and robust procedures are in place to check staff suitability. New staff complete induction training, which includes the nursery's policies and procedures for safeguarding.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- provide more support to the younger children to fully engage and explore the activities available so that they ignite their curiosity further
- improve the arrangements for those children that do not sleep after lunch, so that they continue to benefit from resources and interactions that promote their interests and learning needs.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY104146
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10264392
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	06 to 60
Total number of places	39
Number of children on roll	74
Name of registered person	Milner, Fiona Mhairi
Registered person unique reference number	RP904799
Telephone number	01225 700894
Date of previous inspection	14 June 2017

Information about this early years setting

Rocking Horse Nursery registered in 2002. It is situated in the village of Shaw, on the outskirts of the town of Melksham in Wiltshire. It opens from 8am until 6pm, Monday to Friday, all year round. They close for bank holidays and between Christmas and New Year. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. It employs 17 staff who work directly with the children. Of these, 15 staff members hold an appropriate childcare qualification at level 2 to level 6, including the chef.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Manda Fisher

Inspection activities

- This is 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 a room leader carried out a joint observation of a group activity.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, both indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to parents during the inspection and took their views into account.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times and took account of their views.
- The manager and deputy joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and deputy to discuss how they support staff development.

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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