

Rainbow House Nursery Ltd (Hatfield)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY368169
Inspection date	02/12/2008
Inspector	Siobhan O'Callaghan / Gillian Charlesworth
Setting address	4 Parkhouse Court, Hatfield, AL10 9RQ
Telephone number	01707 268510
Email	
Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

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.

Description of the setting

Rainbow House Nursery opened in May 2008. It operates from a purpose-built building which is all on one-level; the accommodation is fully accessible to all users. The nursery is situated on Comet Square which is part of the Hatfield Business Park. The accommodation comprises of five base rooms, with additional play space and a lunch room in the main corridor. All children have shared access to a secure, enclosed outside area. A maximum of 96 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open all year, however it closes for national holidays and for three days a year for staff training. The setting is open from 08:00 until 18:00. It is the second nursery owned by Rainbow House Nursery Ltd. The other site is in Wheathampstead near St Albans. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register.

There are currently 55 children attending who are all within the early years age group. The nursery is registered to receive nursery education funding. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs 19 staff. Of these, 10 staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications and eight staff are working towards a qualification.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Rainbow House Nursery provides good learning and development opportunities for children within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Children are warmly welcomed into this bright and stimulating environment where there is a strong focus on valuing and respecting the uniqueness of each child. Effective partnerships with parents further supports the provision in promoting most aspects of children's welfare and progression. The provision demonstrates an excellent approach to continuous improvement which is evident within their comprehensive self-evaluation. Their ability to reflect on their practice and instigate improvements is a strength of this provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the recording and sharing of safeguarding children concerns
- enhance children's access to the indoor and outdoor environments so that children can move freely between them
- develop ways in which parents are supported and encouraged to contribute to their children's assessment records.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The provider is an experienced early year's practitioner who demonstrates a commitment to providing high quality care and education for children. She involves all staff in the continual reviewing of the provision and welcomes new ideas from staff, children and parents on how to improve further. She has employed an enthusiastic, committed and well-qualified team of staff, all of whom show an interest in improving their knowledge and skills through attending updated training opportunities. Good staff deployment and high staff ratios effectively supports children's care and learning as they receive valuable levels of support and attention. This is further promoted through an effective key worker system which supports staff in meeting children's individual care needs. The provider values working in partnership with parents and provides them with good quality information about the early year's provision. Parents demonstrate that they are happy with the care their children receive through both discussion and within parental questionnaires. Parents' comments include: 'I am really impressed with the nursery as a whole, the staff, food, activities, and the level of care', 'the nursery is well equipped, has a lovely atmosphere, warm, lots of smiles'. Parents play a key role in sharing information with staff to support their children's care; however, as yet, their ability to be involved within their children's assessment records has not been fully established.

The provider has developed some thorough policies and procedures to support the safe management of her nursery. Vetting and recruitment procedures are on the whole extremely secure and support the safety and protection of children. There are excellent safety measures in place to ensure that the building is secure and safe. Comprehensive daily risk assessments are completed to monitor any hazards which are quickly highlighted and removed. All outings that children take part in are assessed for potential risk and checklists are managed to ensure that staff take essential equipment with them. The staff team have a sound knowledge and understanding of safeguarding issues and are aware of the possible signs and symptoms of abuse. They are confident in recording any arising concerns in a confidential diary, however, the recording and sharing of safeguarding issues is not secure and may possibly impact on children's welfare.

The provision is effectively organised to promote an inclusive environment for children. An abundance of good quality resources are attractively displayed and are easily accessible to all children including babies. Bright and colourful displays of children's work adorn the walls and create a stimulating backdrop for children, staff and parents. The environment is extremely welcoming and inviting and has a busy and yet very calm atmosphere. Children are keen to observe photographs of themselves when they hang up their coats and when they observe the routines of the day. This fully supports their sense of belonging and the feeling of being valued within this provision. Both the indoor and outside environments are organised well to offer children effective challenges to support their all-round development. However, access to the outside play area is focussed around daily routines which do not fully encourage children's independent use of this area.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are making good progress in all areas of their learning as they explore a wide range of stimulating and exciting activities and experiences. The staff team are developing positive planning and assessment systems that focus on the uniqueness of each child; this helps to monitor children's individual progression, although more involvement with parents is required. A good focus on taking the lead from children supports them to be active learners. The staff team are fully engaged with the children at all times as they sensitively challenge and extend their learning within daily routines. For example, older children develop independence and self-care skills as they enjoy helping themselves to their own lunch, they skilfully handle utensils and are aware of taking due care around the hot food. This relaxed social occasion is a time for children to communicate with each other and the staff team. They are learning positive social skills as they wait patiently for their turn to pour drinks and serve food. Staff are very respectful towards children as they allow them to take their time and listen attentively to what they have to say. Subsequently children are developing polite manners and excellent modes of behaviour.

Children are motivated learners as they enthusiastically engage within both adult-led and self-initiated activities. They thoroughly enjoy being active both inside and out in the garden, although there are missed opportunities to promote children's free access to outside play. Children show intense curiosity and concentration as they find an old fashioned suitcase by the dressing-up resources. A staff member is close by to guide the children and encourage them to think about how they might open it. The children are delighted to discover the key and learn how to operate the catches to get this open. Their enthusiasm continues as they use their senses to stroke the silky fabric and the pockets they find inside. Staff effectively follow children's interests and develop their ideas through the implementation of mini-topics. For example, children's excitement in finding small insects in the garden is developed into a topic on mini-beasts. Children are able to explore a spiders web in close detail as staff find an innovative way of spraying this with hairspray and transferring it onto black paper. These impromptu activities positively value children's own ideas and in turn motivate them to learn.

Young babies are extremely happy and content. It is evident that they have established secure and trusting relationships with their key workers. They confidently explore a broad range of natural materials in their designated sensory room. The atmosphere is very relaxed as they listen to soothing music and enjoy the sweet smell of lavender which adds to this very calming environment. Babies demonstrate their natural curiosity and their eagerness to learn as they independently move around and explore the resources which are fully accessible to them. The focus is on heuristic play, thus staff do not disrupt this valuable learning, although they are close by to support them if necessary. These young children are fully supported to express themselves as they use simple sign language and gestures to demonstrate for example when they want a drink or if they would like more. Staff have found this a very positive tool to aid them in meeting children's needs.

Children's welfare is promoted through many positive practices within their daily routines. They enjoy eating healthy and nutritious home-cooked meals and learn the importance of personal hygiene as they brush their teeth after lunch. All children have opportunities to enjoy fresh air and exercise on a daily basis. Babies are taken for walks in their prams whilst older children have designated times to play in the garden. Children's understanding of keeping safe is permeated throughout the setting as they learn how to use resources effectively and safely. For example, when children get carried away with buttering their scones and then attempt to lick the knife, there is a discussion about the potential dangers of these actions. Children are involved in emergency evacuation drills and regularly go for walks in the local environment where safety is always reinforced through discussion and good practice. Children are delighted to help take care of the nursery pets which include a puppy, tortoise, hamster, African snail and goldfish. Through these purposeful experiences children learn about the needs of others and how they must also take due care and attention to their own health and safety needs. Overall, the children are developing many important learning and development skills which set secure foundations for their future learning.

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	3

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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