

# The Railway Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Inspection date** 08/09/2009  
**Inspector** Melanie Eastwell

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**Type of setting** Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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*.

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.

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## Description of the setting

The Railway Nursery School registered in 1999 and re-registered in 2009 with a change of owner. The nursery operates from a community building, they are sole users when the nursery is in operation. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The provision is located in Lavendon, Milton Keynes in Buckinghamshire. It is open Monday to Friday, 51 weeks of the year from 7:30am to 6:00pm.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 42 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 66 children aged from birth to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but does include the provider's confirmation of compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register at the end of the report.

There are 12 members of staff, 11 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications and the nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Well-developed knowledge of each child's individual needs ensures that staff promote most aspects of children's welfare and learning with success. Children are safe and secure at all times and enjoy learning about their local area and the world around them. The partnership working with the local school and other agencies and particularly with parents is a key strength and contributes significantly to ensuring that the needs of all children are met well and they get any additional support they need. This means that children make good progress, given their age, ability and starting points. The nursery has commenced a process of self-evaluation to identify areas of strong practice and to identify priorities for future development and this continues to develop.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the systems for planning and the assessment of the children to ensure that individual children's interests are used to inform the future planning and to clearly show their progression in learning and development
- ensure that consistent good practices are maintained for children's hygiene and safety relating to the procedures for children to dry their hands and the

system for cleaning children's faces and hands after meals.

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

Well-managed documentation and an organised approach by the management team underpin the daily activity in the nursery relating to most aspects of children's well-being. However, the systems for managing the children's hygiene and safety are not always followed consistently throughout the nursery and this potentially compromises their safety and protection from cross-infection. Comprehensive risk assessments are followed that include daily checks of all areas of the nursery and these are updated as required. Children's welfare is safeguarded. The staff understand their obligation to follow the nursery procedures and the guidance from the Local Safeguarding Children Board in the event of any child protection concerns. Appropriate procedures are in place for ensuring the recruitment of and to check the ongoing suitability of the staff and annual appraisals are carried out to ensure any training needs are identified. The owner of the nursery is committed to increasing the knowledge and skills of the staff through further training such as the Foundation Degree. This active commitment to investing in the staff's continued development has a positive impact on the children's experiences in the nursery. The management and staff team have commenced the process of self-evaluation and work together as a creative team. They are beginning to identify and celebrate areas of good practice and to consider their priorities for further development within the nursery.

The partnership working within the nursery is very effective, particularly the relationships with the children's parents. The staff have very good links in place with the local school and endeavour to build links with other schools that the children go to when they leave the nursery. Parents are highly complimentary about their children's experiences at the nursery. They report that the staff are always friendly and approachable and that they receive both written and verbal feedback about their child's progress on a daily basis. Notice boards and displays around the nursery inform parents about general childhood information, forthcoming events and the topics and activities their children will be offered. These complement the regular newsletters, twice yearly parents evenings and open days the nursery hold for the parents. The nursery supports working parents whose children attend the local school by providing sessional care for those children initially starting school on a part-time basis and by providing an after school club for older children.

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

Children enjoy the staff's highly positive interaction with them during their time at the nursery. They respond to the staff's positive facial expressions, praise and encouragement and this promotes children's developing self-esteem and confidence. For example, staff sit with a variety of activities in each of the nursery rooms, they talk to the children about what they are doing and are willing to get

involved in their play. The staff are skilled in knowing when to intervene in order to make suggestions to enhance the game, the children's vocabulary or on the invitation of the children and when to sit back and observe what is going on. Children are provided with plenty of opportunities to develop their understanding of the world. For example, they celebrate a variety of different festivals and have access to a good range of books and resources that recognise diversity, they grow plants and vegetables in the nursery garden, visitors come in to help with the gardening and bring in different animals such as rabbits and millipedes and they explore messy play including water, sand and soil. Children get on well together; they begin to develop friendships with their peers. For example, pre-school children work together on a complicated game in which they negotiate with each other about the different roles in the game and work together to create a 'den' in which to play. Babies demonstrate that they are happy and relaxed. For example, they settle to sleep quickly and they move confidently between the range of activities set out for them and approach the staff for comfort and reassurance as required. Children in the two-to-three year old room show increasing independence skills. For example, they take their slippers off and know which box to put them in for storage and go on to attempt to put their shoes on ready for outside play.

The nursery is currently in the process of updating the way the staff plan activities and the assessment of the children's progression. The planning is linked to monthly themes that include a range of activities to cover the six areas of learning and individual elements of the early learning goals. The key workers record a focused activity on each area of learning every week and use the evaluation of this to identify individual children's next steps for learning for the next week's plans. Children's achievements are recorded through samples of their work presented in scrap books and a tracking document. However, the current planning does not show evidence of children's interests being used to inform the future planning and the current system for recording children's achievements does not demonstrate clear evidence of observations to show how children are progressing in their learning and development. The key worker system is effective throughout the nursery. The staff have base rooms but also spend regular time in the other rooms to ensure they know all the children well and the routines in the other nursery rooms. This 'buddy' approach ensures consistency for parents because they know that the members of staff present at the beginning and end of the day have close links with each other and this promotes a sense of belonging and security for the children.

## 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

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b> | 2 |
| The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement                                     | 2 |

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

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>                          | 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  | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers                                | 1 |

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

|  |   |
|--|---|
| The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
|--|---|

### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b> | 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            | 3 |
| The extent to which children make a positive contribution        | 2 |
| 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