

Merry-Go-Round

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date 19/04/2012
Inspector Denise Aitken

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Type of setting Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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*.

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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

Merry-Go-Round Ltd was taken over by the current owner in September 2011. Merry-Go-Round first became registered by Ofsted in 2002. It is situated in the centre of Weybridge, Surrey, where it operates from St James Church Hall. The nursery uses a hall, smaller room, kitchen and toilet facilities. Children have limited access to a large garden; there is also a local park. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 36 children in the early years age group may attend at any one time. The nursery is open five mornings a week from 9.15am to 12.30pm during term time only. There are currently 56 children from two to four years on roll. The nursery is funded to provide free early education to children aged three and four years. The nursery employs five permanent staff members; of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications including the manager, who holds a relevant level three qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Overall, children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because staff include all children's interests and experiences in the planning of activities. Children have many worthwhile play experiences and enjoy making choices in this well-resourced nursery. Staff have high expectations for children to become independent and to participate in maintaining good standards of safety and self-care. A thoughtful evaluation of the nursery provision by the new management has been translated into clear targets for future development, so demonstrating the capacity to maintain good practice and continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the engagement with parents and carers by encouraging them to review their children's progress regularly and to contribute to their child's learning and development record
- provide more opportunities for the older and more capable children to investigate objects and materials, together with their properties, and to be interested in the natural world

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The management is competent in carrying out duties to safeguard all children. All staff are subject to thorough recruitment procedures, so all hold Criminal Records Bureau checks. New staff members have an effective induction to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities towards keeping the children and nursery environment safe. There are policies and procedures in place, which staff follow carefully to ensure that daily setting-up of nursery equipment and activities is checked to identify and minimise risk to children. The management attends training to keep up-to-date about safeguarding practice. As a consequence of all these actions, children's well-being is safeguarded to a good standard.

The new management has been effective in carrying out an initial evaluation of the nursery provision and has identified areas for improvement accurately, showing a desire to drive improvement. One particular improvement is documenting children's interests, so that resources and activities can be set out accordingly. This new and effective system of planning is having a positive effect on children because it keeps them motivated and active in their play. Partnerships with other agencies are developed well for the benefit of children. The nursery has good links with the local authority and follows its guidance on evaluating and improving practice. An example here is the introduction of a self-service snack time to allow children more choice over when to take a break from activities.

Staff are deployed well and resources put to good use to provide engaging learning experiences for all children. Staff make good use of the environment, setting up stimulating spaces inside for physical activity. Ample staffing allows for children to enjoy physical activities provided by the local community and regular trips to the local park. These arrangements contribute to children adopting healthy lifestyles through frequent exercise. The nursery's resources reflect good attitudes of both management and staff towards equality and diversity. Children use toys and books with positive images. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is effective in working with both other agencies and parents to ensure that children with additional needs are fully supported.

Partnership with parents is adequate. A parents' board is regularly updated. Displays offer basic information about the nursery and a website has been launched to aid publicity. A parent says that she finds the updating useful, especially information about the planned play themes, because it helps her to know what to talk about with her child. The management is committed to providing an open door policy to existing and prospective parents. Currently, there are no systems in place to regularly inform parents and carers about children's progress, or strategies to involve them in the assessment of children's learning and development. There are plans in place to launch an open day for parents and carers to improve communications.

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

Children enjoy their time during the nursery session because they have freedom to make independent choices about what they would like to do, such as whether to play alone, with others or participate in an adult-led activity. Staff plan stimulating activities based on children's individual interests across all six areas of learning, so children are keen to play. Some older children are not challenged as well as possible to find out about the world around them although, overall, they still progress well. The key person system ensures that all children have an adult who gets to know them well personally and observes their progress closely. The planning system is based on the knowledge the key person holds on their particular children. This system results in all children making good progress overall from their starting points on entry.

Children show that they feel safe through the way they move confidently around the large hall. Staff are on hand to help and support children as they play. Children know how to behave and understand the daily routines. This awareness stems from staff taking a consistent approach, and making expectations clear, which helps children to feel secure. In particular this consistency helps the younger children settle into the nursery because they can learn from the examples set by others.

Children progress well in learning about healthy living. They readily eat fresh fruit at snack time, understand that it is a good idea to drink water and display excellent independence in their hygiene practices and self-care. They visit the local park frequently and benefit from sports coaching from the local football team. Children use a good range of outdoor equipment, such as bikes, scooters, balls and hoops to gain other skills and generally enjoy exercise.

The daily routine offers a good balance of adult-led and child-led activities. The hall is sectioned into well-equipped spaces covering the required areas of learning effectively overall. The small room is set up mainly for the older children, providing access to information and communication technology equipment, as well as offering group activities to develop literacy and numeracy skills. All these activities help children gain useful skills for their future education when they move on to school.

Children of all ages display good levels of confidence because they are in control of their own play. This confidence results from the broad range of interesting experiences available and the flexible approach by staff, as to how children use the environment provided. Children enjoy taking on small responsibilities. They help tidy up at the end of sessions and they take pride in making sure everything is replaced in the right box. Staff take account of children's views and preferences by asking what songs they wish to sing, as they prepare to say goodbye to their friends as sessions end.

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

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	2
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