

DSCF Quality case study

White Rabbit Kindergarten, Walsall, West Midlands

Background

White Rabbits Kindergarten and Pre-School Nursery, the first private day nursery in Walsall was established in 1972. It occupies the ground floor of two adjoining Victorian houses. Based in the heart of the Black Country, White Rabbits is committed to its children's welfare.

The White Rabbits team is made up of dedicated and qualified staff, all qualified above Level 3, all of whom work hard to give children the very best of care during their time with the nursery. White Rabbits strives to continually look at the needs of their staff, providing relevant training both on site and at outside facilities. This has resulted in a high retention rate over the last three years, and a staffing structure that is not command led. This has meant staff are directly involved in their own learning.

Registered for 50 places, with 15 staff White Rabbits Kindergarten is open 8am to 6pm, for children from 0-5 years. Offering the free entitlement White Rabbits has an excellent reputation for the quality of their childcare, acknowledging the need for partnership with their local authority, Walsall Council and with the wider community.

Quality

White Rabbits Kindergarten has built on its good reputation by increasing its staff knowledge on the child's emotional behaviour. It prides itself on offering parental involvement, and the planned introduction of children into its nursery. This commitment manifests itself with a number of free visits per child over a monthly period, allowing the child to feel comfortable at the nursery. A key individual is allocated to each child, so allowing for consistency.

White Rabbits is keen to keep abreast of the latest developments in childcare, and this has been supported by an interest in the Reggio Emilia model from Italy. The various aims and objectives of the model have been incorporated into the daily running of the nursery, especially with the use of light and sensory experimentation. Quality Assurance programmes are also important to the nursery, and White Rabbits has undertaken the Effective Early Learning quality scheme from Worcester University, with a focus on pre-schooling and the ten different dimensions of quality, as advocated by Pascal and Bertram. This has been followed by the NDNA Quality Counts scheme.

As the owner at White Rabbits Kindergarten points out; "as a result of undertaking the Effective Early Learning scheme, we at the nursery have decided to take the NDNA Quality Counts Quality Assurance scheme, as this further enhances our commitment to deliver high quality childcare".

All of the above would never be possible without an understanding to have effective and robust partnerships with the local community. The owner of White Rabbits chairs the local Children's Centre partnership board, and works to ensure that her business feeds into the local children's centre. She currently sits on the Early Years



Consultative Group (formally the EYDCP) at Walsall Council, representing the private, voluntary and independent sector. In addition, she sits on the local authorities grants panel, and the schools forum.

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