

# Polly's Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101536
<b>Inspection date</b>	15 January 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Linda Janet Witts
<b>Setting Address</b>	Brownhill Road, Brownhill, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL6 8AS
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<b>Registered person</b>	Polly's Day Nursery
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Polly's Day Nursery has been registered since 1990 and offers full day care for children aged two to five years. The nursery is situated in the residential area of Brownhill near Stroud. It serves the nearby villages of Chalford, Bussage and surrounding areas. It is open from 08.00 to 18.00, Monday to Friday, for 51 weeks of the year. Children attend on full or part-time basis. There are currently 83 children on roll, of whom 52 are funded three and four-year-olds. The nursery welcomes children with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.

Polly's has three playrooms situated over two floors. Children are cared for in groups according to their age and stage of development. Each group has separate play areas within the nursery property. Outdoors there is a sensory garden to the side aspect and a larger garden to the rear of the property.

The staff team is made up of 11 members; 10 of whom work full-time. Nine members of staff are qualified to National Vocational Qualification level three, in Child Care and Education, or equivalent. The nursery manager is nearing completion of an early years level four qualification.

Two members of staff are currently working towards level two and three qualifications. All staff are first aid trained.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health, nutritional, physical and emotional needs are met extremely well. Toddlers learn to be independent. They gain confidence to try new things knowing that staff are close by to offer help and support as needed. The older children show confidence and are very independent. They like to be involved with routine activities that ensure the hygiene maintenance of the nursery. For example, children offer to wipe tables before meals and set out place settings. They also use child-size brooms to assist staff in sweeping the floor. All areas of the nursery are maintained to a high standard of cleanliness and staff follow very effective procedures that promote good hygiene. Careful consideration is given to minimising the risk of cross-infection. For example, during recent floods a strategy was agreed with parents and the environmental health agency, when running water is unavailable. The use of bottled water, antibacterial hand gel and use of disposable plates and cutlery enabled the continued operation of the setting to meet the needs of parents whilst continuing to promote children's good health. Children routinely wash their hands before they eat and after 'messy' play. Picture prompts remind children to wash their hands thoroughly and staff check that children do wash their hands. Tissues are easily accessible for children. The older children know that if they blow their noses they need then to cleanse their hands to remove germs. Toddlers' comfort is ensured by the prompt response from staff to change soiled nappies.

Children's medical and dietary needs are discussed with parents and individual health plans are drawn-up. Information is disseminated to all staff involved in the children's care. Effective procedures are followed in the event that children are unwell or if they have an accident. Staff are trained in first aid and any head injuries are monitored closely, using a sticker to indicate to staff any children that they need to be watchful of.

The signs of tiredness in the young children are recognised by the staff. For example, a child does not wish to eat his lunch and begins to cry; an understanding adult offers words of kindness and allows the child to snuggle up on her lap while she supervises other children eating. Those that need to sleep do so in a comfortable place where they are monitored regularly by the practitioners. Older children rest according to their needs.

Children eat well. The nursery menu provides children with a varied and wholesome diet. Meals are cooked on the premises and include plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables. Mealtimes are an opportunity for children to enjoy their food and toddlers are learning to be independent in feeding themselves. Older children serve themselves and gain control over their eating. At snack-time they have a very good choice of foods. For example, banana, kiwi, raspberries, blackberries, plums, pomegranate, raw vegetables, rice cakes, breadsticks, humus and dips. Children decide if they want more to eat and also help themselves to drinks as they wish.

The children of all ages have excellent opportunities for outdoor exploration. They are helped to experience and achieve pleasure and control in sensations and movement. There is a sensory garden that is particularly well used in summer months. The larger garden encourages children's enjoyment of fresh air and exercise. Here they can run freely, use slides of different sizes, rockers and wheeled toys. Children demonstrate control in their movements stopping and

changing direction as they run, avoiding obstacles. Group activities such as parachute games encourage children to co-ordinate their physical actions with other children and adults. They raise and lower their arms in time to lift the parachute and giggle as they run underneath when it is their turn. Physical challenge is offered to more able children. There is a climbing wall and children are also taken to a local play park to use the play equipment there.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is outstanding.

Children's safety is seen as of paramount importance by the nursery owners and staff. A close circuit television, security system is used to monitor visitors when staff are unable to attend the door in person. The identity of visitors is checked and a record of attendance made. Safety measures are implemented throughout the nursery to minimise identified risks. Staff have an excellent understanding of how to achieve a balance between children's freedom and setting safe limits. Children learn to keep themselves safe from an early age. For example, toddlers learn not to wave cutlery around, to protect themselves and others. Children use scissors and tools safely. Regular fire drills help to familiarise children with emergency evacuation procedures. Photographs of the evacuation procedure are displayed to remind children of what they need to do. They also have visits from fire fighters and road safety officers to help them to learn more about staying safe. Children are kept safe on outings. High adult to child ratios are used and children follow simple rules whilst out walking and crossing the road.

The nursery is attractively decorated with children's art work adorning the walls, along with posters, photographs and positive images of different cultures, ethnicity, gender and disability. Toys and equipment are in abundance and are of high quality. Children can access resources safely, as most are stored at child level in clearly labelled storage boxes and on sturdy shelving.

Children's welfare is further safeguarded as all staff fully understand their responsibilities regarding child protection issues. They regularly attend training to ensure they have up-to-date knowledge of how to deal with any issues, should they arise. The nursery also has clear written procedures available for reference.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

The children attending the nursery thoroughly enjoy themselves. They arrive with enthusiasm and are fully occupied throughout their time here. Close and caring relationships between children and staff are very much in evidence. Staff work closely with parents to find out children's interests and use information gathered to help them when planning activities for children. Younger children's all-round development is promoted through the use of the Birth to three matters framework. Activities are planned to build upon what children already know and can do. The children aged two have their own play room which provides areas for creative activities, a book area and areas for imaginative play, floor and table top activities. Outdoor areas are well used by the group. The two-year-olds are offered an impressive range of rich and stimulating opportunities to investigate, explore and to be creative. The children like the sensory experiences of investigating bubbly water, baked beans, scooping and sprinkling a mixture of flour and cocoa powder, moulding playdough, snapping up and feeling the texture of pasta and other such activities. They also like to paint, construct, do jigsaws and sing nursery rhymes along with the adults caring for them.

### **Nursery education**

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. The three and four-year-olds achieve well at nursery. They are very enthusiastic in their play and keen to learn. They are progressing well in all areas of their learning. Children's achievements can be accredited to the excellent teaching from staff. An effective key worker system is implemented, as with the other age group of children in the nursery. All staff demonstrate a very secure understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum, including developmental stepping stones. They liaise closely with staff to ensure a smooth transition for children from the younger age group. Documented learning journeys travel with each child as they progress within the nursery. These together with information sourced from parents/carers are used effectively to inform planning. Frequent observation and assessment during the course of children's activities is used to identify where children are in their learning, whether they need additional support or need greater challenge. Plans are then adapted to ensure that they promote future learning for all children. Staff work hard to plan a varied, stimulating range of activities for children. Plans are flexibly applied so as to maximise learning opportunities that may occur spontaneously or as a result of children's ideas. Time, space and resources are well organised and staff deployment carefully thought through to ensure seamless and stimulating provision throughout the day.

Children have excellent conversational skills and confidently speak to their peers, staff and adults who are unfamiliar to them. They are confident to speak in front of a group. Children are introduced to new words to extend their already large vocabularies. The home languages of bilingual children are respected and these children are confident to speak in both their home language and English. Other children learn simple phrases that parents have shared with staff. They are introduced to phrases in languages such as, Chinese, Spanish and Dutch. Children engage in rhyming activities and children as young as three recognise spoken words with similar sounds. For example, they offer words such as 'rat', 'mat' and 'sat' to rhyme with the word 'cat'. Children show a love of books. They look at them on their own, with their friends or with an adult. They listen intently to stories read by staff, showing interest in the illustrations and offering suggestions for how the stories might end. They know the name given for story writers and those who illustrate books and also know that books can be a good source of information. Books are compiled using photographs, children's drawings and captions. These include books about the children and their families and outings. Children like to look at these and recall their experiences. Writing implements and materials are readily available and children frequently draw and make purposeful marks.

The three and four-year-olds gain confidence in counting. Younger three-year-olds join in counting rhymes and are beginning to use counting and mathematical ideas frequently in their play. They see numbers used as labels within their play room. Older children count competently. They recognise the number of objects and compare the number of objects in different groups. They talk about shape, size and quantity and use mathematical ideas to solve problems. For example, children fill a water trough. When they discover that it is likely to overflow they scoop out some of the water. As they do so they use mathematical language such as 'full', 'less' and 'more'.

Children gain knowledge and understanding of the world. They learn about their environment and are keen to explore and investigate. The pre-school room is full of resources to promote exploration and staff are on hand to further develop children's natural curiosity. Outdoors children undertake gardening activities and search for mini beasts. Children can view the movements of worms through the perspex window inset into the garden border. Wind chimes and windmills are observed to see the movement of wind and the children talk about the weather. Regular local walks enable children to explore the natural environment and local community. Children enthusiastically learn about the wider world. They talk about holidays and

learn about children's different ethnic backgrounds. Activities planned introduce children to different cultures and help children to learn about children less fortunate than themselves. For example, as part of the Children in Need Appeal, children pay for balloons which are then released. Children map where their balloons are found and excitedly listen to letters sent by those who retrieve the balloons. Some balloons are found in France. Children build using a broad range of construction resources using their own design ideas. The children are proficient computer users and can complete simple programmes unaided.

Children develop their physical skills well. As well as being competent movers, they also develop their fine motor skills as they manipulate small objects. They successfully co-ordinate their hand movements in order to complete tasks. For example, at the water trough they scoop up water and transfer it between containers. They operate valves and pipes to move water. They place small objects in the water to see if they sink and then retrieve them. Children practise their skills of manipulation as they try to manage the fastenings on their coats and many do so successfully. They use writing implements, cutlery and scissors with control.

Children's creativity is nurtured. They are able to freely use their imagination in their play. Children who choose to play in the home corner take on roles such as, mother, child, doctor and dentist. Much of their role-play is based on first-hand experiences. For example, three children play together. One announces "I am the mummy but my tummy hurts so I can't feed you or anything today". Another says "I am the sister I will do it" and she sets about her tasks of cooking and cleaning using some of the many available props. The third child, who is the baby, is offered kind words of reassurance from 'mum' and 'sister'. She is spoon fed and given toys to play with. Similar imaginary play is evident as children play with small-world figures and resources. Musical activities are popular with the children. They explore the sounds of musical instruments that a member of staff shows them. They talk avidly about the sounds and also about the design of the instruments. For example, they look closely at the wooden carving of an African drum and a gecko clapper, and suggest how they might be played to achieve different sounds. Children make their own musical shakers and record different sounds made by the group and laugh as they are replayed.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

Children are nurtured to become self-assured, confident, independent, individuals, by all of the staff. The practitioners quickly learn about children's individual needs, sourcing information from parents to aid this. For those that need extra support, such as those with medical conditions, learning difficulties or disabilities, individual care and education plans are agreed with parents. This ensures that all children are fully included.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are extremely happy and the nursery environment has a very warm and welcoming atmosphere. Each child and their parents or carers are greeted upon arrival and children enthusiastically run off to play. Each child is respected, as is their family and cultural background. Positive images of gender, culture, ethnicity and disability adorn the walls throughout the nursery and can be seen within the resources routinely used, such as, in books. Children and staff learn simple phrases in the home language of children attending, with the help from children's parents. The children are very keen to talk about their families and friends and like to learn about the lives of others. Throughout the year children join in celebrations of religious and cultural festivals and traditions. They also join in charity fund-raising events, learning to help those less fortunate than themselves. Relationships are excellent in each group. Children relate exceptionally well to the

practitioners and their peers, as do the practitioners to one another. Management of children's behaviour is exemplary. Children receive frequent, sincere praise and encouragement and are encouraged to take pride in their achievements. This fosters children's self-esteem. Children learn to play co-operatively, to share and take turns. Older children learn to negotiate conflicts when they arise and are sensitive to children's feelings.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. The nursery advocates working with parents to support children's care and learning. Before children start at nursery information is gathered about each child and two-way communication established. Parents and staff chat and enjoy friendly banter. At collection time, each key carer takes time to tell parents/carers about how their child has been, what activities they enjoy and share children's achievements. Parents report that this feedback is much appreciated. Assessment records are well maintained and shared with parents at parents' evenings or at a time convenient to parents. Each child has a documented 'learning journey' that is compiled during children's stay at nursery. These include samples of work and annotated photographs linked to children's stages of development. Parents are helped to understand about the Birth to three matters framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum and how activities help children to develop.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

The nursery is exceptionally well organised and has a clear ethos that children's care must be of the highest standard and that children's happiness, sense of belonging and being valued, must be of paramount importance. They make a promise to parents and children that they will ensure children are 'safe', 'loved', 'laughing', 'learning' and that parents will receive 'feedback'. Excellent use is made of the highly qualified and experienced staff who work exceedingly well together as a team. Many of them have worked for Polly's for several years. They enthusiastically undertake all training offered to enhance their care of children and for personal development. Each member of staff has a clear understanding of their individual roles and responsibilities and offer support to one another instinctively. Children benefit greatly from the caring attributes of their carers. The nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management are outstanding. Clear, visionary aims are achieved in practice as the owners work closely with all staff and together are highly committed to continuous improvement and professional development. They routinely reflect upon their practice and evaluate their provision for children's care and education. This has a very positive impact on children's progress. Staff have allocated time to collate their assessment findings of children's progress, to plan and evaluate activities. This ensures that when working with the children they give uncompromised attention to their care and learning. The manager plays an active role in delivering the Foundation Stage curriculum and works closely with those delivering this and the Birth to three framework, closely monitoring the effectiveness of what is offered. The owners, manager and group leaders together motivate staff, who in turn ensure that children are always enthused to learn. Staff commitment to the enhancement of children's experiences, partnership with parents and embracing training opportunities, is highly valued by the nursery owners.

The nursery manager has developed good relationships with many of the primary schools that children will transfer to. School teaching staff are welcomed into the nursery and information shared with parents' agreement, to aid children's smooth transition into school.

The nursery premises are extremely well organised. All areas within the nursery are attractive and welcoming with high quality displays of photographs, children's work, plants and interest tables. Indoor and outdoor spaces are laid out to maximise play opportunities with easily accessible resources for children of all ages to choose. Each group room has designated areas for different types of play, including home corners and 'wet rooms or areas'. The sensory garden and larger garden are each creatively designed to embrace the wealth of play potential. Ample, high quality toys, furniture and equipment provide an exciting, well-balanced range of activities to support all areas of the children's development. Groups follow routines that work well and are familiar to the children. A high ratio of adults work with the children and extremely effective use is made of frequent one-to-one care.

All legally required documents that contribute to children's health, safety and wellbeing are clear and detailed. The nursery's operational plan is efficient and effective. Policies and procedures are reflective of the practice within the nursery. Records are accurately maintained and stored confidentially.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection a recommendation to ensure hygienic hand drying facilities are available at all times, was made. In respect of the provision for nursery education points for consideration were given. These were to consider the level of staff involvement in child-led play to ensure that it is appropriate and also the assistance offered to children who are beginning to write recognisable letters, to ensure they are correctly formed. In response hand drying facilities have been improved and now promote excellent hygiene practice, minimising the risk of cross-infection. Now, child-led play enables children to make decisions for themselves and to use their own ideas. The skilled staff respond to child-led play knowing instinctively when to play an active role in children's play and when to stand back and let children play freely. Those children who are beginning to write recognisable letters, receive help to ensure they are correctly formed.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.



## WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

### **The quality and standards of the care**

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)