

Balliol Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	134032
Inspection date	06 February 2008
Inspector	Karen Louise Prager
Setting Address	2a Rawlinson Road, Oxford, Oxfordshire, OX2 6UE
Telephone number	01865 515654
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Registered person	Balliol Day Nursery
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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?

Balliol Day Nursery opened in 1993. It is located in North Oxford and operates from the ground floor of a large Victorian house. The nursery serves the local area however, priority for places at the nursery is given to people with connections to Balliol College. A maximum of 16 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 16 children under five years on roll. Of these, four children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend the nursery on a full time basis. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week for 46 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 08:45 until 17:00.

The nursery employs six staff. Four of the staff including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. One staff member is currently working towards an appropriate qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very well cared for in the nursery as the staff work closely with the parents to ensure all children receive care packages to meet their individual needs. Children show an excellent understanding and willingness to keep themselves safe and healthy. The nursery is kept scrupulously clean by a cleaner who understands the high level of cleanliness required when caring for young children. Children develop very good hygiene habits as they learn for example, to help themselves to a tissue when their nose needs blowing, and then to go and wash their hands.

Children have a balanced and varied diet of freshly cooked food each day providing them with good nutrition. They access drinking water and milk at snack and meal times and are prompted at intervals in between if the weather is hot or the children appear to be thirsty. Thought and consideration has been given to the children's diet, taking into consideration and meeting individual dietary needs. The nursery supplies all the food for the children and focuses on a vegetarian diet. Mealtimes promote pleasant social interaction between the children and staff where they have opportunities to develop their independence skills, talk about the food they eat and develop fine skills as they use knives and forks. Children assist in the tasks surrounding setting the table. They also get involved in some of the food preparation, such as mixing pancakes on Shrove Tuesday. This activity is supported by repeating a rhyme about cooking pancakes which the children join in enthusiastically.

Children benefit from very good opportunities to promote their physical skills. Within the nursery children enjoy dancing and moving to music and have plenty of space in which to express themselves. Children are very keen to play outdoors where they can choose from a variety of equipment to support their physical skills. Older children learn to neatly negotiate each other's vehicles and enjoy swinging themselves back and forth on the swings. All children have access to a 'fairy garden' where they are able to run freely and dig in the mud. They participate on regular walks around the community where young babies enjoy the fresh air and older children benefit from the long walks involved.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children feel safe and are extremely settled because of high levels of support and supervision provided by the staff. Children have easy access to a wide range of high quality resources. Staff recognise the value of critically assessing how children use space and resources in order to evaluate and improve the activities for all children attending. For example, they organise play areas so that children can play with floor toys without causing trip hazards to others. There are very effective procedures in place to ensure the safety and security of children being cared for. Risk assessments and checks are undertaken regularly, both indoors and outside the nursery to ensure children are cared for in a safe environment. Staff ensure that resources such as climbing equipment is appropriately sited on an absorbent surface and provides sufficient challenge to all children. Children learn to keep themselves and others safe. For example, as they move from one area to another they are well aware that the gate must be shut after them to keep the babies safe. This allows children to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits. Fire evacuations are regularly monitored, practised, recorded and reviewed to ensure children's continuing safety.

Information is communicated and shared with parents well to keep them informed and up to date on health and safety policies, procedures and practice, to support children's arrangements for care. All staff are well aware of their responsibilities to ensure children are secure and protected. Children's welfare is a foremost concern of the staff and this responsibility is shared with parents to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children become engrossed in a wide range of purposeful and developmentally appropriate indoor and outdoor activities which provide high levels of challenge appropriate to their age and stage of development. Children are eager to attend and relish their time in the nursery. They thrive in the calm and nurturing atmosphere where staff create an attractive environment. They feel secure in the warm, caring atmosphere and form very good relationships with staff and with each other. They develop their sense of identity as individuals and as part of a group by seeing themselves reflected in photo books about themselves.

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Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are happy and thoroughly enjoy their time in the nursery. Staff are enthusiastic and committed to working with children, which they do so very successfully. Children are progressing very well, because of the staff's knowledge of how children learn. They offer the children very good experiences. Staff plan, evaluate and assess children's progress and the effectiveness of activities in moving children on in their learning. Staff and children interact well together and as a result children enjoy warm and close relationships with all staff members, who listen and question appropriately to extend children's learning.

Children are confident, happy and enthusiastic in participating in activities. They choose and use resources independently and confidently express their needs, likes and dislikes. They interact well with adults and each other, playing co-operatively in pairs and small groups. They have good levels of concentration and persist at activities for extended periods of time. They have good opportunities to develop their early writing skills and they have access to a good range of reading materials. Children use books independently; they handle books competently and are aware that print and pictures carry meaning. They enjoy reading favourite books and explore the pictures remembering the stories and adding their own comments. There are excellent opportunities for children to develop further their thinking and communication skills successfully. They regularly access the internet to search for information and are able to share home experiences when they bring in items, for example a video about a skiing holiday.

Children are confident in the use of numbers and are able to count to 10 and beyond. They recognise numbers 1 - 9 and are able to put a number line in the correct order. Awareness of space and shape develops well as they build with bricks and they describe the properties of shape. They are able to use small tools competently. They are able to explore and experiment

through a range of activities. Through planned activities children are becoming aware of cultural, religious events and customs of countries around the world. The nursery plans activities around significant family events and celebrations. They have had the opportunity to observe lively Morris Dancers on May Day in the centre of the city.

Good hand-eye coordination is well promoted as children learn to use pencils, glue sticks and paint brushes with very good control. Children express their ideas freely through a good range of activities such as role-play, painting, collage and movement. They use their senses well whilst using a variety of equipment and enjoy exploring sound and rhythm. Children can sing many simple songs from memory and they participate actively at singing time. They enjoy the storytelling sessions and become actively involved in the story.

Teaching is encouraging and challenging for all children. Staff demonstrate a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They provide a purposeful learning environment for the children to learn and develop as individuals. Staff are enthusiastic and committed to providing a rich learning environment for the children. Children play an active part in the setting and are motivated to develop their learning. Staff respond promptly to children's interests and plan single activities or nursery topics around children's current development and interest. Children show careful thought as they make independent choices and select their own activities throughout the day.

Staff work directly with the children. They show an excellent understanding of the individual development needs of the children, helping them to focus on activities such as counting and building and develop good concentration skills. Children throughout the setting are motivated and become engrossed in a wide range of developmentally appropriate activities, indoor and outdoor. Staff use good consolidation techniques through repetition, questions and revisiting topics and activities to support the children's learning. Assessments of the children are continuous. Staff constantly track children's progress and use the information effectively, after consultation with parents, to guide planning and aid children's future learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's individual needs are fully met because the staff have time to get to know each child and their families. They provide very good opportunities for children to learn about the community in which they live by organising trips out to local shops, library, parks and college. Children feel valued because staff learn and use welcoming phrases and songs in their home languages. They learn to respect their own cultures and those of other people as they celebrate a range of festivals such as Hanukkah. Children were awed when they sat together, listened to music and watched a Menorah being lit. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Staff have realistic and consistent expectations and provide very positive role models. The stimulating play opportunities ensure that children are engaged in purposeful, satisfying play experiences and their behaviour is exceptionally good. Children gain a high level of self-control. They express their needs appropriately, learn to negotiate conflict and become sensitive and respectful in their interactions with others. Older children share responsibility for decisions about the provision actively contributing to the development of Golden Rules.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. There is a superb relationship between staff and parents which ensures all work together in numerous ways to meet the children's needs. Staff ensure

that a very open dialogue is maintained to ensure the best learning and care for the children. Parents receive clear information about the setting and the education offered before the children attend. There are calm, unrushed opportunities to exchange information every day and many parents take this time to view and discuss their child's personal profile folder which is freely available at all times. Staff use photos of what children do to share their achievements with parents. Parents place a very high value on the quality of care and education their children receive.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children are fully occupied with ample play opportunities during their time in the setting. The staff have thought very carefully about the organisation of the children and the layout of the nursery. As a result children benefit from the newly introduced key worker system and the open plan layout where children of all ages play together for much of the day. There is a warm and inclusive atmosphere in the nursery where continuity of care is promoted as siblings are allocated the same key worker and are able to play together if they choose.

All required documentation to support children's welfare is in place. A formal appraisal system is in place which promotes the ongoing development of the staff and the nursery provision. All policies and procedures are individual to the setting, robust and fully support the expert practice of knowledgeable and highly skilled practitioners who consistently give utmost priority to protecting all children, promoting their well-being and supporting all to develop their potential.

The quality of leadership and management is outstanding. The manager leads with enthusiasm, experience and knowledge. She regularly takes time to observe children and staff and reflects on how the nursery might be improved for children and staff. The manager has a clear vision for the nursery, aiming to provide a first class service which meets the needs of all the children who attend. The staff team has a clear understanding of their responsibilities. The committee ensures that as roles and responsibilities change a smooth handover is achieved. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous care inspection two recommendations were agreed regarding documentation. The organisation of the setting has improved as parents now sign the medication record book to acknowledge the administration of medication. The setting's behaviour, complaints and child protection policies have been updated improving children's safety.

The previous nursery education inspection identified three key issues for improvement relating to staff and child development. An ongoing staff appraisal system is now in place. Staff have undertaken training to increase their knowledge of how children learn, and children have daily access to tools such as scissors. The development of these areas has improved the provision for children attending.

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.

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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