

Polkadot Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY292440
Inspection date 17/06/2009
Inspector Jan Burnet

Setting address Greyswood, The Ridgeway, Stratford-upon-Avon,
Warwickshire, CV37 9JL

Telephone number 01789 290101

Email

Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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).

Description of the setting

Polkadot Day Nursery opened in August 2004. It operates from a converted single storey building situated on the outskirts of Stratford-upon-Avon, close to main routes. All children share access to a secure enclosed garden and outdoor play areas. There are no steps at the entrance or internally. Operational hours are Monday to Friday, from 07:30 to 18:00, for 51 weeks of the year.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and a maximum of 47 children in the early years age group may attend at any one time. There are currently 73 children aged from three months to three years on roll. Children attend for full day care and sessional care.

The nursery employs 17 childcare staff and of these, 16 are qualified. The nursery holds National Day Nursery Association (NDNA) membership.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding. The provider, manager and staff team create a stimulating, vibrant and welcoming environment where children's interest and natural curiosity to learn is consistently encouraged. The individual needs of each child are continually met and excellent relationships have been formed between children, staff and parents. Staff ensure that all children are valued and included and information obtained from parents helps them to identify and address children's differences. Planning for improvement, including the process of self-evaluation, is fully effective.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- consider extending opportunities for the older children to practise climbing skills and confidence with more challenging large equipment.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Superior systems are in place to ensure that children's welfare is comprehensively protected. They are cared for in a safe and welcoming environment. Staff are pro-active in protecting children's welfare as they are fully aware of their role with regard to safeguarding children. The written safeguarding policy is thorough and systems ensure that it is known by staff and parents. Risk assessments for the premises, resources and activities are comprehensive and are reviewed with the involvement of all staff.

Procedures for recruitment, selection, induction and appraisal are robust. The

provider and manager make sure that every staff member's suitability has been thoroughly checked before they have unsupervised access to children. Systems for monitoring and self-assessment are excellent. The Ofsted self-evaluation form has been completed thoroughly and the manager identifies clear plans for improvement. At the time of the last inspection, there were no recommendations raised as an outstanding judgement was made. However, with the involvement of staff and parents, the provision for children's learning and welfare is continually reviewed so that excellent standards are maintained. Recent improvements to the outdoor area mean that children now enjoy play activities equally in playrooms and outside, and are able to do so throughout the year. Measures to ensure ongoing improvement include acting on advice given by local support workers. Practitioners within the setting have an excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and demonstrate a strong commitment to developing their knowledge and skills through ongoing training. Staff to child ratios and the percentage of qualified staff exceed requirements.

The partnership with parents is outstanding. Parents are extremely well informed about their child's achievements and progress and they are encouraged to be involved in supporting their learning and development at home. In addition to a planned introduction to the nursery for each child, parents are also offered home visits. The reception area is full of valuable information, for example, on safeguarding procedures, childhood illnesses and the six areas of learning and ideas for activities at home. A folder is continually available containing comprehensive policies and procedures which successfully reflect the ethos of the setting. Parents are asked to post any suggestions into the 'Comments Box' and the results of recent questionnaire are displayed. Parents were asked for their views on their child's intellectual development, social development, general happiness, the range of activities, quality of food, quality and regularity of feedback, helpfulness of staff and the relationships between staff and their child. Parents respond very positively to the inspector, verbally and in writing, when asked for views on the service provided. Effective links with other providers and childcare services are established in order to ensure progression and continuity of learning and care.

Children's good health and well-being is promoted extremely well and necessary steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection. Staff teach children about keeping safe and healthy. Menus for lunches and snacks include a very good range of different protein foods, carbohydrates, fruit and vegetables. Healthy and appropriate food for babies is provided by a local company, and the lunchtime meal for older children is provided by Warwickshire County Caterers and is cooked at a local school. The temperature of hot and cold food is closely monitored to ensure that it is safe. Staff are aware of their responsibilities under food hygiene legislation and food hygiene procedures are part of induction procedures. A Food Hygiene Gold Certificate has been awarded to the nursery by Stratford District Council.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are provided with excellent opportunities to ensure that they make progress across all areas of learning and development. They are enthusiastic and eager to be involved. Planning is flexible, responding to children's individual interests and needs, and staff effectively evaluate children's different stages of development in order to plan for them as individuals. Parents are fully involved as they are continually informed of their children's progress and how they can encourage and support them in activities at home.

Resources are plentiful, safe, clean and encourage children's natural curiosity as learners. Children of all ages select their own resources, thus promoting their independence. They are confident, active learners and personal, social and emotional development is particularly strong. Children are happy and settled and their self-esteem is fostered through the praise and encouragement continually given by staff. Children's creativity is given a very high priority. All children enjoy a range of activities that promote the development of their senses. They explore different textures as they make marks in custard, sand, jelly and baked beans and they explore sound as they use shakers, that they have made themselves, when listening to music. Children excitedly sit together in a small group to find out, 'What's in the box'. They are encouraged to join in verbally and non-verbally as staff promote the use of sign language. The sand tray is on the floor in the playroom and children aged under two years choose to take off socks and shoes and step into it. They are supported in doing this by staff and whilst feeling the sand with their feet, they listen to a music tape and dance to, 'If you're happy and you know it'. Resources encourage children to identify different sounds, and toys for very young children are bright and colourful and are made up of different textures. Children repeat situations that they have seen as they rock their babies and put them to bed and play with other home corner equipment.

Children practise moving in different ways. The garden area is on a slope and children practise balancing skills and enjoy the excitement of rolling down. They practise catching and throwing, move to music and learn to pedal and steer sit and ride toys. They develop skills and control as they play skittles and practise climbing steps up to a small slide. Climbing equipment generally meets the needs of children aged under three well, but a wooden climbing structure suitable for the older and more able children recently splintered and so was removed. It has not yet been replaced. All children practise hand and eye co-ordination and manipulative skills daily. They play with posting, stacking and construction toys, mould and prod playdough and use a range of mark making materials. Older children learn to use tools, including scissors.

A well planned and organised garden and outdoor play area allows children opportunities to enjoy a full range of activities. They recently painted large Wellington boots and are now using these as well as pots for planting and growing. Books are always available and children choose them confidently to look at alone or with a staff member. As they support children's learning, staff continually promote thinking and language development as they talk with children and ask open-ended questions. Older children select favourite books and recite out

loud popular sayings, for example, 'I'll huff and I'll puff' from 'The Three Little Pigs'. All children make marks with a full range of writing materials and older children write for various purposes, for example, they write letters and then put them into envelopes ready to take home. Children learn shapes and colours and staff encourage counting as they play.

Older children are encouraged to request activities and baking is popular. They explore change as they crack their own eggs into mixing bowls and then add their chosen amount of sugar and flour. They are learning to share and take turns and as they place a large mixing bowl on to the scales, they notice that the dial is moving. A staff member supports them in identifying that there are numerals on the dial, and older children are able to recognise some numerals to five. Children are very proud of their achievement as they spoon ingredients into cake cases and staff praise them enthusiastically. Children are learning how to keep themselves healthy and safe, for example, a child drops a face flannel on the floor and identifies that she cannot now use it to wash her face because it, "has germs on it". Children's welfare is addressed comprehensively because staff have a full understanding of their responsibilities to protect them from harm.

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	1
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	1

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

