

Balliol Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	11/08/2011
Inspector	Jan Leo
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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*.

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).

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

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, with no more than six of these aged under two. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 16 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group and attend the nursery on a full time basis. Of these, four children receive funding for free early education. The setting offers support for children with learning difficulties and disabilities and cares for a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs six members of staff, four of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. It opens five days a week for 46 weeks of the year with sessions running from 8.45am until 5pm. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The nursery runs exceptionally well because of the skill and dedication of the staff. All aspects of health and safety are promoted to a high standard and children have a very clear understanding of what is expected of them. An extremely effective key person system helps staff promote a commitment to equality and diversity. Behaviour is exemplary and children show a high degree of motivation and learn effortlessly. Resources are used imaginatively to help children develop the skills they need for the future. Strong partnerships are established with parents and children's other carers to help create a stimulating and balanced day for each child. The staff diligently review and adapt practice to meet children's changing needs and they identify clear targets for development to help maintain continuous improvement. Almost all areas of the nursery are fully supported by clear and effective policies and procedures to provide a consistently high standard of service.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- developing the use of risk assessment documentation by including information about all safety procedures undertaken

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The nursery has robust systems in place to safeguard children. Staff have a good understanding of child protection issues and understand the procedures to follow if they should have any concerns about the welfare of a child in their care. Safe recruitment procedures are rigorously followed to ensure all staff are suitable people to work with children and children receive a high level of supervision from staff to keep them safe throughout the day. The children learn to play safely and protect themselves from harm because they follow good practice and receive clear explanations to help them understand how to avoid accidents. For example they automatically strap themselves onto a tricycle and receive a reminder about why seatbelts are used as they play outdoors. The staff diligently conduct both risk assessments and daily safety checks to keep the environment safe but, while the record of risk assessment meets legal requirements, it is not currently used to full advantage to provide evidence of all the safety procedures staff use and their commitment to safeguarding the children.

The staff form very strong bonds with children and their families. The setting also work with other settings to ease the transition into school. The staff attending meetings with health professionals to work on development plans for individual children in order to help narrow the gap when children have identified difficulties. Parents value the service highly and feel very welcome to stay when settling their children or to visit at a later date to share their interests and skills. They receive full and accurate information verbally about their children's progress and most key staff keep formal records of development for parents to see at any time. Parents and children are encouraged to contribute ideas for the improvement of the nursery and staff act on suggestions whenever possible. Staff are committed to furthering their own skills and welcome opportunities to take responsibility for specific roles and share what they know. For example, they lead singing and counting in German to help children develop an awareness of other children's backgrounds. The nursery has a strong commitment to supporting children who speak English as a second language and toys, books and other resources reflect the multicultural ethos.

All staff are skilled in building close bonds with the children and supporting their development. They plan individual programmes for their own key children and sharing information with colleagues to continue support at the required level if others choose to join them during play. The children are organised into mixed age key person groups to help them make friends easily and learn from older children. All develop a strong sense of community and begin to understand the needs of others from an early age. The staff plan the day around children's interests, using resources very effectively and placing equality of opportunity at the heart of all they do. They celebrate children's individualism and, as a result, all children feel valued and thoroughly enjoy their time at the nursery.

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

The children arrive eagerly and quickly choose what to do from a stimulating range of activities. Some play in small groups with their key person, practising their physical skills as they climb on the indoor caterpillar or being creative and making animal masks to wear as they play. All are well engaged and productively occupied. They freely choose where to play, demonstrating a very clear understanding of what is expected of them as they confidently move from one activity to another. The children know to bolt the gate after they move up the steps to the higher level, aware of the risk if babies fall on the steps. They confidently ask for help if struggling to close the bolt, taking the responsibility seriously and demonstrating a clear understanding of safe practice.

One child announces that he wants to play outdoors and staff suggest he might want to wear waterproofs as it looks like rain, encouraging fresh air as part of their healthy lifestyle. Others copy, thinking it is a good idea and they independently prepare themselves by locating and donning their outdoor clothing to protect them from bad weather. Some concentrate hard to fasten their zip and dexterously manipulate the ends until they fit into place. Once outdoors they climb and pedal competently showing good control over their movements. All ages are free to decide on where to play and what to do, and even the toddlers make confident choices and join in wherever they wish. They cautiously negotiate small steps to move around the garden and some accept a helping hand to steady themselves and avoid a fall. The staff never inhibit children's development, encouraging independence and hanging back to see if help is needed rather than rushing in to help unnecessarily.

All staff have high expectations and consequently the children are high achievers. Some show great skill with counting and simple addition while others recognise familiar words such as the days of the week, showing developing ability and confidence in the skills they need for the future. Some join in music sessions, showing interest in the music player and scrutinising the speakers to explore where the noise is coming from. The young children copy the older ones, following the actions during singing and mouthing their own words to join in with gusto.

The staff routinely link learning to make it relevant and interesting. They join in play, developing ideas and reinforcing children's skills and understanding. Staff observe what children do and convey details of aims and progress to parents and carers when they collect their children at the end of the day. Most key staff have detailed records for parents to see but some newer staff are concentrating on building relationships first before updating the paperwork, demonstrating that their commitment to meeting the needs of the child takes priority. Despite recent major staff changes, the setting remains highly effective in all areas with exceptionally close bonds between staff and children to ensure children thrive during their time at this very well run nursery.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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