

Palacefields Daycare Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	303479
Inspection date	13/03/2012
Inspector	Karen McWilliam
Setting address	Palacefields C J School, Badger Close, Palacefields, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 2QW
Telephone number	01928 755374
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Type of setting	Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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

Palacefields day care centre was registered in 2006. The centre offers full day care and out of school facilities known as the link club. Children have access to a secure outdoor area and the enclosed school grounds. The nursery and out of school club operate from a purpose built unit within Palacefields primary school, in the Palacefields area of Runcorn. The nursery is open each week day from 8am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year. The out of school club is open each week day from 8am to 9am and 3pm to 6pm during term-time and from 8am to 6pm during school holidays.

The nursery is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 34 children may attend the nursery at any one time. A maximum of 40 children may attend the out of school club at any one time.

There are currently nine members of staff, eight of whom hold early year's qualifications to at least level 2. The manager has achieved Early Years Professional Status and the deputy manager has a foundation degree in childcare. The nursery provides funded early education for two, three- and four-year olds.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Overall, a well-developed knowledge of each child's needs ensures that staff promote children's welfare and learning well. Children are safe and secure and enjoy their time at the centre. The partnerships with parents, the link school and other agencies are a key strength and are significant in making sure that the needs of all children are met. An exemplary range of systems and resources promote healthy lifestyles. Children make good progress according to their age, ability and starting points. A clear vision by the manager and staff ensure priorities for development are identified and acted on.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- further develop the planning of activities to ensure they follow children's particular interests and takes account of their individual learning needs.
- further develop the deployment of staff to further encourage children's independence in selecting activities.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded from harm and neglect because the staff ensure children's safety is paramount and implement good systems to protect them. All staff have undertaken training regarding child protection and are clear of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse. Written safeguarding policies are in place and shared with the parents from the onset. Comprehensive risk assessments and daily checks ensure that outings and all areas of the centre and outdoors are safe for children. A key fob entry system further ensures they are safe whilst they explore the environment.

There are good systems in place to evaluate and monitor the centre. Regular audits of their service and action plans secure improvements, which have a positive impact on the quality of care the children receive. For example, staff spend more time with each parent at the end of the day discussing their child's progress. As a result, parents are better informed and children's learning is fully supported. The environment is well organised with lots of exciting resources. Staff are suitably deployed most of the time to ensure that children are free to explore and can choose what they would like to play with. The effective use of low-level storage ensures they can access the resources for themselves. This is clearly attributable to their developing self-help skills.

The manager has a clear vision of how she intends to continue to develop the centre and enhance the existing good practice for the benefit of the children. She is enthusiastic about her plans to move forward, and communicates her ambitions effectively to staff. Audits of the centre are on-going. Areas of weakness are identified and action plans are devised to bring about improvement. The manager has ensured that all the previous recommendations were promptly and effectively addressed. As a result there is always a member of staff on the premises with a current first aid certificate. This and other recently implemented changes have had a positive impact on the outcomes for children. Plans for the future are well targeted to continue to bring about further improvements that benefit the children.

Extremely positive relationships are well-established with parents and contribute to how settled children are and the progress they make. Parents are well-informed about the setting and all aspects of their child's care and learning. They speak very highly of the staff and comment on how supportive and approachable they are. Parents are kept up-to-date through termly progress reports, daily discussions, daily diaries; parents open days and planned events. Staff also ensure parents receive leaflets with information regarding the Early Years Foundation Stage. A high priority of the centre is healthy lifestyles and the valuable input from parents has clearly enhanced their established partnership. For example, parents choose which fruits were to be planted in the orchard then they, and their children, helped to dig and plant the trees. Outcomes for children are clearly enriched by this shared ethos. The centre has developed excellent partnerships with their link school. The arrangements to support transitions are excellent in ensuring a complementary and consistent approach to children's learning and development. Partnerships with other services are also firmly established. For example, staff

work closely with the speech and language team. This ensures an inclusive environment in which all children are fully supported because their needs are met.

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

The staff have a good understanding of the Early Year's Foundation Stage and use this effectively to support children in their learning most of the time. However, this is not always consistent; as a result some adult-led activities do not fully recognise children's individual interests. The impact is minimised because the staff know the children well. Children are busy and enthusiastic learners. They settle quickly and soon become engrossed in their chosen activities. They are well-motivated and independent and demonstrate increasing confidence in managing tasks for themselves. Communication, language and literacy are well-promoted in the setting through the constant interaction of the staff with the children. The staff also use structured programmes such as 'Makaton.' Mark making is encouraged in all areas, including outdoors; for example, children chalk on the large board.

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy is also effectively promoted, staff use every opportunity to extend children's learning. They count the numbers on the cooker in the home corner when making a casserole and estimate how long it will take to cook. Children discuss the colour of bobbles when playing hairdressers. Staff challenge children's thinking by asking them, 'which wellies will fit' as children choose from the tub then match them before going outdoors to play. A computer and interactive white board are always available for children; they choose programs and play games. Children take photographs with the digital camera and discuss their pictures. Consequently this helps them develop good skills for future. Knowledge and understanding of the world is promoted through a wide variety of activities. Children enjoy going to feed the 'dinosaur' and they are engrossed as they investigate insects through a magnifying glass. Children develop positive attitudes towards diversity in the world in which we live, because they access a good range of resources, such as books, puppets and dressing up clothes and they celebrate a range of festivals. There are planters available for digging to help children learn about growing and the sensory garden encourages children to explore using all their senses.

Children's health is promoted extremely well and the centre has achieved the 'Halton Early Years Healthy Status' Children readily wash their hands before a snack and clean their teeth after dinner because excellent hygiene routines are well-established. Children are starting to learn about making healthy choices in food because they are offered nutritious options of fruit and vegetables for snack. They make fruit salads and smoothies. Children grow their own fruit in the orchard and eat vegetables grown in their allotment. Children are able to play out daily in the extremely spacious outdoor area and use a range of excellent equipment and resources that test and challenge their skills. For example, balance along the balancing beam or run up and down hills. Trips to the local park further enhance outdoor experiences. Therefore, children are developing excellent physical skills in running, jumping, walking, balancing and climbing.

Children's independence is clearly fostered in the setting. They are encouraged to help tidy up, put on their coats, pour their drinks and scrape their own plates after meals. Children are well-behaved and they have fun with their friends. They share resources and demonstrate care for each other and their environment. For example, children carefully step over flowers when playing because they did not want to make them sad. Staff are good role models and they constantly praise and encourage children.

Children are confident and secure in the centre. They demonstrate this by holding out their hands to staff when they are upset and want a cuddle. They demonstrate an awareness of keeping themselves safe by reminding staff that doors and gates have to be closed. Staff further support children to keep themselves safe by practising regular fire drills, discussing stranger danger and involving children in risk assessments.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
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	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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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

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