

Northwood Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	03/04/2012
Inspector	Hilary Preece
Setting address	Northwood Headquarters, Sandy Lane, Northwood, Middlesex, HA6 3HP
Telephone number	01923957028
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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

Northwood Day Nursery is one of two privately owned nurseries. It registered in 2002 and operates from a purpose built building situated within the secure Joint Services Unit, NATO base in Northwood. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.45am until 5.30pm except for bank holidays and five days over the Christmas period.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 45 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 54 children aged from birth to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 17 members of child care staff. All staff with the exception of one trainee, hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least level 3. The manager is working towards a foundation degree in early years and a senior member of staff holds the Early Years Professional Status and has just completed a full early years degree. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

A well-developed knowledge of each child's needs allows staff to successfully plan for and promote children's welfare and learning. Consequently, children make very good progress towards the early learning goals in this exceptionally safe and welcoming setting. The majority of policies and procedures to promote children's welfare are understood well and implemented effectively. High levels of engagement with parents mean that children's needs are met well and partnerships with other agencies and settings are overall effective in providing consistency in children's welfare and learning. Searching self-evaluation systems mean improvements continue to be made and there is very good capacity to maintain improvement in all outcomes.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the content of the policy on equality of opportunities to ensure it has regard for the statutory guidance, including information about how the provision will promote and value diversity and differences
- continue to build on partnerships and sharing of information between other settings to fully support children's transitions.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding arrangements throughout the nursery are robust. The rigorous recruitment and vetting of staff, together with a very thorough induction and training programme, means children are very well protected. All levels of staff and management have secure knowledge of child protection issues and local safeguarding procedures. They all have regular access to child protection training in order to keep their knowledge up-to-date. Information is shared promptly when appropriate with the Local Safeguarding Children Board in order to protect children. Rigorous security arrangements within the military base mean children are protected from unwanted visitors. Staff members are highly confident in their roles in emergency evacuation because this is practiced with the children each month. The premises and equipment are very well maintained. Extremely thorough risk assessments covering anything that a child or staff member comes into contact with are carried out in conjunction with expert advice from an external company.

Space and resources within the nursery are used highly effectively to provide bright, welcoming and stimulating play areas in which children can move around freely and enjoy their learning. The staff team is well qualified and knowledgeable about the Early Years Foundation Stage. They provide an extremely well-organised and accessible environment which means children rapidly become independent and confident decision-makers. The nursery contributes very well to sustainability through its use of recycling and sourcing of local produce to use in its menus.

The nursery has a very well-established process of self-evaluation that accurately identifies strengths and weaknesses. Strong leadership fosters a culture of reflective practice which means that the setting continues to make improvements based upon the needs of the children attending. For example, children currently attending have expressed their views on what else they would like to do at nursery and consequently plans are in place to provide a paddling pool and more dolls. The views of parents and all levels of staff further contribute to setting a clear vision for the future with well-targeted action plans.

Key persons work closely with parents to get to know the children, help them settle in and thus meet their specific needs. The nursery strives to engage with parents and involve them fully in their child's learning, development and welfare. Examples include providing regular sessions to review their children's learning records, inviting parents to contribute ideas to the planning and menus, encouraging the loan of activities to share with their children at home and inviting parents in to share aspects of their culture or profession with the children. Parents are extremely satisfied with the quality of the nursery. They value the fact that their children are cared for by dedicated staff in such a safe and secure environment and comment on their children's high levels of confidence. The range of information provided to parents initially is currently being reviewed so that they fully understand the setting's policies, procedures and routines.

Effective relationships with other professionals contribute to supporting children's

welfare and learning. Positive links are made with most schools that children move on to, or other military postings, to prepare children for transition and attempts are made to overcome any barriers to building links. There are no children attending who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, the manager is fully aware of the importance of working with outside agencies to support children's welfare and development. Strategies to support those with English as an additional language are implemented well overall and attempts are made to use a child's home language in greetings and songs. The equal opportunities policy does not include information on how the provision will promote and value such diversity and differences. This means written information for parents about how the individual needs of their children are met, is not representative of what happens in practice.

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

Children are very settled, secure and engaged in purposeful play. High quality interaction from staff and well-organised routines enable all children to become secure and confident from a young age. For example, staff organise meal times so that babies sit together around a low table with staff alongside so that they enjoy the social aspect of coming together to eat but remain safe and well supervised. Safety guidelines for routines and use of equipment are displayed in picture form to help children's understanding and staff members are vigilant in explaining why it is necessary to have these boundaries.

Children understand and adopt healthy habits exceptionally well. They display very healthy appetites and enjoy the freshly prepared, nutritious meals and snacks. Older children know it is important to eat fruit and vegetables for good health and confidently explain the reasons for washing their hands and when and how to do this effectively. They understand very well how to take care of their bodies and manage their personal care because staff promote this extremely well through activities and resources. Children help themselves to and correctly dispose of tissues when needed and explain the importance of brushing their teeth regularly following a visit from a dental hygienist. Children and babies engage in plenty of outdoor play and exercise in all weathers as the garden is partly covered. They develop excellent physical skills through climbing on apparatus, pedalling wheeled toys, music and movement, dance and yoga sessions.

Staff effectively observe, assess and plan for the needs of individual children. Planning systems are overseen by a senior staff member and regularly reviewed to explore what system works best. Staff are beginning to use a local authority tracking system to monitor children's progress more closely. Children make very good progress in their learning and development and are well equipped with the confidence, knowledge and skills necessary for their future learning. They develop good levels of communication as staff members are particularly good at modelling language and providing opportunities for children to listen and express themselves during story times, in play and activities. Older children engage in animated discussions and are eager to share their thoughts. Babies show interest in people and happily vocalise sounds and communicate through gesture.

Children show significant interest in the world around them because both the indoor and outdoor environments are well planned. Babies explore their surroundings by clambering over soft play equipment and crawling into a pop-up tent. They access toys of their choice from low-level drawers and enjoy filling and emptying containers with bricks. This means they are developing a strong sense of curiosity and independence. Children gain knowledge of the world and problem-solving skills through planting potatoes in sacks and measuring their growth. They use scales to weigh parcels in the post office and operate keyboards and office equipment in the role play areas. Older children confidently use the computer. Plans effectively take account of the differing learning styles of boys and girls. A topic on superheroes for example, enables boys to channel their interest and enthusiasm in positive ways as they engaged in outdoor mark-making and enjoy reading comic strips in the book corner. Staff report that focusing on boys' learning through active outdoor play has helped develop their creativity and literacy and had a positive impact on children's behaviour and attitudes. Children behave well throughout the nursery and respond to positive and consistently used behaviour strategies. They develop respect for themselves and learn about the cultures and beliefs of others through some interesting activities to celebrate their own customs. Recent celebrations have included a Norwegian Day, a Dragon Boat Festival for Chinese New Year and Diwali.

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	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

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	1
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