

# The Palace Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

---

**Unique reference number**

EY341118

**Inspection date**

22/06/2012

**Inspector**

Carolyn Hasler

**Setting address**

2 Windsor Street, Bletchley, MILTON KEYNES, MK2 2LN

**Telephone number**

01908 640901

**Email**

palacedaynursery@btconnect.com

**Type of setting**

Childcare - Non-Domestic

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2012

## 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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

## Description of the setting

The Palace Day Nursery is privately owned. It registered with new owners in 2006 and operates from a converted house in Bletchley, close to the centre of Milton Keynes. It is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year.

The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 30 children under eight years may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 48 children aged from birth to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The provision has a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There are 10 members of staff, six of whom hold early years qualifications to level 3 or above. The manager is working towards Early Years Professional Status. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

In general, the provision is inclusive and children's needs are adequately met. However, children are not robustly enabled to develop their understanding about their uniqueness and diversity. Children make sound progress in most areas of their development though inconsistent communication and language support limits learning opportunities. Relationships with parents are on the whole positive. However, there is limited information on initial assessments. The provision demonstrates a satisfactory capacity for ongoing improvement.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend the two-way flow of information with parents by offering more opportunities for them to contribute towards their child's initial assessment to establish their child's starting points
- develop and plan further for children's communication giving them space and time to respond to open ended questions
- develop and plan further to encourage children to recognise their own unique qualities and the characteristics they share with other children by acknowledging their own cultural and spiritual beliefs and those of other children

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

The management and practitioner team are committed to children's effective safeguarding. They maintain a good understanding of safeguarding procedures through regular training and team meetings. The provision has a robust safe recruitment procedure. In addition, practitioners have a range of effective procedures to promote children's safety. These include detailed information about working in partnership with key authorities to protect children from harm or neglect. The environment is inviting. Health and safety practices well promote children's learning in a safe space. Risk assessment is effective and includes procedures to cover unforeseen incidents.

The new management is making reasonable steps to improve outcomes for children. These include monitoring and evaluating learning, reviewing and replacing resources and engaging parents in stronger partnerships. Practitioners show suitable attitudes to improving their practices. These include improving teaching techniques and engaging in peer evaluation of their own practice. Ongoing appraisals and team meetings help practitioners recognise their strengths and weaknesses. The management team is evaluative in outlook and soundly seeks to drive improvement forward.

In general, the environment offers a suitable variety of play opportunities inside and outside. Nursery equipment is fit for purpose and of appropriate quality. However, some areas of learning have limited resources to support children's knowledge. For example, the range to support children's awareness of the society they live in and the wider world is basic. Practitioners organise and plan for children's needs but lack robust skills in delivering strategies to help them make consistent progress. Children hear few open-ended questions and this limits their ability to absorb language and respond well in conversation. Overall, records to show children's learning are in place. Practitioners make steady progress in their skills to evaluate activities and plan appropriately. However, initial assessments are basic and do not effectively value parents understanding of children's skills at the point of admission.

The day care provision in general offers an inclusive service. Staff ensure they meet children's dietary needs and display positive images of diversity and languages. There is appropriate provision made for children with additional needs and sound partnerships with key professionals ensure planning helps them make progress. However, practitioners lack confidence in working effectively with children's families to engage with their home cultures, languages and celebrations. This also limits the quality of other children's learning of differences and similarities.

There are generally positive engagements with parents in support of children's welfare and development. For example, the provision has a range of accessible channels for parents to share information. These include a suggestion box, daily chats, access to the web site, news letters and information boards. All practitioners are keen to help children and parents feel welcome. Practitioners working with

babies are particularly willing to work closely with parents towards meeting home routines, views and wishes. This ensures that children have positive beginnings to their learning experiences. Practitioners working with pre-school children are appropriately working with parents and local schools. They have clear intentions so that transitions for children run smoothly and they feel supported.

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

Children settle quickly and are able to separate from parents through supportive settling-in practices. They build secure relationships with the key adults working with them. In addition, they are familiar with all the other practitioners in their environment. Friendships form between children as they gain confidence in social situations. All children learn how to be kind, thoughtful and polite towards one another. They are suitably developing skills in negotiation, working out how to share and turn take. Role-play games, which incorporate safety messages, effectively help children learn about their own safety. For example, children play with a play oven and oven gloves, commenting on their awareness of the dangers of heat. Children's views are suitably taken account of when setting boundaries and in their everyday choices. They are encouraged to talk about the things they like doing. Project work has engaged children's interest in national events. In addition, they have had visitors to the setting to help them learn about different roles in the community.

Children show a good awareness of the importance of routine, personal hygiene. They understand that washing helps to wash away germs and keeps them healthy and strong. Young children's physical needs are cared for well. Time and space is set aside for children to play and learn or rest as needed. All children are physically active. Planning ensures that children play outside in all weathers with larger and more challenging resources. Music playing in the background of younger groups encourages movement. The provision's cook provides for the dietary needs of all children. Children benefit from healthy snacks and meals throughout their day. Displays of healthy choices and discussion on good health, help children make good decisions.

Children make satisfactory progress in their skills and achievements. They engage in an appropriate balance of child- and adult-led activities. They hear language all around them and are sufficiently encouraged to participate. Although practitioners are developing skills in talking with children, they lack confidence and practice to be able to open their discussions out consistently. Children see and enjoy written words and pictures. They have opportunities to make marks, using paper and paint or writing tools. There are some opportunities to practise mark-making with purpose with other materials, such as sand, dough or soil. Most pre-school children know which key letter starts their name. There are several, daily activities which encourage name recognition and a few children are able to write their names. Children have many opportunities to engage in computer games, or explore three-dimensional numbers, shapes, size or colours. Practitioners use an acceptable level of language around mathematical ideas to support children's learning. Children

enjoy exploring mini beasts in the garden with a magnifying glass or exploring dark spaces with torches. They are able to choose music on the compact disk player and use buttons and leavers in appropriate situations. Overall, children are suitably learning the skills that they need to continue to make progress towards future opportunities to learn and develop.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
------------------------------------------------------------------	---

### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



## **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
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----