

# Clarence House Day Nursery & Pre-School Centre

19 The Causeway, Godmanchester, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE29 2HA

<b>Inspection date</b>	23/08/2013
Previous inspection date	23/03/2011

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>1</b>
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision is outstanding

- Children make exceptional progress in this stimulating, welcoming nursery. Motivated, professional practitioners implement comprehensive educational programmes and children learn and develop rapidly.
- Children become highly competent and confident communicators as they are offered plentiful, interesting opportunities to speak, listen and develop their language skills.
- Children enjoy superb creative and messy play activities which help them express their thoughts, ideas and feelings in many ways. They explore different textures and smells, engage in role play and become engrossed in music and dance, which exercises their bodies and minds.
- Children's physical development is superbly promoted and they learn about their local community. They enjoy many walks around the local area, visit places of interest and join in with community based events.
- Parents are highly respected and great importance is placed upon their contribution to their child's nursery experience. They are offered many opportunities to engage in their child's learning and are very appreciative of this.
- Leadership of the nursery is inspirational. The exceptionally capable and professional approach of the manager and deputy has brought about considerable improvements in the nursery environment and practice. This enables them to offer children a highly beneficial early years experience.

## Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in each of the main playrooms and the outdoor areas, including a joint observation with the toddler room manager of a mathematics and colour recognition activity in the pre-school outdoor area.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager of the provision and spoke to children's key persons as appropriate during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation, evidence of suitability of practitioners working within the setting, the provider's self-evaluation evidence and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector took account of the views of three parents spoken to on the day, as well as information included in the nursery's own parent survey.

## Inspector

Deborah Hunt

## Full Report

### Information about the setting

Clarence House Day Nursery and Pre-School Centre was registered in 2003 under its current owner and is on the Early Years Register. It is situated within a converted, two-storey semi-detached house in Godmanchester, Cambridgeshire. Children attend from the local area and the surrounding villages. The nursery is accessible to all children and there are enclosed outdoor play areas.

The nursery employs 15 members of childcare staff, nine of whom hold an appropriate qualification at level 3 or above. Four members of staff are working towards a qualification, and one member of staff holds a foundation degree. The nursery also employs catering staff.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 7.30am until 6.30pm, all year round, except for Bank Holidays and one week at Christmas. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 53 children on roll who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education places for two-, three- and four-year-olds. It supports children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

#### To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- continue to develop the already highly stimulating outdoor play areas to offer older children even greater opportunities to be creative, take risks and experience challenge.

## Inspection judgements

### How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children are highly motivated and eager to learn in this very stimulating and inclusive setting where their individual learning needs are prioritised. Practitioners demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of children and their families and respect their individual situations. Children settle into the nursery exceptionally easily as very carefully considered routines are in place. Every child receives a home visit before they begin any settling-in sessions. The manager or deputy attends with the key person to enable the initial meeting to take place in an environment that both the child and their parents feel comfortable in. Thorough discussions help parents understand how the nursery operates, and the useful information gathered enables the nursery to plan very effectively for each child from the

start. Children's continuing progress is superbly promoted as parents are invited to share in their learning in a variety of ways. Practitioners offer parents home learning sheets full of ideas for children to try out at home, and parents are invited into the nursery. They join children as they celebrate special events, such as the school leavers' picnic, and join in with activities and sessions during the nursery day. These opportunities form part of the ongoing dialogue that takes place between the nursery and parents throughout each child's pre-school life.

Children make excellent progress in their learning due to the superb support and teaching offered by practitioners. The uniqueness of each child is a feature of the nursery, and practitioners are extremely knowledgeable about individual children's preferred styles of learning. For example, pre-school children play with hay and a toy barn with animals. For some this is a tactile experience, for others the focus is imaginative play, and other children develop their understanding of language and communication. Practitioners capably manage their differentiated interests in the activity, and children sustain concentration and interest for a long time.

Key persons plan highly effectively for children's next steps in their development as they take note of children's thoughts, ideas and interests. In the pre-school room, children are encouraged to develop their own scenarios, and practitioners support their play in an enabling way. For example, children move chairs into a group and excitedly gather resources from around the nursery to create their own 'toy shop'. They engage in animated conversations about what they are selling and buying and how much everything will cost. This play is replicated within the outdoor environment and the slide is moved to the playhouse entrance as they imaginatively create their shop inside it, sliding the resources down the 'delivery chute' into their shop. Children's learning journals provide a comprehensive account of progress made throughout their time in the nursery. Parents share these documents and take them home to enjoy regularly. Children love to look through them, both at home and at the nursery with their parent or key person, and express amazement at the photographs of their younger selves. Parents contribute to their children's learning as they share observations through the 'activities at home' sheets. Children enjoy taking home 'Clarence Bear', who joins them on ventures and outings. For example, he is snapped sitting on the wing of an aeroplane and enjoying a cocktail on holiday in the sun. Parents also contribute personal skills as they come in to bake cookies with children to help them learn about Canadian Thanksgiving. Thorough assessment and tracking of children enables practitioners to set precise and accurate next steps in learning for them.

Resourcing is exceptionally good within each of the nursery rooms. The diverse range of high quality toys and activities make a superb contribution to the enjoyment children derive from their learning. Accessibility of the resources and labelling in pictures and words help children make sense of the wealth of opportunities they are offered. They develop independence as babies learn to negotiate the shallow stairs in their room, toddlers begin to take risks as they climb and older children complete small tasks. Children move confidently around their environments, and older children in particular develop the autonomy to move freely between the indoor and outdoor areas. Children explore the feel of the hay they use for their 'farm animal' bedding outside, as they place it snugly around them in the farmhouse. The wonderful variety of messy play activities offered include

gloop and play dough, and the children make jelly, custard, spaghetti, kidney beans, lentils and pasta. This enables them to explore their developing senses as they see, smell and touch the different materials. Older children freely transport resources between the indoor and outdoor areas as they develop their own play scenarios, taking a picnic they have made, including butternut squash, outside to enjoy. They practise their newly acquired understanding as they have fun incorporating the names of the fruits and vegetables they have been learning about in their play.

Younger children happily explore the environment at their own pace, learning to solve their own problems. For example, they bob down playing with sand and concentrate hard as they fill containers, which they transport to the water tray. They then work out how to add water to the full cup and pour some sand into another container to ensure they can do so. Toddlers enjoy exploring the large box that appears in the garden, which practitioners have deliberately left for them to 'unwrap'. Children relish the anticipation of what they might find and are excited when they find new play animals inside. Role play areas offer children exciting opportunities each day to become a superhero, dress as a princess or imitate favourite characters from books they have read. Additionally, children dress up in the uniforms of various schools, create classrooms with blackboards and enjoy completing their 'class register'.

Professional, insightful teaching and the detailed approach taken to helping children make progress prepare them extremely well for the next stage in their learning, such as starting school. The nursery has expertise in a number of areas which help develop children's communication and language styles. For example, 'Every Child a Talker' and the associated monitoring tool are used effectively within the nursery, as are story sacks and talking boxes. Through such initiatives, children grow in confidence, develop a love of books and become highly skilful communicators.

Children begin to know their local area exceptionally well as they visit the churchyard, take rubbings of the gravestones and collect leaves to make prints with. They make their own postcards and walk to the postbox to send them to their parents. Babies love trips to the local children's centre to join in with the stay and play sessions there. Children enjoy learning about their community as they join in with the local gala, scarecrow painting, tree planting and harvest festival.

Practitioners work closely with children's families and outside professionals, such as speech and language therapists and the area special educational needs coordinator. This enables the nursery to offer children with special educational needs and/or disabilities a superb level of support to fully promote their individual progress and development. Interventions are timely and ensure the gap narrows rapidly from children's original starting points. Children very effectively gain an understanding of diversity and an appreciation of other people subtly through their play, discussions with staff and the fantastic variety of resources provided. Practitioners recognise the backgrounds of the children who attend the setting and fully embrace their beliefs and cultures into the nursery environment and their play, to further enhance this aspect of learning. For example, children are superbly supported as the nursery has access to a bank of centrally held language books, which enable them to converse with children speaking English as an additional language.

## The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

The exceptionally effective key person system means that practitioners get to know children and their families extremely well. They develop a deep appreciation of children's backgrounds, strengths and interests through the home visit carried out for every child. This enables them to support and promote children's well-being to a very high standard. Children's emotional development is continually promoted as they develop secure, trusting relationships with practitioners. This enables children to feel safe and secure within the nursery. For example, babies reach up to give their key person a cuddle, and older children welcome the interaction during small group activities, such as enjoying nursery tea in the garden on a warm, sunny day.

Daily verbal information is exchanged with parents of all children to ensure that their changing needs are always given priority. Additionally, children in the baby room have a daily diary, which details their individual care needs each day and offers the opportunity for parents and practitioners to share information. Children of all ages demonstrate exceptionally high levels of confidence and self-esteem. They approach practitioners with ease and cooperate very well with their peers. For example, they work together to scoop up the spilt lentils they have been playing with, negotiating who will sweep first. Close relationships exist between the children, as they give each other spontaneous hugs and cuddles during their play and become excited when their friends arrive. Children's work is beautifully displayed around the nursery, including pictures of their families, which gives them a very good sense of belonging. The nursery liaises extremely well with any local schools children move on to, in order to promote smooth transitions. Children going to the main catchment school are taken on a visit for a morning or afternoon. Children attend from other cities and, therefore, it is not possible to work with these schools in the same way. However, the staff give exceptionally high priority to ensuring all children feel confident and secure as they move on to school. Practitioners speak to all schools children move onto, in order to find out the information they want on each child, and a transition document and summary reports are shared. Key persons are always available to speak to and share frequent conversations with teachers in reception classes. Local reception teachers visit the setting and liaise closely with key persons regarding children's well-being and development prior to starting school. Additionally, staff seek to work with schools about children's attainment levels on entry to enable them to concentrate on any areas of learning to ensure children make the best progress possible.

Children are extremely relaxed and confident due to the excellent, nurturing care they receive from practitioners. Their needs are consistently met and practitioners praise and acknowledge their progress and achievements, which encourages high levels of self-esteem. For example, practitioners clap and tell them they are 'fantastic' when children help them put the plates out for dinner time. Children's exceptional behaviour is promoted superbly as practitioners are excellent role models and topics cover issues, such as feelings and relationships. Additionally, children demonstrate their familiarity with rules and routines and the nursery's 'golden rules', which they are reminded about each day during circle time. These rules are owned by the children and they frequently mention them during their play. Children learn to be responsible for their own safety when they

tidy away toys with enthusiasm when practitioners tell them it is 'tidy-up time'. Older children enjoy caring for younger ones, and children show elevated levels of personal responsibility in the way they manage their relationships with one another. Through activities, role modelling and gentle, timely reminders when necessary, children develop a strong sense of accountability for their actions and valuable skills for the future.

Children's awareness of developing a healthy lifestyle is encouraged through cookery, the food they eat and other activities that promote healthy eating. The nursery sources local foods wherever possible as they use the local butcher for meat and vegetables, which are grown locally. The nursery cook offers children freshly cooked meals, which are nutritionally balanced and rotated to offer variety in their diets. Children help themselves to healthy foods, such as fruit at snack time, and grow peas, tomatoes and potatoes outdoors, which they tend to themselves. Outdoor physical play also offers children the opportunity to run, skip, jump and climb. Children use tractor tyres and negotiate stepping from one to another. The nursery outdoor area is about to be re-developed, which means consideration is given to building on this already highly stimulating area, to provide children with even greater risk and challenge in their outdoor play. Children become adept at changing into their t-shirts and shorts and learn to put on shoes, coats and hats, as they take part in extracurricular sports activities and active, music-based sessions.

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

Leadership and management of the nursery are excellent. Through the impressive drive to continuously improve the nursery, the manager has forged close bonds between the staff team, and the nursery runs exceptionally effectively. This ensures practitioners work at a consistently high standard to provide an excellent early years experience for all children. Practitioners have a robust understanding of their responsibilities in meeting the learning and development requirements. The programme of continuous professional development is noteworthy, and practitioners frequently access training to continually enhance practice and teaching within the nursery. Self-evaluation is highly rigorous and highlights the nursery's strengths and areas for development. It is used as an ongoing and highly valuable tool to enhance the care and learning provided. There is a very effective system for regularly monitoring practice, including peer-on-peer observations and monthly supervision meetings. The manager and deputy ensure that in this way, the educational programmes are exceptionally closely monitored and any new initiatives are incorporated. In addition, monthly staff meetings offer practitioners the chance to reflect on the needs of children and the nursery as a whole.

Safeguarding arrangements to protect children are very robust. Highly effective policies and procedures further strengthen practice in this area. The exceptionally secure partnerships with families and other agencies also ensure that children remain protected. All staff are trained to a high level and have an excellent understanding of local safeguarding procedures. Safeguarding is a standing item for discussion at staff meetings and forms part of practitioners' supervisions each half term. Stringent recruitment and vetting of practitioners helps to ensure children are cared for by a professional and suitable staff team. Thorough induction procedures ensure practitioners have a clear

understanding of their roles and responsibilities and the general running of the nursery. A very similar induction is undertaken with trainees and students, who are offered mentoring through a practitioner during their time at the nursery. The highly stimulating environment is changed and resources rotated regularly. Practitioners are very well deployed across the nursery, both inside and outside, so that children are constantly supervised throughout the day. Accidents and injuries are effectively recorded and monthly monitoring and evaluation of any entries ensure that possible hazards within the nursery are swiftly identified and minimised.

Partnership working with other professionals and agencies is very well established and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are superbly supported. Excellent working relationships have been developed with parents, and practitioners value their active contribution to their children's nursery experience. Parents attend interactive sessions at the nursery and regular coffee mornings. Parent consultation evenings have an added dimension as they are asked to paint a picture of their child as they wait for their appointment. The resulting portraits are on display in the entrance foyer of the nursery, and children love to find themselves and discuss what they see. These evenings have an informal, relaxed air and parents are encouraged to get to know one another. Practitioners demonstrate a superb understanding of the benefits of working closely with parents and other professionals to meet children's individual needs. Parents speak very highly of the setting, saying that they are 'so well informed' about how their child is doing, that children engage in 'purposeful play and individualised activities' and children love coming to the nursery. Other parents spoken to are highly appreciative of the family atmosphere. They state that this is exactly what they want for their children and they appreciate the 'young, enthusiastic and active staff'.

## What inspection judgements mean

### Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

## Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY260325
<b>Local authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	910379
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	50
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	53
<b>Name of provider</b>	Clarence House Day Nurseries Ltd
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	23/03/2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01480 386241

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## Type of provision

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Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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