

Polkadot Day Nursery

Greyswood, The Ridgeway, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, CV37 9JL

Inspection date	28/01/2014
Previous inspection date	17/06/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
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

- Staff are extremely caring and children's health, safety and well-being are afforded the utmost priority.
- Children enthusiastically participate in lots of innovative and expertly planned experiences that provide them with an excellent foundation on which to build their future learning. This is because staff have an excellent knowledge of individual children and skilfully provide learning experiences that accurately reflect their differing needs, preferences and interests.
- The nursery outdoor areas are children are extremely well-planned and resourced. They provide children with an attractive environment that successfully sparks their imagination, inspires exploration and effectively supports children's creativity and physical skills.
- Inspirational and innovative leadership and management means that all staff are highly motivated and practice is consistently exceptional.
- Staff frequently share advice, ideas and best practice with parents and successfully use a comprehensive range of strategies to encourage their involvement in children's learning. By doing so, staff astutely recognise and acknowledge the vital role parents play in supporting children's learning and promote a consistent approach to children's care and education.

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 inspected conducted a tour of the premises.
- The inspector spoke with the provider, her management team and staff, at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector interacted with children throughout the inspection.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager of a planned activity in the outdoor area.
- The inspector observed activities throughout the nursery in both indoor and outdoor spaces.
- The inspector looked at documentation including children's records, learning and development information, staff records and a selection of policies and procedures.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with children and discussed and viewed the provider's self-evaluation form.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents through discussion and from written questionnaires sent out by the nursery.

Inspector

Carol Johnson

Full report

Information about the setting

Polkadot Day Nursery was registered in 2004 and is on the Early Years Register. It is one of nine settings owned and managed by Polkadot Day Nurseries Ltd. The nursery operates from a converted single-storey building situated on the outskirts of Stratford-upon-Avon, close to main routes. There are enclosed areas available for outdoor play.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday for 51 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. There are currently 40 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and some who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 16 members of childcare staff. Of these, eleven hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least Level 3, including one with Early Years Professional Status, two hold a Postgraduate Certificate in Education and another an early years degree. The nursery holds National Day Nursery Association membership.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- consider enhancing the already excellent partnership with other providers with a view to exchanging examples of outstanding practice with a wider audience.

Inspection judgements

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

Children make outstanding progress in relation to their starting points. This is because the quality of teaching in the nursery is excellent. Staff put children at the centre of everything they do. They know the children in their care really well and accurately judge when they need support or are ready to be taught new skills. Staff constantly observe what children know and can do and accurately assess children's progress and plan for the next steps in their learning. Staff gather a wealth of useful information from parents and any others involved in children's care and education. This helps staff to successfully establish children's starting points, individual needs and preferences and provide consistency of care. In addition, key persons effectively maintain progress records for each of the children and regularly share these with parents. In addition, parent consultations provide additional opportunities for parents to meet the staff team and discuss their children's progress. Staff recognise the important role parents play in their child's learning and work extremely hard to build positive and trusting relationships with them. Consequently,

parents confidently share information about themselves and their children and highly effective partnership working arrangements support children's welfare and progress. A wealth of useful information is available to parents via the nursery website and includes advice on weaning, potty training and the value of play and talking to children. Furthermore, in the nursery foyer, parents can view videos of their children engaged in experiences and pick up a variety of activity ideas and information leaflets.

Staff place an extremely sharp focus on helping all children to communicate effectively. They routinely model language and regularly introduce new vocabulary as part of the daily routine and during learning experiences. For example, a member of staff introduces colour, shape and size language as a small group of children investigate coloured blocks of ice placed in warm water. The member of staff asks children what they think might happen to the water and ice and patiently waits for them to respond. She listens to what they say and skilfully uses their responses to encourage further conversation and plan the next steps in their learning. Consequently, children develop language, reflect on their learning and gain confidence to speak in group situations; all skills they will need in preparation for school and future life. Some of the nursery staff have undertaken 'Time to Talk' training through the local authority; an initiative aimed at helping children learn to talk and their parents and carers to learn to listen. Subsequently, an abundance of information is displayed around the nursery and this provides adults with useful tips to on how encourage children's language and communication skills. As a result, children make excellent progress in understanding, listening and speaking in relation to their starting points. Several children attending the nursery speak English as an additional language and their needs are effectively met; many of the 'Time to Talk' strategies, used by staff with all children, make a significant contribution to their emotional well-being and progress. For example, children know what is likely to happen throughout the day because the nursery daily routine is displayed using pictures. Furthermore, staff get down to the children's level when speaking and this means that children can pick up on the many clues expressed in facial expressions and body language.

Staff provide children with experiences that are innovative, exciting and lots of fun. They understand that children need a balance of adult-lead and child-initiated experiences and this is reflected in the daily routine. Children participate in carefully planned group activities and receive regular opportunities to learn independently and without constant adult interruption. Resources to support all areas of learning are in abundance and a comprehensive selection is stored within children's easy reach. Consequently, children develop independence and are well-equipped to confidently and comfortably, explore and learn. Children benefit greatly from an incredibly rich, varied and attractive learning environment that inspires their learning and enhances their skills. Indoors, babies and toddlers develop balance, muscle tone and strength as they engage in floor play and explore low-level climbing equipment. There are several 'discovery boards' attached to the walls at child height; these boards have door bells, light switches and door handles attached and encourage children's curiosity and fine muscle movement. The outdoor areas are a particular strength of the nursery and these are used extremely well by staff and children of all ages. There are areas for children to explore nature, climb and investigate using all of their senses. Covered areas provide some protection from the weather and there is plenty of space for children to run around, used wheeled toys and be physically

active. In addition, various outside professionals visit the nursery to help children develop agility and gain balls skills.

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

Children benefit from an extremely welcoming and well-resourced environment that is highly conducive to learning. There is plenty of space both indoors and outdoors and attractive displays of children's work and photographs of them engaged in play enhance the environment. Furthermore, these displays add to children's self-esteem, sense of belonging and promote lots of discussion between adults and children. An extremely well-established key person system successfully supports children's welfare and emotional security. Children receive exceptionally warm and responsive care and 'new' children settle very quickly. Babies are content and babble happily as they play. Older children readily go to staff members when they are upset or in need of support and know that staff will respond appropriately. Staff clearly know individual children very well and adeptly recognise and support their personalities, needs and interests. Excellent communication between staff, other professionals and parents and/or carers exists. This means that any areas where children or their families may need additional assistance are effectively identified and appropriate support mechanisms put in place. Parents rate the nursery very highly and recent parent questionnaires indicate that 100 per cent of the parents who responded felt welcome and valued. All parents interviewed during the inspection praised the nursery. Their comments included, 'staff are so welcoming and immediately made my child feel part of the group' and 'staff made settling-in so easy and my child has come on in leaps and bounds'.

Children's good health and safety are promoted to an incredibly high standard. They are nurtured and very well cared for in line with their individual routines and their parents' wishes. For example, staff sensitively and appropriately settle children at sleep times and any individual comfort items are readily available to children. All areas of the nursery are extremely clean and maintained very well. Excellent hygiene and food safety procedures are in place and followed by staff; these include the use of disposable aprons and gloves during nappy changing. Children display self-care skills appropriate for their age and stage of development. They regularly practice putting on, and taking off, their shoes and coats and many of the older children are particularly skilled at doing so. Food provided by the nursery is very healthy and nutritious, and physical exercise is a regular feature of the nursery routine. All children access the outdoor play areas on a daily basis and receive an abundance of opportunities to experience fresh air and expend energy. Furthermore, they learn to take risks safely. For example, children regularly access climbing equipment and learn that it is safer to wait their turn before going up the steps to the slide; they are less likely to fall. Nonetheless, staff remain close at hand and remind them, when necessary, of behaviour expectations and safe practices. Children listen to staff and readily follow instructions. They show lots of care and consideration for others and their good behaviour, achievement and effort is promptly acknowledged and praised. As a result, children behave extremely well and are successfully motivated to cooperate and participate in experiences.

The nursery has obtained a variety of resources that staff effectively use to help children

explore their emotions and gain a sense of belonging. For example, staff use 'Story Sacks' that include books and toys, and help prepare children for a visit to the doctor, dentist or hospital. Also, parents are asked to send in photographs of family members and these are used to inspire discussion and reassure children when they are upset. Children's needs are supported extremely well as they move between the rooms in the nursery or on to other provision, for example, local pre-schools. Children's key persons successfully prepare them for the move in lots of different ways. For example, key persons accompany children, moving between rooms in the nursery or onto other 'Polkadot' settings, on visits prior to the move. These visits help children become familiar with the new environment, routines and staff. Also, they provide reassurance for children and their parents. Staff talk to older children moving on to pre-school about what to expect and present the move as a positive and exciting experience. Consequently, children's emotional well-being is supported incredibly well by the nursery, in close partnership with parents and other professionals.

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

Leaders and managers demonstrate an excellent understanding of their responsibility to meet the requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. All staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities with regard to child protection and implement rigorous safeguarding procedures. The nursery safeguarding policy contains all required information and clear guidance about child protection procedures is prominently displayed in the main foyer. This means that adults have easily accessible information to refer to should they have child protection concerns. The nursery is extremely safe and secure and visitors are closely supervised. All aspects of health and safety are afforded the utmost priority by the provider. Staff regularly and meticulously risk assess all areas of the premises used by children and any potential hazards are effectively identified and swiftly minimised. Recruitment, induction and vetting procedures are extremely robust and ensure that all adults working in the setting are suitable to fulfil their roles to the expected standard. Qualification levels at the nursery are well above legal requirements and children benefit from a consistent staff team that is focused, determined and hardworking. Staff work extremely well together and their different, but complementary skills and expertise, are recognised and very effectively utilised. Everyone working at the nursery is passionate about what they do and show by their words and actions that they really want to improve children's life chances.

The provider has an infectious enthusiasm and a dynamic sense of ambition. She successfully cultivates and maintains an environment where staff are respected and highly valued as individuals. Staff personal and professional development is actively encouraged and successfully used to improve outcomes for children. For example, staff describe how a recent training course inspired them to review the nursery environment and make changes. As a result, staff now provide even more natural and tactile resources that excite children's senses and encourage exploration. The nursery is one of several early years settings owned by the same provider, and training, ideas and best practice are shared between these settings. This means that staff benefit from the mutual support of a multi-skilled and experienced wider staff team. Also, they are better equipped to consistently provide a high quality provision for children and their families. The provider and her

managers regularly network with other professionals and share examples of best practice. However, there is scope to share experiences and best practice with a far wider audience and thus, help to further improve the nursery and raise quality in the childcare sector. Reflective practice is an integral part of the daily nursery routine. Management closely monitor and review staff practice and assess the quality and suitability of experiences planned and provided for children. As a result, strengths and areas for improvement are successfully identified and carefully considered action plans are in place. For example, plans for the immediate future include the creation of additional outdoor space to enhance the already excellent learning environment. An area at the rear of the building is currently being cleared for this purpose. The provider is currently gathering the views of all connected with the nursery as to how they think it can be best developed. By doing so, she creates a shared vision for the future and demonstrates that the views of others are welcomed and valued.

Highly successful partnership working arrangements successfully support children's welfare, learning and development. Robust documentation and information sharing with parents ensures all agreements and required information are obtained for every child. As a result, managers and staff have a thorough understanding of each child's circumstances and background, including who may have access to them and who may collect them. Staff make a point of talking to parents and/or carers when children are dropped off and collected and a wealth of useful information is displayed around the premises. Consequently, parental wishes are known and important information is effectively shared. Furthermore, excellent partnerships are in place with other agencies and childcare professionals. A variety of professionals, for example, speech and language therapists and health visitors, regularly visit to observe children in the nursery environment and to offer staff advice and support. There is a joined up approach to the care of children who have identified special educational needs and/or disabilities and this means that they receive timely, consistent and very effective support.

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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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

Unique reference number	EY292440
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	949555
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	47
Number of children on roll	40
Name of provider	Polkadot Day Nurseries Ltd
Date of previous inspection	17/06/2009
Telephone number	01789 290101

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

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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