

Inspection of Nene Valley Day Nursery

Cliftonville, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN1 5HL

Inspection date: 24 March 2025

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children are at the very heart of this vibrant and inspirational nursery. With genuine care and a nurturing approach from staff, children rapidly develop confidence and a strong sense of well-being and belonging. The positive relationships between children and staff are palpable. Babies gaze at staff who speak to them gently and hold them close when they have their bottles.

All children, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, successfully take part in activities alongside their friends. Staff swiftly identify children who need additional support. They work closely with parents and other agencies to implement specific targets and interventions to help children achieve as well as they can. Children quickly respond to staff, who use clear language and sign language to help children understand what they expect of them. Staff's skilful approach supports children's engagement effectively.

Leaders and staff implement a curriculum that is ambitious and sequenced for all children to build on what they already know. Children concentrate and remain engaged and focused on their activities. For example, children are fascinated when staff read a story about dinosaurs and volcanoes. Children's knowledge is extended as staff carefully explain about dinosaurs being extinct and what this means. Staff introduce new words that extend children's vocabulary, such as 'eruption', 'magma' and 'lava', as they look at factual books alongside stories.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Leaders are committed to providing children with high-quality experiences. They value staff's skills and support them to develop their knowledge. Staff access an abundance of bespoke training that helps them develop confidence and skills that enhance how they interact with and teach children. For example, staff use well-placed questions and make suggestions to help children develop their ideas, such as constructing a wide and supportive base when they want to build a tower. Highly effective monitoring of staff's practice through discussions and regular supervision results in an enthusiastic, professional and reflective team of staff who work exceptionally well together.
- Staff are effective in their teaching. This contributes to children's learning and widens their experience. For example, during a woodwork activity, staff confidently talk to children about safety and show them the safety goggles they will wear. Staff demonstrate how tools such as pliers, hammers and G clamps work. They help children to learn the difference between materials, such as wood and metal. Through discussion, staff teach children that wood comes from trees. Staff encourage children to compare and describe how wood and metal feel different. Children say that metal feels heavy and cold, and staff tell them

metal can cut the wood because it is softer.

- Children's communication and early literacy skills develop rapidly. They have time to practise and revisit their learning through specific stories where staff teach them sign language. Toddlers are excited and motivated to take part. They rush to get the bag that contains the books and a toy character from the stories. Staff demonstrate the sign language for phrases such as 'Where is Jessie cat?' as they read the text. Children show they are familiar with this activity as they tell the story themselves. They turn the pages of the book and confidently use the signs they learn from staff.
- Staff are skilled in supporting children to work together and have respect for others, which results in consistently positive behaviour and cooperative play. Staff are exceptional role models. They talk to children about why it is important to ask their friends for a turn with toys when they have finished playing. Staff spend lots of time playing alongside children, gently reminding them to be kind and to think of others. This ensures all children can take part in discussions and activities and be fully involved.
- Staff have high expectations for the children to develop their independence, decision-making skills and confidence to do things for themselves. Toddlers and pre-school children do not sit down for lunch as a whole group; staff invite children to come to the lunch table when they are ready so their play is not interrupted. Children sit in small groups, with staff showing them how to use the tongs and spoons to serve themselves. Lively discussions take place about the food children eat. For example, staff talk to children about vegetables and how these contribute to keeping them healthy.
- Leaders and staff are committed to supporting parents alongside their children. Parents receive detailed feedback daily about their child's care routines and how the activities contribute to their child's learning. Parents are encouraged to use the lending library to extend children's love of books at home, which has a positive impact on children's language. Leaders share information for parents to continue their child's learning and development at home, and this contributes to a consistent approach for children.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

Setting details

Unique reference number	219904
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10393553
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	105
Number of children on roll	162
Name of registered person	Childbase Partnership Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP900830
Telephone number	01604 628444
Date of previous inspection	28 October 2019

Information about this early years setting

Nene Valley Day Nursery registered in 1998. It operates from premises situated in the grounds of Northampton General Hospital, in Cliftonville, Northampton. The nursery is open from 7am until 6.30pm, all year round, except for two in-service training days and bank holidays. The nursery employs 53 members of staff. Of these, 41 hold early years qualifications between level 2 and level 6. The nursery provides government funded places for children aged from nine months to four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors

Melanie Eastwell
Charmaine Cayton

Inspection activities

- The manager, deputy manager and both inspectors completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Both inspectors observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this was having on children's learning.
- The inspectors spoke with the manager, deputy manager, nominated individual, area manager and the regional manager about the leadership and management of the nursery.
- The inspectors talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection.
- Both inspectors carried out joint observations with the manager, one of a woodwork activity in the pre-school room and one of a small-group session in the Ladybird Room.
- Children spoke to the inspectors during the inspection.
- One inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views. She also took account of written feedback from parents.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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