

# Thames Valley Park Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

EY279729

**Inspection date**

14/07/2011

**Inspector**

Susan May

**Setting address**

Building 4, Microsoft Campus, Thames Valley Park,  
Reading, Berkshire, RG6 1WG

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**Type of setting**

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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

Thames Valley Park Children's Centre is part of the Bright Horizons Family Solutions Ltd. It opened in 2003 and operates from premises on the Microsoft Campus on the Thames Valley Park, Reading, Berkshire. It is situated on the ground floor of one of the Microsoft buildings. There is an enclosed outdoor area. The nursery offers childcare facilities to employees of Microsoft.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Child Care Register. A maximum of 52 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 56 children on roll. This includes 20 funded children. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 6.30pm with the exception of Bank Holidays and Christmas.

The nursery employs 18 staff including a cook, of these, 12 hold appropriate early years qualifications and four members of staff are working towards achieving these.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The dedicated manager and staff team recognise the uniqueness of each child and provide an exceptional environment where children are nurtured and make excellent progress as their welfare and learning is well supported. Secure, trusting relationships are established that help children develop confidence and a strong sense of belonging within the setting. Effective partnerships are in place and continue to be developed between providers, parents and other agencies to ensure individual children's needs are met and their protection assured. Excellent leadership skills from the manager along with input from staff, parents and children ensure sustained improvement as they demonstrate awareness of their strengths and determination to continue to scrutinize and move their practice forward to support the development of children's care and learning.

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

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- providing opportunities for all parents to attend nursery practice meetings taking into account their different working patterns.

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

The dedicated manager leads an enthusiastic and committed team which works hard to ensure the children's safety, welfare and well-being. A strong emphasis is placed on safeguarding children with robust policies and procedures in place. These are securely understood by the staff who clearly recognise their responsibilities and make children's welfare a priority. Stringent recruitment systems ensure that staff are appropriately vetted and suitably qualified with a good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff morale is high as they support each other and strive to continually improve their knowledge and skills through ongoing in-house, local authority and external training. An effective appraisal system identifies both individual and the setting's training needs. Comprehensive risk assessments are effectively implemented to manage and eliminate identified risks within the setting. All policies and procedures are in place and shared with parents, these are reviewed on a regular basis. All confidential documentation is stored securely. An outstanding feature of the nursery is the exciting and highly motivating learning environment. The nursery makes excellent use of its outdoor area for a wide range of learning experiences and the overall accessibility and variety of toys and resources provided, has a significantly high impact on children's development and learning.

Parents speak extremely highly of the care and learning opportunities their children receive from the dedicated staff team. For example, many parents comment on the regularity and accessibility of information they receive on their child's development. Other favourable comments included the nursery's flexibility and the effective family support system. Staff have a very good knowledge of each child's background with initial discussions with parents informing them of children's current interests and stage of development. Staff encourage each child to recognise their own unique qualities, with good systems in place to ensure each child feels a sense of belonging and is able to take part fully in the provision. Inclusion is threaded through all aspects of the nursery and children are effectively provided with activities to help them learn about other cultures and people's differences. There are effective partnerships between staff, parents and their children and external agencies to ensure all children reach their full potential. For example, staff are extending the links with staff at schools children will attend to ensure that the transition from nursery to school is sensitively handled and children are well prepared for the next step in their education. The nursery's partnership with parents is well organised from initial pre-visits to sharing the well presented information on their children's development. Parents are genuinely well informed of nursery practices and are provided with opportunities to attend meetings to discuss nursery issues; however, the timing of these meetings does not take into account parents' working patterns.

The nursery staff show increasing confidence in their application of reflective practice and self-evaluation. The setting has successfully completed a self-evaluation document, which has a full and detailed account of areas identified for development. The manager demonstrates a strong ability to guide and oversee all

aspects of practice and the maintenance of quality within the setting ensuring that the organisation and management of the nursery is highly effective and promotes children's progress and achievement within an excellent programme of play and learning.

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

Children are cared for and educated in an extremely supportive and stimulating environment. Staff have an excellent knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and use this knowledge to plan a stimulating and interesting learning environment for all children, with comprehensive observations and assessments of the children's development; monitoring their progress in all areas. Regular parents' meetings, daily verbal exchanges and newsletters ensure parents are kept informed of children's progress. Staff record children's progress in their development records, use these to inform future planning and share them with parents requesting their input to provide coherence and continuity in the children's learning.

Children particularly enjoy the outdoor environment, where activities support all areas of learning. For example, children have planted and care for a range of vegetables and flowers, pour water into a container of soil to make mud pies and look for mini beasts. This provides opportunities for children to begin to recognize where their food comes from and to explore the natural environment. The nursery is a workplace nursery with children attending from a wide area and variety of backgrounds; this provides opportunities to extend children's understanding of the wider world as staff request information and support from parents. For example, children make books using photographs from home of their families and events that are important to them. An excellent range of resources promoting equality and diversity is available. Children initiate their own play as they self select resources, play out doors daily whatever the weather enjoying free flow play and fresh air and exercise. A balance of child led and adult directed activities is offered, for example, children thoroughly enjoy sharing stories with staff and their peers, tell each other their thoughts and feelings and have favourite stories they want to read again and again.

Designated construction areas provide opportunities for children to problem solve as they build roads, towers and houses, with a selection of large and small construction resources. The use of numbers and number recognition is promoted as younger children count the dots and older children recognize the number that indicates how many children can play at each activity. Out doors children 'park' their vehicles by the appropriate number displayed on the fence. There are opportunities for mark making throughout the nursery, from the designated writing area indoors to the laminated safety checklists that children tick as they recognize what makes the outdoor area safe for them to play in. Children develop control and coordination as they play with malleable materials such as play dough and use tools such as cutlery and cooking utensils as they make cakes. Creative development is promoted throughout the nursery from the very youngest children

who have the opportunity to explore their senses with a variety of resources offered to them, to the older children who freely access a range of arts and craft materials Children have access to everyday technology, computers and simple electronic game appropriate to their age; for example, babies and very young children enjoy sound and light toys, while older children access computers with simple software.

Children's developing independence skills are promoted very well as they self select resources, choose and serve themselves lunch and are consulted about what they like doing in the nursery. They begin to learn about sustainability as they use many natural materials in their play. Children move around freely demonstrating their awareness of keeping themselves safe as they carefully negotiate around each other when moving around, sit carefully on chairs at snack time and when using scissors and use 'Candy Floss' the safety zebra to help identify hazards and occasions when they need to be with an adult, for example, as they discuss road safety. Staff promote children's understanding of the importance of good health, through providing good role models and the availability of resources for them to begin to care for themselves, such as having, tissues within easy reach with bins beneath for prompt disposal. Children are curious, confident and sociable. They are lively but behave well, demonstrate positive behaviour and develop very good self control as they begin to show an awareness of responsibility within the setting. Their work is valued and displayed attractively, praise frequently given by staff for their achievements. Children show concern for each other as they readily share and take turns. Children play a dynamic role in their own learning and offer their ideas and respond to challenges with enthusiasm, this helps builds self-esteem and developing skills that will benefit the children in the future.

## 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>	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

### 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>	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
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	1
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
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	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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