

Milestones Day Nursery

Norman Community Centre, Bignold Road, NORWICH, NR3 2QZ

Inspection date	05/06/2014
Previous inspection date	Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
		2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
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		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Children are happy, supported and make good progress given their starting points as the quality of the teaching is good. Practitioners demonstrate an insightful knowledge of each child's interests and learning needs. Consequently, they provide rich and stimulating activities both inside and outdoors, that promote all children's learning well.
- Children thrive as they form close bonds with their key person and their transition through the nursery is well managed. Children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, which supports them well as they prepare to move on to school.
- The nursery works exceptionally well with parents, other professionals and agencies, providing excellent support that enables every child to learn and develop well.
- The management team provides strong leadership and constantly reflect on practice within the setting. Plans for improvement are well targeted to further raise the already high quality of the provision.
- Safeguarding is given high priority in the nursery, with good procedures in place to ensure that staff have a thorough understanding of their responsibilities.

It is not yet outstanding because

- On a very few occasions, children are not provided with sufficient time to make decisions or try to have a go for themselves because staff are sometimes over eager to support them in their play.

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.

The provision is also registered on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in each of the playrooms and the outside learning environment.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with a member of the senior management team.
- The inspector spoke with the manager of the provision, staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector reviewed a selection of children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with children and viewed the provider's self-evaluation form and improvement plan.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day and information included in the setting's own parent survey.

Inspector

Lindsey Cullum

Full report

Information about the setting

Milestones Day Nursery was established in 2004 and re-registered in 2013 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It is managed by the Pre-school Learning Alliance. The nursery operates from purpose-built premises in Norwich, Norfolk. Children have access to four main playrooms and associated facilities. There is an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is accessible to all children. The nursery is open Monday to Friday, from 8am to 6pm all year round, with the exception of bank holidays and three staff training days. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 218 children on roll in the early years age range. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language. The nursery employs 25 staff to work directly with the children. Of these, 23 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- build on children's ability to try for themselves, by allowing them a little more time to organise themselves and use their emergent skills and knowledge.

Inspection judgements

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

Children throughout the nursery are happy and motivated. Practitioners have a secure understanding of what children need to learn and how to support their learning through play and first-hand experiences. Consequently, they provide an educational programme, which has depth and breadth across all areas of learning so that all children make good progress, from their individual starting points. Practitioners have high expectations of all children because they find out from parents what children can do before they start in the nursery provision. This information, alongside early observations made by the child's key person, are used as part of a baseline assessment. Each child has a detailed learning journal containing comments about their achievements, illustrated by photographs, which show children of all ages take part in a wide range of activities, that build on their early learning skills. Practitioners use information gathered through their observations to successfully plan for children's next steps in learning, ensuring they set out a wide variety of interesting and challenging activities each day, that engage children so they actively learn through their play. Focussed adult-led activities are designed to build on the evaluation of children's previous interests and activities. In addition, a very detailed evaluation of the week's activities is carried out by practitioners, to reflect on their practice

and help continuous development. Face-to-face contact with parents and carers plays a key part in the communication about children's learning and development. Parents also view children's learning files very regularly and add their aims for children's learning or contributions to the tracked progression for children. Practitioners provide ideas for further activities at home by discussing what children have been doing and why, and suggesting more ideas to continue learning at home. These extremely effective links with parents and carers, optimise children's learning in the nursery and at home. Summative assessments are completed, such as the progress check for children between two and three years, which clearly demonstrate children's progress over time. This is closely monitored by the management team. As a result, progression for all children, given their starting points is good and the nursery is successful in narrowing the gaps in children's level of attainment. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are extremely well supported because staff develop focused individual plans for them, that meet their unique learning needs. Parents and any other professionals supporting children are fully involved in setting targets for children's achievements, meaning that there is an extremely consistent approach to supporting children's specific learning and development needs.

Children's communication and language development are promoted well and older children chatter confidently to staff and each other during activities. Practitioners model clear language during activities without discouraging children's efforts as they copy new words. This enables all children to use their growing skills and become confident communicators. Those children learning English as an additional language are very effectively supported as they receive well-planned support, to ensure they make good progress. Very effective use is made of practitioners who speak the languages preferred by the children. For example, they work with small groups of children to develop children's vocabulary and speaking skills in English, while valuing their home languages. Practitioners learn key words and use gestures to support the spoken word. Activities are used effectively to introduce children to new words and practise saying them. For example, while painting, younger children copy practitioners as they identify the colours and then repeat the words while older children enjoy learning more complex words. There are examples of meaningful text, numbers, signs and symbols in the environment and children learn to recognise their name through the self-registration process. Books are available in each group room and children enjoy sharing picture books or stories with practitioners. Practitioners incorporate songs into everyday activities, such as hand washing and children chose those they would like to sing during group circle time. This means that children are developing good listening skills and an interest in literacy. From a young age, children are encouraged to make choices about what they would like to play with. Resources are stored at their level, so they are learning to become independent. Overall, practitioners follow children's interests and enable them to initiate activities. However, on a very few occasions some staff are too eager to facilitate children's play by assisting them with tasks rather than encouraging them to make independent decisions and solve problems. Children are developing a good imagination. Older children readily engage in role play with their friends or work together to create a train track in the sand pit. Children enjoy exploring and experimenting. They delight in the opportunities provided to paint, choosing to mix colours and paint using their fingers or small brushes. Younger children relish the texture of the paint as they poke their fingers into pots and dab onto coloured paper. Older children use expressive language, such as 'squidgy' as they explore foam or describe what they are making as they squash, roll and mould dough.

Practitioners make good use of the outdoors to promote children's learning. Children choose when they would like to play outdoors and excitedly dress themselves in waterproof clothing so that they can jump in puddles in wet weather or play in the water tray. They benefit from a range of physical play equipment. They climb the steps to the high tower, balance as they walk across the small wooden beams or the wobbly bridge and play games with balls, developing their physical skills and coordination. Children recall different planting and growing activities. They learn how to tend different vegetables they plant and younger children explore scented plants and herbs in the sensory area. Consequently, children are learning about the natural world through real-life experiences. Children thoroughly enjoy the recently developed mud kitchen. They dig and find bugs or use household items to mix and make mud pies. Practitioners join in their imaginative play with enthusiasm, pretending to eat their pies or drink their cups of tea. Older children laugh about the horrible things they pretend to put in their pies. They work cooperatively, sharing resources and it is apparent that children enjoy their play and their interactions with practitioners. Practitioners clearly understand the need to support children's learning in the prime areas and concentrate on this, particularly with the younger children. As they grow older, the specific areas are woven through, ensuring that when children leave to begin formal schooling, they are well-prepared for the next stage in their learning.

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

The practitioners are very effective in supporting children's well-being. Children throughout the nursery enjoy warm relationships with the caring practitioners. The key persons are attentive, therefore children build secure attachments with their special person or key person buddy, who are on hand to support children when needed. Practitioners work exceptionally hard to develop strong, trusting partnerships with parents. They work extremely closely with parents or carers to ensure that children's needs are well known. For example, initial settling sessions enable all aspects of the children's well-being to be discussed in detail and recorded. As a result of the information gained, practitioners can exactly mirror home routines so that children settle easily. This means there is very effective continuity in care between home and nursery life. Parents work with the key person to develop a starting point for children's learning and development, that helps them to track children's progress over time. Once settled, children demonstrate their feeling of confidence by moving around their group room with confidence and finding activities which interest them. They spontaneously approach practitioners when they need help or reassurance, which again shows they are feeling very secure in their surroundings. Transitions are very well managed to ensure good continuity of care. Parents are fully involved in the process and the sharing of information between key persons. Children meet and mix with other children in the nursery during outdoor play and become familiar with practitioners from other rooms in the nursery. Therefore, children experience a very smooth transition from one room to another. The nursery also has exemplary systems in place to assist children who are due to move on to school. Practitioners leading the older group room plan more structured activities. For example they prepare children for physical education sessions at school by helping them learn to undress and dress themselves. Children play with items linked to school, such as uniform and they talk about school

during group time. Furthermore, teachers from the local schools visit the nursery so that children can meet their teacher in familiar surroundings and practitioners share information with schools exceptionally well. This all contributes to children being very well prepared for school and adopting positive attitudes to future learning.

Children behave exceptionally well because they are busy and engaged. They are kind, offering to share and take turns with resources with little or no prompting, demonstrating their understanding of the clear boundaries and high expectations of practitioners. Practitioners act as very positive role models, speaking kindly to children and gently reminding them to say 'please' and 'thank you' when appropriate. Frequent praise and encouragement from practitioners, help to develop children's self-esteem and sense of achievement. Older children are establishing clear friendships and enjoy playing together. They are willing to take on responsibility, for example, helping to tidy away toys or setting tables for mealtimes. There are clear rules in place and children demonstrate that they understand these. Consequently, children are learning right from wrong and developing good social skills under the skilful guidance of practitioners. Any behavioural issues causing concern are closely monitored and discussed fully with parents. Advice from external agencies is quickly sought so that early support can be implemented. The nursery is extremely inclusive and children learn to respect and celebrate each other's differences. This contributes very effectively to supporting children's personal, social and emotional development.

The environment is warm, welcoming and very child-centred. Resources and activities are presented attractively, children's artwork and photographs are beautifully displayed around many of the walls and there is space for the children's belongings. Consequently, each room is vibrant, stimulating and equipped with resources suitable for the age of the children attending. The outdoor environment is exceptionally well used to promote children's learning and well-being. This has been developed to provide rich learning opportunities and an exciting place for children to play, discover, explore and have fun. They enjoy energetic and active play and spend a great deal of time outdoors, benefiting from the fresh air and exercise. Children's large muscles are developed as they climb, balance, run, crawl and jump with increasing control and coordination. Their health is extremely well promoted and there are very clear and consistently applied systems in place to protect them from infection. Children with specific medical conditions and needs are well supported and effective care plans are in place. Practitioners seek additional training where necessary, to ensure that no child's well-being is compromised. Children learn about healthy lifestyles as they enjoy freshly prepared, nutritious meals and snacks. The cook and practitioners are very aware of children's dietary needs and preferences, so these are well catered for and no child's well-being is put at risk. Children eat extremely well and parents comment that they eat foods in the nursery that they do not eat at home. Practitioners sit alongside the children, encouraging good social skills. They discuss the food children eat and the benefits to the children. This supports children's understanding of a healthy life. The care needs of babies and toddlers are meticulously met. For example, they can sleep or rest according to their individual needs. Regular checks ensure that they are comfortable and settled at all times. Practitioners are very aware of younger children's self-care skills, providing appropriate chairs and cups for mealtimes to support children's emerging skills. They encourage children to be independent and manage their own personal care, relative to their ages and stages of

development. For example, older children serve themselves at mealtimes and learn to dress themselves appropriately for outdoor play. Children know they need to wash their hands before snack and meals, learning useful personal hygiene practices through everyday routines.

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

The management team has high expectations for the quality of care that is offered to children and families. Regular reviews of all paperwork and procedures take place to ensure that all requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage are met well. Arrangements to safeguard children within the provision are robust. All practitioners attend safeguarding training and review their knowledge during supervision and team meetings. There are clearly mapped procedures for monitoring any safeguard concern. All practitioners demonstrate a sound understanding of their responsibility, with regard to referral to the appropriate authorities, when necessary. The nursery works extremely closely with the local children's centre to support families and signpost them to additional services where appropriate. As part of the safeguarding procedures, thorough recruitment practices and suitability checks are carried out. These are followed by a methodical induction over a probationary period, during which new practitioners have a mentor and follow a close supervision programme. Practitioners are proactive in ensuring that children's safety is maintained and the children are carefully supervised, both indoors and outside. Rigorous systems are in place to assess risk and to ensure that the premises are safe and secure, in order to fully protect children. As a result, the provision ensures children are fully protected.

Continuous professional development for all practitioners is assured because regular monitoring of practice takes place. Systematic supervisions and annual appraisals enable practitioners to review and set targets for continued improvements in their practice. The management team also work alongside practitioners as good role models. They offer continuous feedback to practitioners, which provides very clear guidance to embed their understanding of good practice. Furthermore, the management team actively supports opportunities for staff to widen their knowledge and experience through training. Initiatives are shared and implemented, such as the 'Every Child a Talker' programme, which the nursery use very successfully to monitor and improve children's speech and language skills. Clear reflective practice includes input from all practitioners, parents, carers, other professionals and the children. For example, parents are regularly welcomed in for 'stay and play' sessions with their children, so get to share in their children's experiences and talk to practitioners in a relaxed and fun environment. Parents provide extremely positive comments about the nursery provision, the support the practitioners provide both for their children and themselves and the progress that they can see their children are making. Staff meetings, training plans and daily evaluations of activities all help to highlight areas for development. Written reflective documents are held, with clear action plans, to drive the continuous improvement and further build on the good levels of achievement.

Practitioners build excellent partnerships with parents, carers and professionals associated with the children. Communication books help to share information and aspects of care, to ensure consistency. Regular assessments ensure that children's achievements can be built on with future planning and any gaps in achievement identified early, so that interventions are planned and children receive the support they need. The nursery works particularly closely with other professionals involved with the children to identify and fully support individual children's needs. Parents are totally involved in developing the individual plans for their children and help to review them with their child's key person. Practitioners attend meetings with parents, supporting them in contacting other agencies where needed and signposting them to additional services. Practitioners are instrumental in settling children at new schools because they facilitate visits from teachers and work with those schools to prepare children. Consequently, the very effective partnership working makes a strong contribution to meeting children's unique needs and preparing them well for future learning.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

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	EY472339
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	946960
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	64
Number of children on roll	218
Name of provider	Pre-School Learning Alliance
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01603213294

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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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