

The Marlow Riley Park Day Nursery & Pre-School

Unique reference number (URN): EY409400

Address: Crown Road, Marlow, Buckinghamshire, SL7 2QG

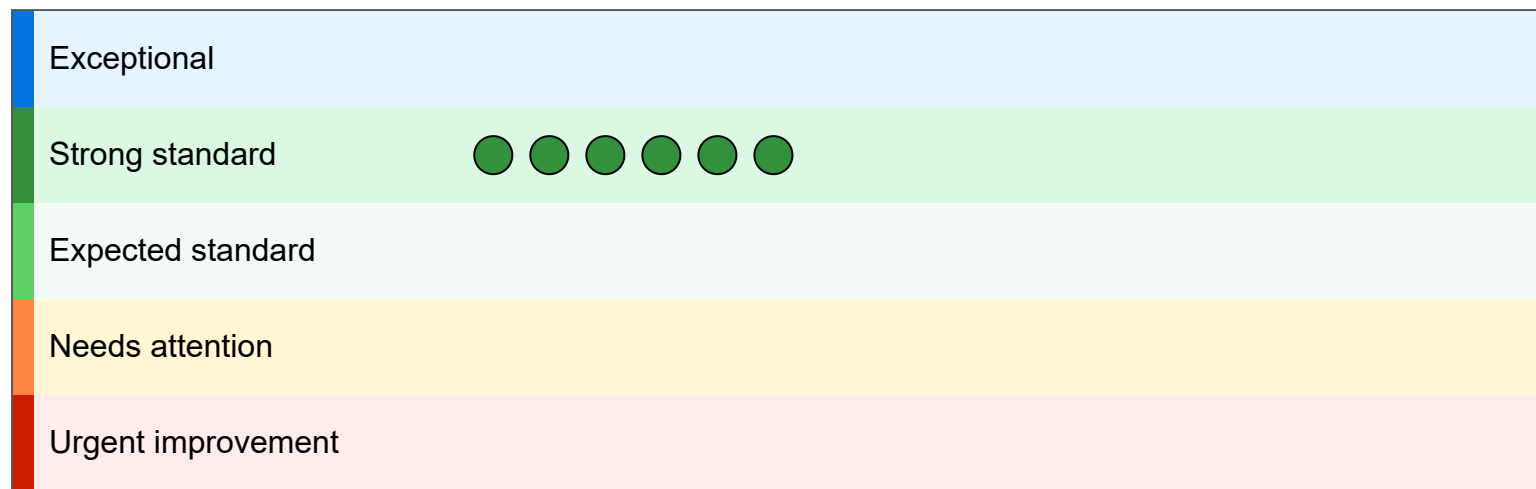
Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registered with Ofsted: 06/05/2010

Registers: EYR, CCR

Registered person: Poppies Day Nurseries Limited

Inspection report: 30 January 2026



Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, children are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect settings for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met: The setting has an open and positive culture of safeguarding.
- Not met: The setting has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

All children make consistently strong progress across the curriculum due to the access they have to a wide range of activities that staff plan effectively for them. Children engage highly in activities that support their learning and development. From a young age, children show confidence with managing their self-care needs and completing tasks independently. For example, older children are highly focused as they use toothbrushes to clean dirt from laminated teeth. As they complete this task, staff ask questions to make children think about the importance of oral hygiene. Children respond and show they understand which foods are good and not so good for their teeth.

Children are independent, motivated learners who engage confidently with both adult-led and self-chosen activities. Younger children are sensitively encouraged to repeat words, while older children benefit from highly effective, targeted support to extend their speech and language skills. Older children are highly engaged as they take part in small-group-time activities to promote the pronunciation of different sounds. Children build their vocabulary, joining in with singing and rhymes that are woven throughout the day. This helps children to be very well prepared for the next stage of their learning and for the transition to school.

Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines

Strong standard ●

Staff create an environment that is warm, welcoming and nurturing, giving all children a strong sense of belonging. Staff provide consistent reassurance and gentle reminders to help children understand what is expected of them. They sensitively offer alternative choices when children need support to make positive decisions.

Relationships between staff and children are exceptionally strong. Children seek out staff for comfort and reassurance, demonstrating high levels of emotional security. Children build positive and supportive relationships with one another. Even the youngest children show delight when seeing their friends and greet each other happily as they arrive. Older children play cooperatively, demonstrating kindness and helping each other during shared activities.

Staff tailor their support for children's behaviour to children's individual age, stage of development and personal needs. Younger children are guided through effective use of distraction techniques. For example, when younger children want to throw toys, staff provide them with soft balls to throw instead. Older children receive clear and age-appropriate explanations about expectations and behaviour. As a result, children are beginning to understand and manage their emotions. They respond positively and develop high levels of self-control.

Parents are supported to ensure children have regular attendance, helping them to build routines and consistency, which has a positive impact on children's learning.

Children's welfare and wellbeing

Strong standard 

Strong partnerships with parents ensure children's individual needs are understood. Staff use information gathered when children first start effectively, enabling key persons to form secure attachments and support children's emotional stability by following routines from home. For example, staff regularly communicate with parents to match children's sleep times and weaning stage. The key-person system is highly effective. Children demonstrate a strong sense of security and trust, settling quickly and seeking comfort from familiar adults when needed.

Staff promote children's physical development, personal safety and wellbeing through careful, consistent planning for this. As a result, children develop early awareness of how to keep themselves healthy and safe. Children run and climb in the garden using their imagination as they play. Younger children laugh as they run up and down ramps indoors and wait for their friends to finish before they have their turn. Children learn how to manage their self-care needs independently. For example, children understand when they need to wash their hands, and from a young age self-serve their food at mealtimes.

Staff encourage, support and provide children with the time and space needed to express their emotions, and children are beginning to show they can manage these in appropriate ways.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard 

Leaders and managers have created an ambitious curriculum that is designed and implemented effectively to provide broad and balanced experiences for children that meet all areas of learning and development. They make well-informed decisions to drive continual improvement. Leaders have established clear expectations for what children should learn and how this learning will be achieved. Planning is firmly rooted in children's next steps, enabling them to make the best possible progress.

Staff plan a broad and well-sequenced range of activities that deepen children's learning and help them embed new knowledge. Support for communication and language is a notable strength. Staff routinely ask purposeful questions that encourage children to think about what they are doing and why, and they support children to use their critical thinking skills when problem-solving. In addition, staff give children the time they need to process their thoughts and respond. Additionally, staff use simple signing effectively with younger children to further support communication.

Mathematical development is embedded well across the provision. For example, when using play dough, staff model and reinforce mathematical language linked to size, number and quantity, helping children develop secure early mathematical understanding.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is prioritised. As a result, children feel safe, secure and happy. They understand different types of relationships and know who they can go to for comfort and support. Children play well both alongside and with each other, developing early social skills and building relationships.

Leaders and staff know the children extremely well and are highly effective in adapting teaching to meet their individual needs. This includes children with barriers to their learning, such as special educational needs and/or disabilities. Reasonable adjustments are made thoughtfully and consistently. Because staff understand each child's individual needs, interactions and teaching approaches are tailored to ensure all children can access the curriculum and make strong progress.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Through regular observations and assessments, staff have a secure understanding of each child's individual needs, and they use this knowledge effectively when planning learning experiences. As a result, children benefit from well-targeted support that promotes their ongoing progress.

Observations and assessments are used to identify any emerging gaps in learning. Staff are quick to respond, adapting teaching and planning to meet identified needs. Barriers to children's learning are carefully considered during planning, and strategies are implemented to minimise these effectively. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive the targeted support needed to ensure they progress to the best of their ability. Effective partnership working with parents and other agencies provides children with the consistency they need to further their development. Managers have a secure knowledge of funding entitlements and how this can be used to provide children with additional resources and/or experiences to support them to progress further. As a result, children receive the individualised support they require to succeed.

Partnerships with parents are strong, and staff gather information about children to identify any potential barriers to learning. Staff work closely with families to ensure that children experience consistent approaches both at home and within the setting. This collaborative working supports children's continuous progress and enhances their overall development.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders and managers effectively evaluate the care and learning experiences provided for children and identify areas for development. Staff feel valued, listened to and confident in approaching the management team with any concerns. Regular one-to-one meetings ensure that staff's wellbeing is supported and training opportunities identified. As a result, staff benefit from targeted training. For example, recent training means staff have received support that has strengthened their understanding and delivery of the curriculum.

Managers promote an inclusive ethos and have a secure understanding of the barriers that may affect children's learning and development. Staff focus closely on children's individual needs and provide tailored support for children and their families. Effective working with other agencies ensures that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive the support and help needed to progress and meet their development goals.

✔ **Compulsory Childcare Register requirements**

This setting has met the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register.

How we check if a provider meets the requirements of the Compulsory Childcare Register

When we check if settings meet the Compulsory Childcare Register requirements, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met
 - Not met
-
-

What it's like to be a child at this setting

Children are very settled and have developed strong, trusting relationships with staff who know them exceptionally well. As a result, children feel safe and secure, which gives them the confidence to explore the environment, resources and thoughtfully planned activities. They enjoy the experiences offered to them and show high levels of engagement, becoming independent learners who are well supported by staff.

Staff have a strong understanding of each child's starting points, prior experiences, individual needs and barriers to learning, such as special educational needs and/or disabilities. This enables them to plan effectively for the next stage in each child's learning and development. From a young age, children are given frequent opportunities to be independent. Staff encourage them to have a go during activities, helping them to develop resilience and preparing them well for their next steps. There is a clear and consistent focus on communication and language across the setting. Children show a love of books and singing, and staff skilfully introduce new vocabulary and extend children's sentences by adding one or more words. For example, while completing activities, staff ask children questions that support them to make decisions and problem-solve. While younger children are eating, staff introduce them to words such as 'crunchy'.

Because of this high-quality support, children develop age-appropriate knowledge and skills. Staff work in partnership with parents and other professionals to reduce barriers to children's learning and wellbeing, adapting activities and routines where needed so all children can participate fully. Older and younger children enjoy learning alongside one another. They are building positive peer relationships, and staff support them sensitively to share and take

turns. Staff model positive behaviour and language, and children behave well. Children also benefit from consistent encouragement to use good manners and show respect for others.

Leaders promote the importance of regular attendance. They provide support to help families establish good routines so that children benefit from consistency and learning opportunities.

Next steps

- Leaders and those responsible for governance should sustain their work to ensure continued improvement and high standards. They should focus on creating a transformational impact on the outcomes and experiences of all children.
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About this inspection

The inspector spoke with leaders, staff and the special educational needs coordinator during the inspection.

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.

Inspector:

Nicky Butler

About this setting

Unique reference number (URN): EY409400

Address:

Crown Road
Marlow
Buckinghamshire
SL7 2QG

Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registration date: 06/05/2010

Registered person: Poppies Day Nurseries Limited

Register(s): EYR, CCR

Operating hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday : 07:30 - 18:00

Local authority: Buckinghamshire

Facts and figures used on inspection

This data was available to the inspector at the time of the inspection.

 This data is from 30 January 2026

Children numbers

Age range of children at the time of inspection

0 to 4

Total number of places

57

Our grades explained

Exceptional ●

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other settings can learn from it.

Strong standard ●

The setting reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard ●

The setting is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention ●

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement ●

The setting needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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