# Holbourn House Day Nursery LTD

**Unique reference number (URN):** 2805251

**Address:** Old School House, The Green, Dodford, Northampton, NN7 4SX

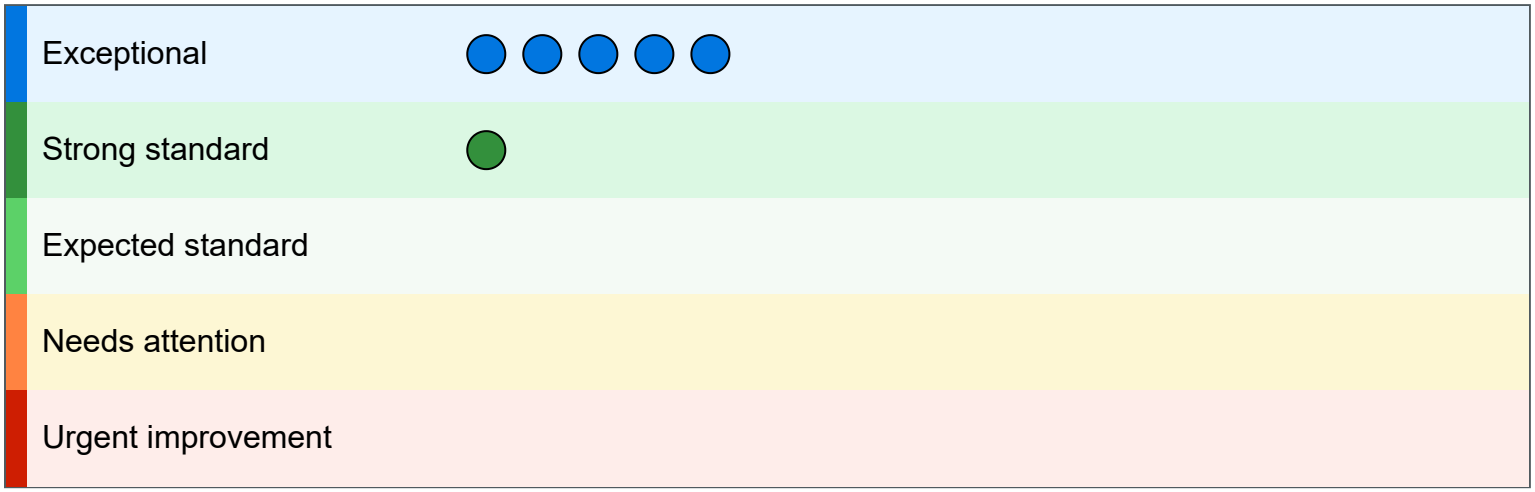
**Type:** Childcare on non-domestic premises

**Registered with Ofsted:** 13/09/2024

**Registers:** EYR, CCR

**Registered person:** Holbourn House Day Nursery Ltd

# Inspection report: 14 August 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.

# Exceptional

## Achievement

**Exceptional**

Children make significant progress from their individual starting points, with many achieving skills beyond those typically expected for their age. From a very young age, babies show remarkably high levels of independence and control in their physical skills. They use spoons with skill and dexterity to feed themselves and confidently drink from an open cup. Those who are newly walking climb steps to use slides and navigate across uneven surfaces independently.

Babies and young children demonstrate a remarkable ability to use new vocabulary with confidence and engage in mature conversations. Children with barriers to learning equally achieve incredibly well. For example, nonverbal children have developed from no spoken language to confidently using two- to three-word sentences within short periods. Children who previously required one-to-one support to participate fully now confidently communicate, interact with others and recall previous learning. Their positive attitudes prepare them exceptionally well for the next stage of learning.

## Children's welfare and wellbeing

**Exceptional**

Leaders consistently prioritise the welfare and wellbeing of children and their families. Leaders ensure staff receive extensive training tailored to the needs of their key children. This gives staff the comprehensive knowledge and skills needed to respond sensitively and effectively to children's individual needs and abilities.

Leaders use the knowledge they gain from research to review and improve their settling-in and key-person arrangements. For example, children remain with the same key person throughout their time at the setting. This enables adults to develop an exceptionally detailed understanding of each child and family. This has a positive impact on children's sense of security, relationships and emotional wellbeing as they build lasting and meaningful bonds.

Children demonstrate a strong awareness of healthy habits and personal safety. At mealtimes, they confidently talk about healthy foods in their lunch. Outside, children gather their own sun hats without prompting. Toddlers recognise when their bodies need rest, explaining that they will be sleeping after a busy morning. Staff support children to understand how to keep themselves and others safe. During walks to forest school, children confidently hold the safety rope and hold hands. These everyday experiences enable children to develop a strong sense of responsibility for their own and others' wellbeing.

Leaders ensure safe sleep arrangements are appropriate to children's ages and remain prepared for updated guidance.

## Curriculum and teaching

**Exceptional**

Leaders have designed a highly individualised curriculum that supports each child to build upon their independence, autonomy, resilience and kindness based on their individual developmental stage. They have thoughtfully created a mixed-age environment where

children can share their interests across all ages and learn from each other. All staff have ambitious expectations for every child regardless of any barriers they may face. Staff use precise knowledge of children's starting points, alongside expert guidance and research, to deliver consistently high-quality and adaptive teaching. As a result, children regularly demonstrate knowledge, language and skills beyond those typically expected for their developmental stage.

Staff skilfully use everyday experiences to deepen learning and extend children's curiosity. When children notice dragonflies and berries on the walk to forest school, staff respond promptly by introducing new vocabulary and questions to encourage children to think more deeply. In this way, staff turn spontaneous moments into valuable learning opportunities that extend children's knowledge, language and understanding of the natural world.

Staff support children to build, remember and apply knowledge highly effectively over time. They challenge younger children to strengthen newly acquired walking skills as they balance across wooden beams. Older children are guided to assess and manage risk on rock climbing equipment. Children develop fine motor skills progressively from mark making in sand to using spray bottles and safely chopping snack with knives. Staff expertly adapt their support so that children practise, refine and transfer these skills across meaningful contexts. As a result, children demonstrate significant sustained progress in their physical development, confidence and self-regulation.

Staff sequence mathematical learning and introduce language purposefully through meaningful play. Staff use strategic questioning and well-timed comments to stretch children's thinking beyond age-related expectations. For example, they support one-year-olds to use words such as 'more' and 'full' in water play. Two-year-olds compare weights and explain whether buckets of sand are 'heavy' or 'light'. Staff deepen this knowledge further by encouraging three-year-olds to recognise and discuss 'capacity' as they explore when a water jug is full. As a result, children develop a strong grasp of mathematical vocabulary and apply their knowledge confidently across practical experiences.

## Inclusion

**Exceptional**

The setting has a highly responsive and individualised approach to identifying, assessing and meeting children's developmental and wellbeing needs. Staff expertly identify barriers early and skilfully adapt teaching, routines and environments accordingly. For example, children who start with limited speech are offered personalised strategies, such as signs and symbols, sign language and visual prompts, to support their communication.

All staff hold high expectations for every child, regardless of their starting point or circumstances. Leaders rigorously monitor children's progress and the impact of interventions. They adapt support where it is not having the desired effect. This ensures additional support makes a significant difference to children's experiences, participation and progress. Personalised daily interventions are carefully planned and embedded into children's routines, enabling them to make sustained progress without limiting their access to the wider curriculum.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from highly effective leadership and an experienced staffing team, which works closely with families and other staff. They seek advice from professionals including teachers of the deaf, inclusion teams

and health professionals. When external support is delayed, leaders and staff take initiative to develop individual plans to support children in the meantime. Staff undertake extensive training, research new strategies and keep up to date with new research that is implemented into teaching. This sees all children have access to rich experiences and opportunities regardless of their barriers to learning. Consequently, children rapidly flourish across all areas of development.

The setting recognises barriers faced by disadvantaged children and those known, or previously known, to children's social care. Staff provide consistent relationships and emotional support that promote security and belonging. Additional funding is carefully planned for, with leaders and staff responding to emerging needs and interests as they arise. This sees support targeted at the right time and in the most appropriate way, ensuring that each child benefits from resources, experiences or interventions that are relevant to their individual progress.

Leaders and staff recognise how family context can influence children's wellbeing and readiness to learn. Leaders work highly effectively with families to ensure support extends beyond the nursery setting and reflects each child's wider circumstances. Leaders use their expert knowledge thoughtfully to signpost families to relevant services and local support groups. Leaders also share effective practice through annual local conferences, contributing to improved inclusion across the wider community.

## Leadership and governance

**Exceptional**

Leaders are impressively dedicated to ensuring all children, particularly those with additional needs or barriers to learning, achieve above and beyond what is typically expected. They are highly effective in their goal of reducing barriers so that all children flourish and thrive.

Leaders have established an effective culture of continuous improvement where practice is regularly questioned, researched and refined. Leaders' highly strategic decisions are grounded in the lived experiences of children, families and staff. Leaders continually pursue their own professional learning activities and act as positive role models for their staff. Leaders carefully consider staff wellbeing and recognise that staff need to feel valued, supported and emotionally secure to provide consistently high-quality care and teaching.

Leaders demonstrate detailed and perceptive analysis of the setting's strengths and areas for development. Staff are also active participants in improving the setting. Regular staff meetings give opportunities for all staff to reflect on what could be more consistent and refined to further strengthen the impact and outcomes for every child. Staff welcome feedback from colleagues and reflect with leaders in regular supervisions using video footage of their practice and written peer observations. This provides meaningful opportunities to reflect and consider how staff can continue having a transformational impact on the outcomes and experiences for children.

Leaders engage thoughtfully with families and the wider community to strengthen practice and ensure children are remarkably well prepared for transitions. They provide home learning packs and coaching sessions to individual families, including on behaviour, speech or school readiness. Leaders are incredibly knowledgeable and actively participate in research, practice hubs and professional networks, while sharing their own effective practice

through annual conferences. This creates a culture where improvement extends beyond the setting as leaders contribute to developing practice across the wider early years community.

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## Strong standard

**Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines** **Strong standard**

Leaders have created a whole-setting culture of consistently positive attitudes to learning with children, families and staff. Children are curious, willing to have a go and increasingly able to sustain their engagement. Babies and young toddlers remain engrossed in experiences for periods significantly longer than typically expected for their age. During singing and parachute sessions, babies participate with evident joy and laughter, using babble, gestures and vocalisations to indicate that they want the experience to continue.

Staff encourage children to celebrate each other's successes through high fives, encouragement and positive comments. Toddlers retrieve toy fairy figures for friends, while older children congratulate peers when they find their name on the self-registration board.

Leaders and staff have developed the mixed-age environment, which offers consistent opportunities to develop empathy, patience and consideration. Older children naturally adapt their communication when playing with younger children. They ask questions, model language and help them remain involved. Younger children learn to participate in shared play by observing and responding to these positive interactions.

Leaders actively monitor children's attendance. Where patterns of absence emerge, leaders work closely with families through check-ins, home visits, adapted session times and targeted support. This has resulted in improved attendance and greater continuity in children's learning and relationships.

## 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

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

Children's uniqueness is celebrated, enabling every child to achieve above what is expected. Children have a strong sense of belonging. They form secure relationships with their key persons and confidently seek support and communicate their needs. Families are welcomed as active partners, contributing to children's learning and next steps. Children feel safe because adults know them remarkably well and consistently offer support for development and wellbeing.

Children experience genuine joy in learning in this mixed-age setting. They laugh, communicate and learn alongside children of different ages and abilities as they explore, take appropriate risks and develop new skills. Children are confident, capable and increasingly independent learners. Those facing barriers make remarkable progress because adults identify and remove barriers so that every child can participate and thrive. Children are given time to have a go and experience success for themselves. Babies and toddlers independently pour their own water at mealtimes, put on their own wellies and access their own resources to lead their own learning. Older children confidently solve problems, manage risks and take increasing responsibility.

Children of varying ages consistently use vocabulary that is more complex than expected for their age. They develop their social and language skills through imaginative play. For example, during a game of 'ice-cream shops', toddlers show awareness of others and their preferences by asking whether friends would prefer 'dairy or vegan'. Children hear new words from one another and then use them purposefully in their own play. For instance, younger children explain that the shop is closed because it has run out of 'stock'.

Children learn mathematics through joyful, meaningful experiences. During singing, they represent numbers using their fingers, while during dance they count as they jump, stamp and clap. Younger and older children learn alongside each other, with adults adapting challenge to individual capability rather than chronological age. For example, toddlers join older children to complete a large floor puzzle. Children work together, explain methods and show the younger children how to twist and turn the pieces. Children show genuine pride in what they achieve and celebrate collectively as they complete their shared goal.

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## Next steps

- Leaders should ensure continued refinement in the setting's already successful work to remove barriers for children who need extra help and continue to have a transformational impact on all children's achievement and wellbeing.

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## About this inspection

The inspector spoke with leaders, practitioners, the designated safeguarding lead, the special educational needs coordinator and parents 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.

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**Inspector:**
Deanna Leman

# About this setting

**Unique reference number (URN):** 2805251

**Address:**
Old School House
The Green, Dodford
Northampton
NN7 4SX

**Type:** Childcare on non-domestic premises

**Registration date:** 13/09/2024

**Registered person:** Holbourn House Day Nursery Ltd

**Register(s):** EYR, CCR

**Operating hours:** Monday,Tuesday,Wednesday,Thursday,Friday : 08:00 - 17:30

**Local authority:** West Northamptonshire

# Facts and figures used on inspection

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

This data is from 14 August 2026

## Children numbers

**Age range of children at the time of inspection**

# 1 to 4

**Total number of places**

# 50

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## 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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