

Busy Bees Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY232853
Inspection date	22 November 2007
Inspector	Maura Pigram
Setting Address	14th Bushey Scout Hut, Oxhey Drive, Watford, Hertfordshire, WD19 7SF
Telephone number	07754 520827
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Registered person	Busy Bees Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Busy Bees Pre-School opened in 2002. It operates from the Fayer Hall Scout Hut in South Oxhey, Hertfordshire. It previously operated from different sites within the local area. They have use of a hall, a kitchen, toilets and storage space. The pre-school serves the local community. There are currently 40 children aged from two years to under five years on roll. Of these, 14 children receive funding for early education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. They also support children who speak English as an additional language.

A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open term time only from 09:15 until 11.30, Monday to Friday. They are also open from 12:00 until 15:00 on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. A lunch club operates everyday from 11:30 until 12:00. Children attend for a variety of sessions. All children share access to an outdoor play area.

The nursery employs five members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are no staff members currently on training programmes. The setting receives support from a teacher from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and clean environment. Children learn to understand simple good health and hygiene practices as they participate in daily routines to maintain this. They know, for example, that washing of their hands 'gets rid of germs'. In addition, 'Gerry the Giraffe' and 'Tilly the Tiger' are cared for by the children at week-ends. Following their return the toys care and activities are discussed by the skilful staff. As a result, children learn about the importance of brushing their teeth in a fun and interactive manner.

Children enjoy healthy and nutritious snacks which are freshly prepared each day. They eat their snack in small groups and are encouraged by staff to pour their own drinks. However, children do not have ready access to drinks at all times. This means that they are unable to independently quench their thirst throughout the day. Dietary needs are known as parents and staff work closely together. As a result, children's dietary needs are met and they are well nourished.

Procedures are in place to help staff act in the children's best interests, should they require medical attention. Necessary documentation such as written parental consents and contact details, are in place to permit staff to act quickly if children become ill or if there is a medical emergency. All staff have completed appropriate first aid training. As a result, children's health if they have an accident is protected.

Children's physical skills are well nurtured. Cooking sessions and the regular playing with play dough ensures children can use a variety of utensils and tools with confidence. Children enjoy using large outside equipment, such as cars, trikes and slides. Consequently, balance and co-ordination is developed. Children excitingly participate in playing parachute games which involves them in vigorous exercise. The daily routine and organisation of the hall offers appropriate space for quiet play. This means that children can rest according to their needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment that is very welcoming to children and their families. The space is well organised and appropriate action has been taken to identify and minimise any potential risks so children can move around and explore safely. Risk assessments, for example, are carried out daily and the outdoor area is checked prior to children playing outside. Consequently, children can play safely. An emergency evacuation procedure is in place and practised with the children. As a result, they know what to do in an emergency.

Children use a varied range of good quality, developmentally appropriate toys and equipment. These are cleaned and checked frequently. Staff are deployed to supervise children at all times. Arrival and departure times are well managed. In addition, a password system is used. This means that children's safety is effectively promoted. Children learn how to keep themselves safe through fun activities. They recently enjoyed 'Beep, beep day'. During this time children

learn how to cross roads safely and learn about travelling safely in cars. Visitors such as road safety officers and the local Lollipop lady, reinforce safety messages. Children are kept safe on outings because staff are vigilant of the children at all times. Children are given gentle reminders about safety rules such as not running indoors. They are encouraged to tidy away toys and are rewarded for their efforts. This helps them to understand how to keep safe whilst playing indoors.

Children's welfare is effectively safeguarded. There is a designated member of staff responsible for child protection. Staff members are fully aware of the nursery's child protection procedures and what to do if they have concerns about a child in their care. Current policy incorporates the requirements of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Consequently, children's welfare is well protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are helped to become settled and happy because the staff are supportive and caring. Consequently, children become confident and make friends. They are involved in a broad range of planned activities and spontaneous events, which support their development and learning. This is facilitated by the organisation of the hall which is attractively arranged and welcoming. During free play sessions the children are extremely busy and engrossed in their play. They are happy to explore and investigate and relate to other children and the adults well. Children, for example, enjoy driving the bus which has been skilfully made from a large cardboard box, whilst an adult is the passenger. Staff engage children in conversation, listen to answers and support their language skills, offering praise throughout. As a result, children develop good levels of self-esteem. In addition, outings to the woods, an animal farm, local shops and the post office enhance children's learning. Staff incorporate the 'Birth to three matters' framework into their planning. This means that younger children are effectively supported. Children benefit from the presence of experienced adults who are long serving and are committed to ensuring the children are happy and settled. Consequently, children develop and thrive.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

The children are progressing well, supported by staff who have a competent understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children of this age group develop. Detailed planning covers all six areas of learning. Thorough assessments are ongoing and are used to inform planning. However, learning intentions are not always recorded. This means that, potentially some aspects of children's learning may be missed. An appropriate range of teaching methods are used to meet children's needs and help make progress. Valuable time is spent with the children so that their knowledge and understanding is developed. Staff interaction, for example, is high. This means that children are helped to become focussed and are able to concentrate for long periods of time. The level of challenge is sufficient to interest all of the children. In addition, children spend time with their key worker to ensure they are appropriately challenged. Children's behaviour is well managed. Appropriate rules are in place and staff use suitable strategies to help children manage their own behaviour. Consequently, children are helped to play together harmoniously. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language are very well supported so that they can be fully involved in the activities. This means that they are effectively engaged and benefit from the experiences

offered. The environment is very well organised and purposeful use is made of the indoor and outdoor areas.

On arrival children quickly settle and engage in a balance of free play and planned activities. They are interested and motivated to learn. Children's independence is fostered. For example, they are encouraged to choose which toys they would like to play with. Consequently, they use their judgement and initiative effectively. In particular they love playing in the home area. This is regularly changed to enhance the children's learning and understanding. Groups of children delight in dressing up in various costumes such as police and fire officers. In addition they recently enjoyed playing in their 'hospital' and 'dentist'. As a result, they are involved in planned experiences based on real life situations. Children, for example, take notes on their mini clipboards and talk excitingly to staff members about the activity. Other children write 'shopping lists'. This means that children have opportunities to write for a purpose. They understand that print carries meaning as they use name cards throughout the day and share books confidently. They can sing an alphabet song and say the days of the week in a large group. However, rhythm and initial sounds are not always routinely used. This means that children's communication skills are potentially underdeveloped.

Children use numbers during their play. They confidently count each other and understand some comparative language such as heavier and lighter. They can recognise a variety of shapes and colours as a high emphasis is placed on this. Children, for example, concentrate for a long period of time painting and decorating pre-cut shapes. They enjoy exploring a wide range of mathematical equipment including weighing scales, jigsaws and construction sets.

Children enjoy practising physical skills in the setting's outdoor area. Here, they enjoy riding cars, bikes and using slides. During spring and summer they plant flowers and herbs and are helped to care for these. Indoors, they love playing with the parachute and enjoy games such as hopping onto different coloured mats. They use a variety of tools when playing with play dough and help themselves to pens and pencils. This means that their physical development is fostered.

Children's interest in technology is appropriately supported. They use appropriate computer programmes and have access to a variety of interactive toys. Children are able to explore and freely play as staff recognise the importance of this. Children's learning, for example when using a tray filled with compost, is skilfully supported by a staff member, so that concepts such as capacity are effectively demonstrated. Consequently, children are learning in an enjoyable and meaningful way.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and included at all times. Strong links have been developed with professionals such as health visitors and physiotherapists from the nearby health centre. This means that guidance can be sought and all parties work together to meet the needs of individual children. In addition, staff are familiar with Makaton signing. Children receive a warm welcome and are helped to feel part of the pre-school community. The use of the soft toys 'Gerry the Giraffe' and 'Tilly the Tiger' supports this. Consequently, they develop a sense of belonging. Arrangements to settle children into the childminder's care are negotiated taking into account the needs of children and the requirements of parents and carers for flexible childcare. Parents are asked to complete an initial questionnaire about their children. This is effectively used to identify any extra support children may need.

Children are helped to behave well. They are cared for in an environment that encourages positive behaviour. All staff are calm and deal with behaviour consistently. They gently remind children to take turns and to say please and thank you. Appropriate strategies such as time out, explanations and rewards of stickers and magazines are used. Parents are included in the management of behaviour strategies. As a result, children learn to respond to appropriate expectations for their behaviour.

Children's spiritual, moral social and cultural development is fostered. Children are helped to gain an understanding of diversity. A variety of festivals such as Eid, Divali and Christmas are celebrated. Children for example, make artefacts and try a variety of food related to the festivals. Visits to the local shops and the nearby woods enable the children to develop an understanding of the wider world.

Children benefit from the close partnership with parents and carers that the pre-school has formed. A welcome brochure is provided giving a summary of the policies and procedures. This informs them about the services the pre-school offers. Regular newsletters are produced. There is a notice board and a display rack providing relevant information. Parents speak highly of the helpful and approachable staff. Consequently, there is a continuation of care between the children's parents and the staff. There is a procedure in place to record any complaints which complies with the requirements of the National Standards. This means that parents are aware of the procedures to follow if they have any concerns regarding the welfare of their children.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good.

Children's progress is well monitored. Parents have opportunities to exchange information about their children on a daily basis. In addition, open sessions are held to enable parents to discuss their children's progress. Parents are welcomed into the setting and some join in outings. Planning, policies and procedures are easily available. On leaving children are presented with a bag of artefacts and a report on their progress whilst at the pre-school.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the varied range of planned activities and time for free play which successfully promotes their learning. Children are effectively supported in their development by a team of dedicated and hard-working staff. They spend all their time working and playing alongside the children. This means that the adult: child ratio positively supports children's care, learning and play. A key-worker system is operated and one to one support is offered when necessary. This ensures children feel settled and secure. Professional development of staff is given a very high profile so that that staff are able to continue to evaluate and monitor practice. The provision often hosts training sessions and invites other provisions to share good practice.

The leadership and management of funded children is good.

All staff work well together to plan activities and play for all children to learn and make good progress through the Foundation Stage. Assessments regularly take place with children provided with individual and appropriate targets to support their learning and understanding. Planning is currently being reviewed so that new documentation is incorporated. This means that staff are committed to improvements to teaching and effective learning can take place. Qualified teacher input is valued and used to support and review ways of working. The manager and her staff have worked together for a long period of time. They are proactive and committed to

providing a high standard of care and nursery education for all children. Detailed action plans from previous inspections, for example, are regularly reviewed and the practice is continually evaluated. Staff development is highly valued and they are encouraged to attend relevant training. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider was asked to ensure healthy and nutritious snacks are provided. She was also asked to review and update the policy regarding children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These have been done. Children are regularly offered a range of healthy and nutritious snacks. These consist of varied fruit, vegetables, yogurts and dips. Consequently, children are well nourished. The policy related to children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has been updated. This includes detailed information on how children and their families are supported. As a result, children are fully included in the pre-school activities and their welfare is effectively promoted.

At the last education inspection the provider was asked to ensure planning for activities allows children to access play materials independently. She was also asked to increase children's understanding of health and bodily awareness through planned and daily activities. These have been done. Children independently choose resources as the provider has purchased low level storage units. The contents of these are rotated according to the interests of the children and the planning organised by the staff. Consequently, children are able to independently choose resources that stimulate their interest.

Discussions about body changes regularly take place during physical activity. Children, for example, talk about how they feel following a game of hopping. This means that they recognise the changes that happen to their bodies when they are active. During a discussion with an adult they say that playing games keeps them 'fit and healthy'. Therefore, children are helped to understand things which contribute to keeping healthy.

Complaints since the last inspection

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted. There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure fresh drinking water is available to children at all times.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop children's understanding of sounds and rhythm (this refers to rhymes and linking sounds to letters)
- ensure learning intentions for children are indicated on plans.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk