



Bickerstaffe Fledglings

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY315683
Inspection date	25 April 2006
Inspector	Lynne Naylor
Setting Address	Bickerstaffe C of E Primary School, Hall Lane, Bickerstaffe, Ormskirk, Lancashire, L39 0EH
Telephone number	
E-mail	
Registered person	Bickerstaffe Children's Services Ltd
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Bickerstaffe Fledglings opened in 2005 and operates from Bickerstaffe C of E Primary School near Ormskirk, Lancashire. It is operated by a committee.

A maximum of 16 children may attend at any one time. The service is open each school day, term time only, from 08:50 until 11:20. Children are cared for in a hall with access to toilets, across a classroom. They also have access to the school field and playground.

There are currently 16 children aged from 2 years to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 12 receive funding for nursery education. The group supports children who speak English as an additional language and some children with special needs.

The service employs four staff. Two of the staff hold appropriate childcare qualifications and two are working towards a childcare qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff exercise vigilant practices in keeping the premises, toys and equipment clean. Such practices allow children to play in a clean environment without risk to their health. Staff, who hold valid first aid certificates, consistently carry out the correct procedures in managing medicines and accidents. Children's health is therefore protected. However, not all parents views regarding the seeking of emergency medical advice and treatment are known, as they have not all given written consent.

Children enjoy a basic but healthy diet. This is because snacks include wholemeal toast and a variety of fresh fruit and vegetables, which are good for their health. Children use plates at snack time and staff disinfectant the tables prior to use. This reduces the risk of cross contamination and contributes to keeping children healthy. Children learn about nutrition as staff talk to them about their eating habits and the benefits of eating healthy foods. They develop good social skills as they chat freely to each other at snack times. Staff meet children's individual dietary needs well using the good information, gathered from parents, in relation to children's likes, dislikes and any other dietary requirements. During the morning, children have a planned drink time, however, they do not have independent access to drinks. This hinders their ability to identify their own needs and help themselves to drinks when thirsty.

Children follow strong routine procedures, which in turn minimise the risk of infection and cross contamination. Staff lead by example, as a result children learn the importance of hand washing at appropriate intervals of the day knowing that this helps prevent the spread of germs. They talk about simple health issues, such as washing hands to remove germs and getting enough sleep. Children have a growing awareness of what happens to their bodies when they are active, such as feeling hot. They are developing a growing ability to be independent and an awareness of their own physical needs. Children's independence in self care is satisfactorily promoted. They are supported well to take off and put back on their coats and are also helped to fasten dressing up clothes.

Outdoors, children's health benefits from breathing fresh air during regular sessions in the rear yard and field. They develop climbing and balancing skills on the frame, edging their way, with increasing control, along the low level chain whilst holding another chain at a higher level. Plans show children learn to control their movements, stopping and starting appropriately, through simple movement games and moving to music. Children's fine motor skills are fostered well as they competently use a wide range of tools and materials safely during creative activities. Children regularly

manipulate dough well using their hands and a range of implements. They also manipulate construction sets well.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play, eat and rest in an environment that is welcoming and visually stimulating. There are some attractive displays on view, however, these are too high to fully capture children's interests. Children benefit greatly from the use of safe, high quality, wide ranging resources. These are checked for safety, by staff, and set out well in defined areas. Children have some independent access to additional equipment through the thoughtful provision of mobile drawer trolleys. The available equipment supports children well in many aspects of their learning.

Children are protected from hazards, due to the daily visual risk assessments carried out and the clear policies and procedures concerning safety. Staff exercise vigilance in line with their responsibilities, such as visually monitoring children as they cross the school rooms to visit the toilet. Children learn to take responsibility for their own safety, such as picking up dropped items so as to minimise the risk of others tripping and falling. Children are becoming familiar with the setting's emergency evacuation procedures with fire practices carried out on a regular basis. They learn about the role of the emergency services and how to call for assistance.

Staff closely monitor access to the provision, which helps to protect children's welfare. In the event of a child not being collected, the written procedure to be followed is very clear. The registration system shows which staff and children are present and is being developed to show the actual times of arrival and departure. Children are well protected by the staff's good knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and the implementation of appropriate procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff work hard to set up a variety of attractive work areas, prior to each session, in this shared building. Consequently, children enter the group happily and confidently choose where and with whom they wish to play. At each session, children are purposefully occupied and enjoy free access to a broad range of activities, aimed at promoting their development in all areas. Children's choices and ability to initiate and extend their own play are increasing as staff provide additional equipment, in mobile trolleys, next to each area. Children express themselves well, in a variety of ways, and enjoy experimenting with a wide range of media and materials, for example, paint, sand and dough.

Within the building constraints, children are given satisfactory opportunities to be independent. They attend to some of their own needs, for example, by putting on their own aprons in preparation for craft activity. Children are confident and happy in their relationships with staff. They learn about the expected codes of behaviour as

they happily play alongside each other and choose from the good range of resources available, such as small world toys and construction sets suitable to their age and stage of development. Musical activities and story sessions contribute to developing children's communication skills as they learn to listen and take turns when speaking in group situations. Children's self-confidence is increased through having a sense of belonging. They work and play in an environment that sets, explains and maintains clear and consistent limits. Consequently, children develop personal values such as honesty, fairness and respect.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff's growing knowledge of the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage has a positive impact on improving children's achievements, as they plan according to the different areas. Plans are soundly based on the stepping stones and there are logical links between the long, medium and short term plans. Newly implemented assessment systems are beginning to identify and record children's steady progress through the stepping stones. However, records do not yet give a clear picture of progress. Consequently, full use is not yet made of assessment records to plan what children need to learn next. The good range of activities on offer and the well timed, appropriate input from staff, during activities, helps children make sound progress.

Children make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. They listen with enjoyment to stories responding to what they have heard with relevant comments, questions or actions. However, the book area is uninviting resulting in children rarely choosing books for pleasure or to locate information. Children make marks and many recognisable letters as part of their play, for example, when using the designated writing area. They sometimes explain what their message says. A good range of accessible pencils and notepads enables children to use and develop their growing literacy skills in imaginative play. They are introduced to some print that carries meaning, for example individual name cards that they are asked to identify at registration time. However, full use is not yet made of all areas to show children a range of print or numerals. Children play together imaginatively with small world equipment, such as the cars and a farm. The theme of the role play area is regularly changed in line with the current topic.

Children have a good sense of time. They differentiate between past and present and talk about past events in their own lives and what happened yesterday. The setting increases children's awareness of their own and other cultures, for instance children enjoy strong links with the school and the church, joining together to celebrate festivals such as Harvest and Easter. In addition, children enjoy Chinese food, a dragon dance with musical instruments and making lanterns at Chinese New Year. Children's attention is drawn to the use and importance of technology in our everyday lives. However, they have little opportunity to use programmable toys and investigative equipment to support their learning.

Independent access to resources such as dough, paint, chalks, crayons and glue enables children to freely choose to create, which they do enthusiastically. Children have sufficient time and freedom to explore their own ideas and are given sensitive support when they meet problems that frustrate them. Children learn well through

their senses, for example, by feeling different textures or looking closely at bugs. Over time, children enjoy other planned creative experiences, which enable them to use all their senses, such as baking and listening and moving to music.

Children show a healthy interest in numbers and counting. Many older children count beyond 10 and some skilfully add numbers together. Children appropriately use mathematical language such as big and little and frequently refer to number during spontaneous play activities. For example, children talk knowledgeably about size and shape whilst looking at the fire engine and using construction sets. However, children see few words or numerals as labels, for example, through charts or friezes, and have limited access to resources featuring numerals in the role play areas to consolidate their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children, parents, carers and visitors are made to feel very welcome at the setting. The well planned 'settling in' procedures and documentation helps children develop a sense of community within their own group and within the setting as a whole. Staff ensure the atmosphere is happy and relaxed at all times. Children, as a result, develop good relationships with staff, finding them approachable and responsive to their needs.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Staff provide resources and activities that positively represent the children who attend as well as individuals from the wider community. Planned activities that raise children's awareness of the wider world involve learning to respect other cultures and sampling foods from other countries.

Children know and understand the rules which are consistent. They learn to effectively negotiate with each other and take responsibility for their behaviour. They are polite, take turns and show concern for others. Children are learning to understand what is meant by responsible behaviour, such as sitting and listening whilst others speak. The importance of being kind, helpful and considerate towards one another during play is emphasised by the positive role modelling of staff. Children behave well with staff adopting excellent strategies for promoting positive behaviour. Staff prompt good manners, giving children praise for their achievements, which helps boost their self-confidence and self-esteem.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents share useful information about their child when they join the nursery and receive essential information about the nursery provision. This enables appropriate care to be provided for each child. Parents are kept updated with regular, useful newsletters. The progress being made by individual children is conveyed to parents verbally. Opportunities for parents and staff to share information are mainly informal, however, other ways are being developed. This growing communication between parent and staff helps to promote children's welfare and safety. Parents are clearly invited to approach staff at any time about their children.

Parents of children who receive nursery education are aware of the routines and activities and are given some information about the Foundation Stage. Children's assessment records are not yet clearly linked to the stepping stones to inform parents well about their child's progress and the Foundation Stage of learning. Parents do not yet fully contribute to the formal assessment records, consequently, information parents provide about their child is not formally used to promote children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The small staff team, who hold, or are working towards, relevant early years qualifications, implement the setting's policies and procedures to very good effect. Directors and staff have a good awareness of the National Standards and the subsequent amendments, which aids their ability to monitor that they are meeting them. They assume their respective roles well, which serves to ensure children are appropriately cared for in the setting. The operational plan is not yet in a format that can be shared easily with parents or used to effectively manage the setting. However, the required documentation, which serve to protect children, is up-to-date and stored confidentially.

Overall, the leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. There is a positive attitude towards improving and developing the educational programme. Children benefit from the strong commitment, shown by staff, who work with them on a day to day basis, to improving and developing the service. Steady and methodical progress is being made to address the self-identified issues. Useful formal systems of staff induction and appraisal are in place, which support staff's developmental needs. Planning and assessment systems are monitored with positive links being maintained with the early years teacher team. This ensures that children are provided with a varied educational programme.

Many useful systems have been implemented, which are in the early stages of development. For example, the newly implemented assessment systems are beginning to record and monitor children's progress. Space and resources are organised effectively, resulting in children being able to play and learn in a comfortable and relaxed environment. This contributes to children's sound progress in all areas of learning and the smooth operation of the setting as a whole. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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):

- develop the operational plan so it can be used to effectively manage the setting and be shared with parents, and seek written parental consent for emergency medical advice and treatment to be sought for each child

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):

- make greater use of the book area, provide children with a wider range of text, books and reading materials, and provide opportunities for children to develop their technological and investigative skills
- develop the newly implemented assessment system, which tracks children's progress, so it can be used to inform planning; and implement a system to monitor that the curriculum is balanced.

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