



Busy Bee Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	148861
Inspection date	14 September 2006
Inspector	Helen Mary Ball
Setting Address	Unit 2, Marlborough Road, Southampton, Hampshire, SO15 3ND
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Registered person	Alison Patricia Neville
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 Bee Pre-school is one of two privately owned settings. It opened in 2001 and operates from two rooms in a unit in the Shirley area of Southampton. A maximum of 26 children may attend the setting at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday during term times. Sessions are from 09:15 to 11:45 and 12:15 to 14:45 daily.

There are currently 33 children aged from 2 to 5 years on roll. Of these, 20 children receive funding for early education. Children primarily come from the local catchment area. The setting currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

There are five staff who work directly with the children. Of these, four staff have relevant childcare qualifications. The setting has Pre-school Learning Alliance accreditation.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health and well-being is very efficiently promoted. Children respond well to routines and learn about personal hygiene; they wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Older children independently use facilities such as paper towel dispensers and are confident in using tissues, disposing of them hygienically in a bin without prompting from staff. Children's toys and equipment are clean and well maintained, ensuring that spread of infection is minimised.

Children learn to use simple tools such as scissors, brushes and pencils. They are physically active, using the indoor climbing frame with confidence. Children sometimes have opportunities to use ride on toys, and enjoy occasional visits to the local park. This helps them to develop a healthy lifestyle.

Children are well nourished because they benefit from a healthy snack such as fruit. Lunchtimes are sociable occasions when children sit together to eat their packed lunches. Most children are competent at sitting at a table to eat, although some have difficulty in recognising their own space. They are joined by staff who take the opportunity to chat informally to the children, forging close and caring relationships. Children have access to fresh drinking water throughout the session, and they serve themselves using a jug.

Children's welfare is underpinned by the effective use of documentation such as accident and medication records. Children's allergies and individual needs are meticulously recorded, and efficient systems are in place to ensure their needs are met. A comprehensive sickness and hygiene policy helps to protect children against the spread of illness and cross infection. Staff are qualified in first aid which means that they can treat a child in the event of an accident or injury.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are relaxed and happy in this bright, welcoming environment which has colourful posters and murals on the walls. The friendly staff create a cheerful ambience in which children thrive; they show a clear love of children and children respond to them with affection. Children enjoy selecting their own toys and equipment which are stored in large plastic boxes, labelled with words and pictures. This helps to develop their independence.

Children's safety is of paramount importance to staff; they are vigilant in supervising children whilst ensuring that children's sense of independence is not compromised. Risks to children are effectively minimised because staff carry out daily risk assessments and premises checks. Children are aware of the simple rules of the setting and understand the reasons for them. For example, children tell each other "you must walk and not run so that nobody hurts themselves".

Children are well protected because the owner and staff have a sound working knowledge of child protection procedures. There are sound systems in place to ensure that children are only collected by designated adults.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time in the pre-school. They achieve well because staff are skilled and use their thorough understanding of the early years guidance, such as Birth to three matters and the Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage, to provide good quality care and education.

Children settle quickly at the setting because staff are proficient in identifying each child's preferred way of settling in. For example, staff recognise when children need cajoling and when children prefer to observe activities before joining in. This helps children to develop a sense of trust and a sense of self. Children are interested in the activities and are keen to learn. They enjoy choosing what to do and are enthusiastic. Children form good relationships with their peers, and are learning to share and take turns. Children show an understanding of group rules and are able to remind each other. For example, older children remind new children that they must be kind to each other and share. Children are developing self-care skills such as dressing and undressing. Staff plan suitable activities such as role play to support these skills, when children dress up in a range of clothes. At snack time, children are encouraged to pour their own drinks and to choose which fruits they would like to eat which develops independent thinking.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are excited and inspired by the broad range of stimulating, relevant activities related to their needs. They access a wide range of good quality resources which support their development across all areas of learning. Children are eager to learn, and take an active part in story times. Staff encourage their participation by asking questions and helping the children to predict what will happen next. This maintains children's interest and develops their thinking skills. Children's delight in learning is infectious. After discussing the letter of the week during snack time, children spontaneously look around the setting for pictures relating to the sound. Staff offer activities to consolidate children's learning and are proficient in adapting these to match children's individual stages of development. Children use marks readily to represent their ideas and staff sensitively guide children to holding a pencil correctly. Most children are confident speakers and converse easily with adults and each other.

Children develop an understanding of counting, addition and subtraction during everyday routines such as registration, snack and lunch times. They learn about shapes and staff provide suitable activities to support their learning. Staff knowledge of the stepping stones and understanding of the Birth to three matters framework means that they are competent in adapting activities to suit a child's own stage of development. During free play activities, staff consistently model appropriate mathematical language such as bigger, smaller, heavier; this helps children to develop their vocabulary in context.

Children explore with sand, water and dough. Staff take opportunities to sit with children during play dough sessions to talk informally to children. Staff develop the conversation to encourage children to talk about their home and family which develops their sense of self and sense of community. Children learn about each other's similarities and differences in a relaxed and safe environment. Children have free access to the computer and develop early skills such as controlling the mouse.

Children move confidently around the environment and show coordination when using the climbing frame and slide. However, children have limited use of the outside environment. They use a range of tools such as brushes, pencils and construction bricks and staff offer careful support for children who are using scissors for the first time.

Children relish their creative development. Staff use this enthusiasm to reinforce targeted areas of learning. For example, children are encouraged to paint large circles and to collage paper plates; this consolidates their knowledge of shape. Children spontaneously draw large circles in the sand. Children join in action songs and rhymes with enthusiasm.

Right from the start, staff find out about children's skills, interests and needs. They use this information effectively and help children to achieve as much as they can. The meticulous planning and staff knowledge of how children learn, means that children are enabled to progress at their own pace. Staff are skilled in observing children and strike an effective balance between allowing children to develop relationships with each other, and questioning children during their play to challenge their thinking and language skills. They use highly effective systems to monitor and record children's achievements and to plan experiences that help children take the next step in their learning. Overall children make good progress in their learning and achieve well given their capability and starting points.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children are welcomed and play a full part in the pre-school because staff value and respect their individuality and the family context for each child. Children develop a healthy respect for their environment. For example, they help to tidy up and throw rubbish into the bins. Children feel valued when they take part in "show and tell", when staff encourage all children to listen to each other; this helps children to develop respect for each other. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are welcomed, and staff work very closely with outside agencies such as speech therapists, to ensure that children receive the best levels of support.

Children's behaviour is excellent. They are eager to please and help each other. Older children help new children to settle in and to understand simple rules such as sharing and caring. Staff have high but realistic expectations of children and set consistent boundaries. This helps children to take responsibility for their own behaviour. Staff increase children's general understanding of right and wrong, and children respond positively to gentle reminders to say sorry when necessary. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is outstanding. The setting embraces the whole family when a child starts at the setting, and this exceptional level of support and communication continues

throughout each child's time at pre school. This means that care of children is consistent. Parents are kept fully informed about what their child has been doing as children take home activity slips each day, and staff are on hand at the beginning and end of each session to talk to parents informally. Parents are invited to help at sessions on a rota basis, and staff hold open evenings so that they can discuss each child's individual progress with parents. Parents are respected and very much involved in their child's learning. They are invited to help children learn the sound and number of the week by helping their child draw in their phonic book. Staff promote parent's understanding of how children learn by planning play workshops for parents, when they are invited to come into the setting and use the play equipment. Staff then talk to parents about what children do with this equipment and how it helps them to develop. Parents benefit from a regular newsletter which tells them about forthcoming topics and what their children will be doing. It is well presented and easy to read.

Staff offer continuing reassurance to parents, particularly when children are new to the setting. Parents are welcome to stay with their child for as long as necessary, and staff are willing to accept telephone calls from parents to give them frequent updates. This means that parents and children quickly become confident in the provision.

A complaints procedure is in place, together with a system to record complaints. This means that any concerns can be addressed effectively.

Overall, children benefit greatly from their parent's involvement; this contributes significantly to their good health, safety, development and learning.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Leadership and management of the setting is outstanding. Staff greatly enhance children's care and education by the exceptional quality of organisation. Children are protected because the owner follows robust recruitment and vetting procedures; these are followed by a comprehensive induction period, regular staff appraisals and ongoing training. Children benefit from well qualified and skilled staff, who are committed to continual professional development; this is encouraged by the owner who leads by example. Staff have detailed job descriptions and receive excellent support from management. They frequently use staff meetings to discuss, evaluate and monitor the provision, always looking for ways to improve. The owner is actively involved in the pre-school and has excellent relationships with staff.

The manager ensures that staff are organised so that they spend maximum time working directly with children, allowing children to benefit from plenty of support. They arrive early each morning and are clear, in advance, what they will be doing each day. The curriculum planning is exceptional and staff use this to excellent effect, adapting activities to meet children's individual needs and preferred styles of learning. Space is efficiently organised to maximise children's experiences, whilst allowing space for children to move and play freely. Toys and equipment are well organised and imaginatively stored, so that all are accessible to children. Areas of learning are well defined, with one room dedicated to physical and messy play, while the other is used for floor and construction activities, home corner, reading and guided activities.

Children's well-being is effectively supported by the comprehensive range of policies and procedures which underpin the outstanding running of the setting. All paperwork is presented to a very high standard, meticulously maintained and well organised; children are protected because all relevant parental consents have been obtained. The staff are well established and work superbly well together as a team. This provides seamless care and education for children.

The outstanding organisation means that the pre-school meets the needs of the range of children who attend. The setting has received accreditation from the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the setting was asked to update the uncollected child policy and complaints procedure. These have now been updated; this means that staff have clear guidance in the event of a parent not collecting a child. The updated complaints procedure means that concerns can be addressed promptly.

At the last nursery education inspection, a recommendation was made to provide opportunities for children to practice emergent writing skills in a variety of situations. The setting now provides a range of paper, pencils and small notebooks; children use these imaginatively in role-play situations and enjoy making lists and appointments during themed activities. This means that children learn that writing is for a purpose.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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.

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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):

- continue to develop snack time so that children gain maximum benefit from sitting together at meal 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):

- continue to expand opportunities for children to develop physical skills

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