



## **Busy Bee Pre-school**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	251431
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 July 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Gill Thornton
<b>Setting Address</b>	'The Hive', Castle Playing Fields, HAVERHILL, SUFFOLK, CB9 9DE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01440709705
<b>E-mail</b>	daytime no 01440 705800
<b>Registered person</b>	Busy Bees Pre-School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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?

Busy Bees Pre-School is managed by a voluntary management committee made up of parents of children at the pre-school and members of the local community. It was registered in its present form in 1997 but has been running for over 20 years. It operates from one large playroom in purpose built premises on Castle Hill playing fields close to a residential area of Haverhill. A maximum of 24 children may attend

the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each week day during term time from 09.30 to 11.30 and 12.15 to 14.45. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 61 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 35 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a the local area and nearby communities.

The pre-school currently supports a small number of children who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school employs five members of staff. Three members of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two members of staff are working towards a recognised early years qualification. The pre-school receives support from the Local Authority and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is inadequate.

Children gain some understanding of appropriate hygiene practices through the regular routines of the session. For example, most older children know to wash their hands before snack time and staff remind children to wash their hands after using the toilet, although this is not always monitored to ensure they do so. Nappy changing procedures do not always protect children from risk of cross infection as the changing mat is not routinely cleaned with an antibacterial cleaner between changes.

Children's health is not adequately promoted. No member of staff has a current first aid certificate, consequently there is no suitable member of staff on the premises with appropriate up to date knowledge of first aid, so children are at risk in an accident or medical emergency.

A policy is in place regarding administering medication but not all staff understand or are aware of the procedures to follow to ensure children receive appropriate care. Written parental consent is requested to seek emergency medical advice or treatment and an accurate record of accidents is maintained and countersigned by parents, although this is not monitored in risk assessments to identify any pattern of incidents.

Children choose from a selection of nutritious snacks, such as fruit, crackers, cheese and ham, that take account of their individual dietary needs and preferences. They benefit from a well organised 'cafeteria' style snack time which gives them good opportunities to develop their independence and learn to meet their own dietary needs. However, staff responsible for food preparation and handling have not received appropriate training to promote their understanding of basic food hygiene requirements, consequently impacting upon children's health. Children do not have free access to drinking water throughout the session to ensure they are not thirsty, although the group are in the process of ordering a water cooler to address this

issue.

Children take part in a range of physical play opportunities which contribute to a healthy lifestyle. They benefit from a being able choose to play indoors or in the outdoor play area. Outdoors, they enjoy playing with a range of equipment to help promote their large physical skills, such as a large climbing frame, balancing blocks and a large selection of ride on toys and bikes. Indoors, children take part in ring games such as the 'Hokey Cokey' and develop their fine physical skills using equipment such as scissors, mark making tools and threading activities.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is inadequate.

Although children are cared for in a welcoming and stimulating environment, appropriate steps are not taken to ensure staff caring for children are suitable to do so, this means children's welfare is not safeguarded. Unchecked staff do not help children with their personal care and they are aware they should not be left on their own with children, but this is not always possible due to staffing levels and the layout of the environment.

The premises are generally safe and secure. Staff are vigilant in keeping the main entrance and the gate into the outdoor play area locked to prevent unauthorised access. They take some steps to reduce risks to children, for example, they now use a stair gate to make the kitchen inaccessible. Staff carry out visual daily safety checks especially of the outside play area, although formal risk assessments do not take place regularly to monitor safety procedures. Emergency evacuation procedures are displayed within the room and are practised with children so that they know what to do in an emergency.

Children have access to a suitable range of toys and equipment which meet safety standards. The well organised learning environment enables children to move around independently and self select toys and resources which interest and motivate them. The group sometimes goes on outings to the nearby wooded area; parents are informed of this and asked to help via the notice board in the foyer. However, they do not request written consent for routine outings. A written policy for uncollected children is in place, however, this does not include procedures to be followed in the event of a child becoming lost; staff are generally aware of procedures to be followed.

Some staff have attended child protection training and they are all generally aware of the correct procedures to follow if they have a concern. The child protection statement is on display, however, the Local Safeguarding Children Bureau procedures and referral numbers are not available to all staff, so potentially compromising children's welfare.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time at the pre-school, they settle well and immediately become involved in their favourite activities, particularly the popular craft area. Staff welcome children into the setting and praise them for self registering with a 'thumbs up' sign, to which the children respond with pleasure. Younger children mainly attend afternoon sessions when they have access to the same activities as are available in the morning. Staff adapt their questioning skills and methods of teaching to take account of younger children's individual stage of development, for example, engaging children in threading activities while discussing their favourite colours. However, they are not yet providing planned activities specifically for children aged under three in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework to extend activities and experiences to fully promote their play and learning.

Children make positive relationships with staff and their peers. They seek out their friends to join in with their play, for example asking "Will you come and play in my shop please?" Children play confidently on their own or in small groups, negotiating and interacting well while exploring the stimulating learning environment. The layout of the room, with clearly defined areas for different activities, combined with the routine of the session provides children with the time and space to follow their own interests and return to activities that particularly interest and motivate them. Staff are interested in what children do and say and join in with their play to promote their confidence, for example, asking them about their own home while playing with the dolls house.

#### Nursery Education

Quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

Staff use their knowledge of the Foundation Stage to provide a sufficient range of activities and play experiences to interest and motivate children. Staff use a reasonable range of teaching methods and have an adequate understanding of how children learn and make progress. They use open-ended questioning to extend children's learning, for example, asking how many candles they need on their birthday cake.

The learning environment is bright and welcoming and reflects the six areas of learning, with notices displayed which identify the learning in the everyday curriculum. Written plans are limited which means there is no system in place to ensure a balance of children's learning across each aspect within the six areas of learning. In addition, daily focused activities do not routinely take place to move children on and help them make progress. Staff adapt their teaching methods to support children who have English as an additional language to help them make adequate progress. A sound system of recording children's progress based on observations is in place which helps staff monitor children's progress through the stepping stones.

Children enjoy coming to the setting and have a positive attitude to learning. They are sufficiently confident and self-assured to play independently or in small groups. They are learning to take account of the feelings of others and develop a positive self image of themselves. They seek out others to share experiences with, such as when having a 'Birthday party' in the home corner. Children display high levels of

involvement in their chosen activities and have time to explore their own ideas and interests in depth.

Most children are confident communicators and are eager to talk to adults and each other about their own experiences. Most children recognise their own names or are supported by staff to do so. They have good opportunities to practise their early writing skills and engage in various activities to encourage writing for a purpose in the 'office area'. Children join in with number rhymes such as 'Ten in the bed' when staff encourage them to work out 'How many left?' to promote their simple problem solving skills. However, children have little opportunity to use and recognise numerals during their play.

Children use their initiative, for example, using sticky labels to stick paper together when there was no sticky tape and then showing another child how to do the same. They have opportunities to explore and develop an interest in items such as a bird nest on the nature table. Creative development is a strength in the pre-school. The craft area is well used and some children spend considerable time using the interesting range of resources while exploring and experimenting with their own ideas. Children enjoy engaging in imaginative role play activities based upon their own experiences such as 'getting married'.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed into the setting and they are valued by staff who know them well and are aware of their likes and dislikes, which helps them develop sense of belonging. The room is decorated with displays of the children's own work so helping them feel valued. All children have equal access to toys and equipment that meet their individual needs, so they can become confident and independent. Appropriate systems are in place to care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to ensure their specific needs are met. Children become aware of the wider society through activities celebrating festivals such as Christmas, Diwali and Chinese New Year.

Staff use consistent strategies appropriate to children's individual stage of development to promote their understanding of responsible behaviour, these strategies are shared verbally with parents to ensure continuity. The use of specific praise and encouragement helps children develop high self-esteem and develop a positive view of themselves.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory.

Information is shared verbally with parents on a daily basis and most of the documentation and written consents are maintained to ensure staff follow parents' wishes regarding their children's care. Parents make positive comments about the group, they recognise how much their children enjoy attending each day, they find staff approachable and can see that improvements have been made to the group.

Parents receive information via a welcome pack about the Foundation Stage and termly newsletters and notices in the foyer keep them up to date with changes and the running of the pre-school. However, policies and procedures are not shared with parents to ensure they are fully informed about the care their children receive. Parents are aware the group keeps records on their children's progress, which they receive when their children leave, but they have no opportunity to share or contribute to these records.

The group have recently redecorated the foyer to make it more welcoming to parents, who are able to see the activities their children take part in when they collect them from the playroom. However, parents receive limited information about activities and topics covered to enable them to become involved in their children's learning.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is inadequate.

There are no satisfactory procedures in place to ensure that staff working with children are suitable to do so as no one has been monitoring the position regarding staff Criminal Record Bureau checks. This means that some staff have been employed for a considerable period of time without the registered provider ensuring their suitability to care for children. Adult to child ratios are met and staff are generally deployed effectively within the provision to support children's play. However, new staff do not undergo appropriate induction procedures to ensure they are fully familiar with the pre-school's policies and procedures.

Most operational policies and procedures are in place, however, these are not reviewed regularly and do not reflect practice, especially regarding staff training requirements. No effective steps have been taken to ensure staff training requirements are met regarding first aid or food preparation and handling training, therefore children's welfare is not adequately promoted. The committee were unaware of their responsibilities as the registered provider for ensuring that the requirements of the national standards are met. Overall, the range of children's needs are not met.

The leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory.

The committee and staff are committed to improving the provision of care and nursery education. Staff have put a lot of dedication and commitment into improving the learning environment. The group have been receiving and actively acting upon advice from an Early Education Support Teacher to improve their practice. Regular staff and committee meetings take place to review the provision and staff appraisals are in the process of being put in place to identify training needs and areas for professional development. However, there are no formal procedures in place to monitor and evaluate the provision of nursery education.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At their last inspection the group were asked to improve safety regarding children's access to the kitchen and other potential hazards, this has been addressed to enhance children's safety. They also agreed to improve documentation and record keeping, not all of these issues have been addressed appropriately and remain areas for future improvement.

They were also asked to develop their system of observation and assessment, 'Step by Step' records of progress are now in place and include meaningful observations of children's learning to record their progress through the stepping stones. Improvements to planning and the need to provide parents with information on their children's learning are still ongoing and remain as areas for improvement. The group have developed the learning environment to provide children with activities which cover the six areas of learning to enhance the provision of early education.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004. 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**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure that there are effective procedures in place for checking that staff are suitable to work with children
- develop an action plan that sets out how staff training requirements will be met; this refers to attending first aid and food preparation and handling training



- develop a contingency plan to ensure that there is at least one member of staff with a current first aid certificate on the premises or on outings at any one time.

These actions are set out in a ***notice of action to improve*** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

### **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):

- improve written plans to ensure children are provided with a balanced range of activities across the six areas of learning, with regular focused activities to ensure all children offered appropriate challenge to help them make progress
- provide parents with information on the educational programme and children's learning regarding topics, activities and other experiences and provide them with opportunities to share and contribute to their children's records of progress
- introduce a system for monitoring and evaluating the provision of nursery education.

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