



Brambly Hedge Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY290726
Inspection date	27 June 2006
Inspector	Pauline Pinnegar

Setting Address	Richards House, Crosby Road, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL6 1AE
Telephone number	01609 771333
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Registered person	Brambly Hedge Day Nursery
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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?

Brambly Hedge Day Nursery has been registered since 2004. It is a privately owned provision and is situated in Northallerton, close to the town centre. The nursery serves the local and surrounding areas. It operates from four activity rooms and has two secure outdoor play areas. The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 50 children from birth to under eight years at any one time. The registration includes out of school care.

The nursery currently has 91 children on roll aged from 12 weeks to five years. Of these, there are 38 children who receive funding for nursery education. Procedures are in place to support children with learning difficulties.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday, 51 weeks of the year excluding bank holidays. Sessions are from 08.00 to 18.00. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The nursery employs 12 staff of whom five hold appropriate childcare qualifications and five staff are working towards a qualification. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children love spending time outdoors and use the outdoor areas with delight. They go for walks in the local community and play with a full range of outdoor equipment. The children have very well developed physical skills, they enthusiastically use the outdoor area to practise and refine skills, for example, when using balls and manoeuvring the cars and bikes. The well planned nursery environment allows the children to move freely and with confidence between the different rooms and areas. There is an excellent range of resources which enables children to climb, explore and play imaginatively when outside in the nursery garden. They play running and chasing games, skilfully avoiding obstacles. They use the balancing and climbing equipment safely and with skill, striding confidently. They proudly demonstrate new skills as they learn to skip and hop. They learn to take turns and negotiate shared use of space. Staff observe children closely and plan well to provide opportunities for them to practise and extend their physical skills. Toddlers have sturdy toys to push along to support their developing mobility and enjoy crawling.

Children enjoy nutritious, well balanced and freshly prepared meals each day. The menu is changed weekly to ensure children develop new tastes and foods. The good food hygiene standards and practices ensure that the food prepared for the children is healthy and planned to meet their individual dietary needs. The children's mealtimes are sociable, they thoroughly enjoy chatting to staff and friends as they eat together. Children very successfully manage their own food intake under the careful supervision of the staff. For example, the children self serve at snack time using a cafeteria system. They choose from white or wholemeal bread and spread with jam or cheese spread. Meals always include fresh vegetables and children eat a wide range of fruit including dragon fruit, kiwi, pineapple and grapes. Older children after school help prepare sandwiches, vegetable soup and lasagne which raises their awareness of healthy eating. Children make choices and become independent in feeding themselves, most children are able to use a knife and fork very capably to eat their lunch. Healthy eating topics are explored with children to raise their awareness of both healthy and unhealthy foods and foods which are treats. Children are offered drinks frequently and older children can access drinks independently both indoors and outdoors.

Staff liaise closely with parents to establish a shared understanding about children's care needs. This supports consistency as children move through the nursery. Younger children are made to feel special as they enjoy lots of cuddles and gentle conversation. Staff recognise signs of tiredness in babies and toddlers and respond appropriately, so that their need for sleep and rest is met, helping them to be content and enjoy their play.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean and well maintained environment. Staff systematically implement clearly defined health and hygiene guidelines and ensure parents understand that sick children can not be cared for so that children are protected from infection. Children learn good practices through their daily routines. They know why it is important to wash their hands before lunch and after using the toilet and staff constantly reinforce healthy practises, especially at circle time. Children become increasingly independent in attending to their own personal needs. Arrangements for first aid and administering medication are agreed with parents and fully protect children. However, medication records are not always maintained accurately.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in secure and welcoming premises. Comprehensive health and safety procedures are implemented effectively by staff who clearly understand their role in keeping children safe. Staff check the premises daily and take appropriate steps to minimise risks, so that children are protected from potential hazards. For example, security coded pads are fitted to the internal doors and a clear log of all visitors to the premises is in place. However, the area surrounding the changing unit in the bathroom for toddlers is fitted with rough wood and is a potential hazard to young children. Staff are deployed well to ensure safe supervision and are extremely vigilant as they support the children in their play. For example, children are closely supervised as they explore the secure outdoor areas. Carefully organised school collection systems ensure that children arrive at the nursery safely escorted by the staff.

Staff create an environment where there is a good balance between freedom and safe limits. They gently explain safe practices to children, such as why they must not throw sand and reinforce expected behaviour, such as tidying away toys and not running indoors. Good supervision encourages children to behave in caring and responsible ways. Consistent reminders about rules help children begin to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe. For example, they know they must walk in line when going outside to play. Children also learn about road safety and stranger danger when out walking in the community. Children learn to understand the importance of listening to and following instructions, they know what to do when they have fire drills. Staff provide a good balance between freedom and safe limits so that children are appropriately challenged, they teach children how to explore safely using the equipment outdoors.

Children use very good quality resources, which are well maintained and stored so

that children can safely access them without help. There is sufficient, safe space to allow them to enjoy a wide variety of activities so children can move around freely and develop their own play ideas.

Children are cared for by staff who give high priority to protecting children and keeping them safe. They are sensitively supported to share their feelings and make their needs known. Key staff have attended appropriate training and have a clear understanding of their responsibilities within child protection procedures. This contributes to children's welfare being fully safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children love coming to the nursery, they are very settled and secure. They make friends and play together cooperatively, supported sensitively by staff who get to know them and their families very well. They develop confidence and their self-esteem is nurtured. Staff spontaneously differentiate activities to include all children and meet their different needs. They give priority to supporting development of communication skills, encouraging lots of conversations based on children's interests and home lives. Children love stories, which are shared often and they learn to listen attentively, learn rhymes and sing songs, joining in with lively enthusiasm.

Exploratory and creative play, such as sand, water, dough and paint, is integral to children's everyday environment. The creative area promotes children's independent creativity, and is nurtured as they glue, making fascinating lavender bags. The current topic includes exploration of the senses with creative materials, which are combined with flavoured essences and play-dough with glitter. Children explore sounds with musical instruments and music from around the world and enjoy moving their bodies to music. Children relate well to each other and engage in a wide variety of interesting activities. The recent introduction of the Birth to three matters framework is having a positive impact on the quality of provision for children under three. Staff plan and monitor young children's development effectively, ensuring that they provide sufficient and varied choice. For example, children experiment with different media including gloop, jelly, pasta, painting with their feet and walking in baked beans. They have introduced a wide variety of treasure baskets, natural resources, and shakers for babies and toddlers to freely explore. Very young children also enjoy baby massage. Children are interested and persevere, for example, as they complete puzzles and staff recognise when they are ready for more challenge. All children spend their time purposefully.

The play environment is well planned to encourage children to access resources independently and plan their own play. They cooperate to plan extended role play and love participating in role play, such as the flower shop and the ice cream parlour, in which they are confident to express themselves. Their fine motor skills develop as they chalk and draw pictures, build up the train track and use a host of construction materials. Children develop an interest in the natural world and living things, as they care for the hamster, going to the pet shop to choose and purchase the pet. They observe new growth as they plant sunflowers and herbs. Children in the out of school

club enjoy playing with the play station, the computer, baking and various art and craft activities. As part of the recent world cup football event children enjoyed a barbecue party in the garden roasting banana's. They also enjoy creating their own puppet theatre and produced a show for parents.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good, so that children make good progress towards the early learning goals. They are confident to try out new experiences, supported by staff who are well informed about the foundation stage of learning. Children enjoy a wide variety of experiences within the daily environment and they are interested and motivated to learn. Activity planning is well structured and successfully promotes opportunities in all areas of learning. Children access outdoor play at each session. Staff actively utilise opportunities for learning presented by the outdoor environment and use their knowledge of children's individual interests to extend their learning. Children can access resources independently.

Children enjoy coming to the nursery. They use initiative as they make choices and plan their play, they concentrate well and persevere to complete activities. They are becoming confident communicators and happily share their own ideas and experiences, they are encouraged to use language to describe, recall and explain. Children love stories, they listen attentively and contribute enthusiastically. Older children recognise and practise writing their name. Although, mark making is readily available for children this is not always fully extended into role play areas. Children enjoy linking sounds and letters. Children count and use numbers, however, this is not always extended into everyday activities, some children recognise and successfully order numbers up to ten. They use comparative language confidently in their construction play.

Children are very interested in the world around them. They learn about the seasons and growth as they plant seeds, grow herbs and care for animals, learning how to offer appropriate care. They enjoyed a visit from the RSPCA officer. Exploratory and creative play, such as sand, water, dough, crafts and painting, is part of the planned everyday environment, allowing children opportunity to experiment with different media. Organisation of space maximises children's opportunities to explore freely and develop their own ideas in the 'messy' area. Children discover the wider world and other cultures as they discover how people celebrate festivals and try out foods from different countries. They explore the local community very well with trips to the butchers, flower shop and supermarket. During recent topics children enjoyed visits from the local firemen and the Town Crier.

Staff interact very effectively with children to stimulate their curiosity and consolidate learning. They model skills and consistently reinforce expected behaviour, so that children quickly learn to work cooperatively, use all activity areas productively and become familiar with routines. Staff use of open ended questions is especially skilful in encouraging children to think about how to solve problems independently. Assessments of progress are clearly linked to the stepping stones and are used by staff to plan the next steps in children's learning. Observations directly inform planning to promote differentiation within activities meeting all children's needs effectively.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed into the nursery. They develop a strong sense of belonging as they become familiar with routines and participate with enjoyment in many activities. The inclusive and enabling approach means that each child's individuality is strongly valued and nurtured. Children are cared for by familiar and well known staff, they develop secure and trusting relationships.

Children play together very harmoniously. They use initiative to manage their own play experiences and learn to take responsibility for their own behaviour. They think about the needs of others as they take turns and plan shared activities. Staff gently and consistently reinforce rules and boundaries so that politeness and good behaviour are valued and sensitively encouraged. When children behave in especially kind or helpful ways they are awarded with special stickers. Children in the out of school group have developed their own rules and this is proudly displayed. They have awards for 'star of the week' and 'most polite'.

Children learn about the world around them, as staff plan activities raising their awareness of living things and of the lives and festivals of people in other countries. Visitors to the nursery stimulate their interest. Varied outings help to promote their awareness of their local community. They are confident to make choices and decisions in planning their own play. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children are currently exploring different flags, countries and food from around the world following the world cup theme.

The nursery establishes a very good partnership with parents and carers. Parents are fully involved in helping to settle their child and get to know all the staff very well. They liaise closely with staff on a daily basis to share information about their child's needs and interests and develop shared strategies to ensure consistency with home. Information about younger children's routines and activities is shared very effectively using daily feedback sheets. Parents' relationships with staff are relaxed and comfortable, which promotes children's sense of security.

Parents are well informed about the nursery's policies and procedures, their views are sought routinely through parents questionnaires and they know how to raise any concerns. They receive an information pack when their child starts nursery, which includes details of the foundation stage curriculum and the Birth to three matters framework. Information relating to planned learning and activities is displayed. Parents of funded children receive regular opportunities to discuss their child's progress and achievements both formally at parents open days and informally through verbal feedback. Staff give parents satisfactory opportunities to be involved in their child's learning at home.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The nursery environment is very well organised to promote children's welfare and safety. Daily routines are clearly planned and flexibly implemented. Staff are deployed very effectively to ensure appropriate levels of care and supervision, they sensitively follow and support children's interests. A key person approach allows for a sensitive and informed response to children's needs as they arise, resulting in them receiving consistent care and emotional support. Staff are suitably skilled and experienced to work with children and support their individual needs very well.

Children's care and education are supported by good leadership and management. Staff work very together as a very effective team. Weekly staff meetings are used well to help staff plan effectively for children's learning, they consistently review their own practice. Monitoring and evaluation processes inform planning and help staff to identify strengths and areas for improvement, so that children make good progress. Systems are well developed to evaluate and monitor staff performance and the effect the nursery programme has on children's care, learning and progress.

Comprehensive policies and procedures are effectively implemented so that children's welfare is fully safeguarded. Required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and is regularly reviewed. Robust procedures are in place to ensure staff suitability. Staff have suitable skills and experience to work with children. Parent's wishes regarding their child's care clearly influence day to day practice and clear written agreements are recorded.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to; make sure the record of medication contains the times medication is given and that it is signed by parents to acknowledge the entry; make sure that drains and overflow pipes in the outdoor play area are made safe or inaccessible to children; include the address and telephone number of Ofsted in the complaints procedure; confirm to the regulator that approvals have been requested from building control and environmental health; and any recommendations made by them have been completed; submit an action plan detailing how the requirements for the under two's to be cared for in groups of no more than 12 will be met.

Most records are now completed correctly. The medication record now mostly includes the times it was administered but not all records contain all the required information which compromises children's health and safety. There is now a clear written complaints procedure in place for parents which all includes all the relevant information. This has improved partnership with parents. The outdoor area is safe and secure for children with drains and overflow pipes inaccessible to children. Building control and environmental health have been fully consulted with regard to the new baby room ensuring it a safe and healthy environment for young children. The room where children under two years are cared for accommodates no more than 12 children at any one time ensuring their individual needs and welfare is met.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted 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.

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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):

- develop the medication records to ensure the name of the medication and the dosage is accurately recorded
- ensure the changing area for children over two years is safe.

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 the opportunities for children to develop their calculating skills in everyday activities and extend mark making opportunities in role play
- continue to develop opportunities for parents to contribute to children's learning at home.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk