



## **Busy Bees Playgroup**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	143151
<b>Inspection date</b>	16 June 2006
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<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 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 opened in 2000 and operates from within a church hall in the town of Yeovil, Somerset. A maximum of 24 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 09.00 to 11.45, during term time only. Children do not have access to an outdoor play area, however they make use of the local facilities within the town.

There are currently 37 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 25

children receive funding for early education. The playgroup supports children with learning difficulties.

The playgroup is privately owned by the manager who employs four members of staff, all who either hold or are just completing appropriate early years qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children learn about keeping fit and healthy through a range of activities and play provision which is used well to promote their physical development. For example, indoors they use balls, bean bags, a tunnel, parachute, balancing beams, mini-trampoline and climbing frame with slide. They also exercise with music and movement activities, such as Sticky Kids and dancing with streamers as well as spontaneously joining in action rhymes and songs, such as the 'Hokey Cokey'. In addition, children regularly walk to the local park and around the town, exploring their local environment. Children learn about healthy eating habits through enjoying a nutritious choice of snacks at break time. For example, crackers spread with butter, breads from around the world and fresh and dried fruits with drinks of water or milk. They learn about healthy lifestyles through topics, in which they explore healthy foods, exercise and sleep needs. Children have access to drinks of water at all times to ensure they do not get thirsty.

Children are cared for within a clean and hygienic environment where staff have good systems in place to prevent the spread of infection. For example, cleaning toys and equipment each half term, cleaning the room daily, thorough staff hand washing routines, disinfecting table tops and wearing disposable gloves appropriately. In addition, children who are sick or infectious are excluded, according to the policy, which is available to parents to promote consistency of care. Children learn about managing good personal hygiene appropriately through washing their own hands after visiting the toilet and before snack times and using disposable hand towels to dry them. However, children wash their hands in a shared sink of water which does not help to promote good personal hygiene.

Children's health, medical and dietary needs are met efficiently by staff who keep written records of the care required. They provide parents with written details of any accidents, incidents, existing injuries or medication administered and copies of their policies for consistency of care. Staff keep clear and accessible information on children's special dietary requirements to ensure they only receive appropriate food and drink. All staff hold appropriate first aid certificates and first aid kits are available at all times to support them in caring for children appropriately in the event of an accident.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for within a well-maintained church hall which is organised effectively to meet their needs. For example, the hall is divided into different areas of play according to children's interests with dedicated areas for role play, constructional play on the carpet, creative activities and a cosy book corner. In addition, toilets are situated close by for them to use independently.

Children are kept safe and secure by staff who have effective measures in place to protect them. For example, locked external doors, locked storage cupboards, accessible toilet door locks, socket covers, safety film on low level glass and close supervision. Children are kept safe on outings through good systems and staff organisation. For example, staff check areas first, maintain high adult to child ratios and carry a first aid kit, mobile phone and contact numbers. Children learn about safety through good practical activities and staff guidance. For example, practising the fire drill each half term, road safety on walks, using craft tools safely, indoor house rules, such as not running, and through topics, such as outdoor safety.

Children access well-maintained toys easily and independently from what staff set out each session and from a small drawer unit with puzzles, paper and pens. In addition, toy boxes with picture and word labels are kept on the floor for children to choose additional resources from. Younger children attend on separate days to older children. When present, staff ensure they do not have access to anything that is not safe for them to use independently.

Children are protected well by staff who have rigorous systems in place to safeguard their welfare at all times. For example, close supervision, attendance records for children who arrive or depart at different times, records of existing injuries, monitoring all visitors and details of adults authorised to collect children. In addition, the staff are all aware of their roles and responsibilities regarding child protection issues and procedures to support them in keeping children safe.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a good range of play provision and activities to support all areas of their learning and development. For example, constructional activities, hammer and peg boards, puzzles, games, threading and practical life resources. They also enjoy changing role play environments, small world sets and music to promote their imaginative play and explore story, reference and sensory books in the cosy book corner. In addition, they use many different materials to create pictures, collage and models as well as exploring textures.

Younger children's learning and development is planned within the same framework and linked to the same topics as those in receipt of nursery education funding. Staff skilfully link activities to support children in making connections in their learning and through the effective key worker system they set realistic challenges according to children's stage of development. Their learning is focused on emotional well-being, a sense of belonging, physical stability, social and communication skills in preparation for the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Children are developing well. For example, they arrive very happy and excitedly seek out friends, key staff and favourite toys. They talk freely about home life, what they are doing and ask for help when needed. They respond positively to the structured routine and the changes throughout the session, such as starting to put toys away as soon as they hear the 'tidy up time' music. Children enjoy helping when it is their turn and eagerly carry out their tasks with care, such as setting the tables for snack time. At the end of the session they excitedly tell their parents what they have done and show off their work with pride. This all demonstrates children are developing good independence and have a good sense of well-being and belonging within the group. Children communicate well. For example, they speak clearly within small groups and more confident children enjoy speaking out to the whole group. They laugh, frown and freely express what they like, do not like and are all learning to sign during large group activities and discussion.

Children's progress is monitored and assessed appropriately by key workers who keep observations of them playing and achieving. They use these observations to provide them with realistic challenges. However, this system does not ensure each child's next steps are planned accurately to encourage them to develop to their full potential.

#### Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Children enjoy interesting activities and practical experiences which promote their learning and development well in all areas. This is supported well by staff who have a good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and are clear what they intend children to learn from activities. Staff use clear plans as a focus for children's learning. These show what activities and resources, linked to topics, will be used to support children in making connection for each area of learning. For example, within the current 'World Cup Football' topic, children bring in and show related items, they dress up in football kits and make football shirt number lines. They also explore circles and sizes of balls, make 'cheese and banana toasties' from Trinidad, play ball sports and table top football, read story and reference books and decorate the room with posters and flags. Staff ask children lots of questions and provide them with lots of practical activities to keep them interested and to bring their learning to life. Their progress is monitored and assessed well by key workers who keep written observations for all children as they achieve in each area of learning. This allows staff to easily see each child's current stage of development and to skilfully support and extend activities according to their stage of development.

Children arrive happy, excited and motivated to learn. They quickly settle into play and focus well on their chosen activities. They are developing good personal independence through activities designed to promote self-care skills. For example, children choose resources for themselves, take turns as helper to prepare snack time, visit the toilet alone and pour their own drinks. These activities are extended for older children in preparation for school, such as learning to change for P.E during the 'starting school week'. Children speak with confidence answering questions, problem solving, sharing news and suggesting ideas. They also learn new words through topics. Children make good use of books which they use independently to read

stories in the book corner as well as to access information. They sit and listen well at group story times and re-call elements, with enthusiasm, from memory as well as using pictures to predict the next stages of the story. Children write and mark make for different purposes, such as drawing on the craft table, in different role play environments, naming their work and in their 'sounds I know' booklets. Younger children are developing early hand writing skills through using different one handed tools. Older children can write some letters correctly, which they practise in work books if they wish.

Children are developing a good understanding of numbers. They count to ten in group activities, count spontaneously in their play and are learning to recognise numerals correctly. Older children are also learning to sequence numbers correctly, such as through making football shirt number lines. Children are developing a good understanding of shape, size and quantity through use of many different activities and games. They then use this knowledge to complete puzzles, jigsaws and to sort and group objects. Children explore growth and change through planting and tending flowers and beans in the garden. They explore why things happen and how things work through practical experiments, such as melting ice, making vinegar volcanoes and using magnets. They use practical life resources to solve problems, such as unlocking with a key. Children are developing a good understanding of time and place. For example, they learn the days of the week, months and seasons. They also talk about home life, re-call group events at circle time and discuss future events, such as the Father's day performance. Children explore their own local environment throughout the changing seasons and set the weather chart each day. They explore the town and it's facilities, such as the football club, churches, leisure facilities, parks and gardens, roads and geographical features. They also meet members of the local community to find out what they do. Children then explore further to find out more about the countries and cultures around the world, studying food, dress, games, animals, traditions and festivals.

Children move with control and co-ordination using physical play activities and moving around the hall. They use different one-handed tools to promote early hand writing skills. They also learn practical life skills through handling different everyday resources, such as pouring from jugs, opening screw top jars, fitting and turning keys and scooping with spoons. Children enjoy music with 'nursery rhyme sacks' in which they participate with props, they sing songs and action rhymes and explore the sounds and rhythms of different musical instruments. Children use their imaginations well within different role play environments, in music and with adult led craft activities. However, children do not independently access art and craft tools or resources to spontaneously create or extend their own learning.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for equally and fairly in all areas of the provision. Staff have effective systems in place to ensure children's individual needs are met well. For example, tick lists to show all children have been included in special or adult led activities, records and good communication with parents. In addition, staff provide

close interaction and support and key workers monitor each child's well-being and progress and ensure realistic challenges are given. The designated equal opportunities co-ordinator (ENCO) carries out inclusion assessments to ensure good standards are maintained. The playgroup has a special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) in place. She liaises closely with parents, staff, external health care professionals and the Local Authority to ensure consistency of care and teaching. All children are fully included and their individual needs are met with care and consideration. Children learn about diversity well through exploring their own environment as well as beliefs and cultures of others from around the world. They also play with good quality resources which reflect positive images of diversity.

Children behave very well and are developing a good understanding of what is right and wrong. For example, they know not to run indoors, they sit and listen well to others who are talking and are learning to share and take turns well. Staff manage any small issues appropriately and consistently according to the policy. They create a very positive environment where children feel a good sense of belonging. For example, they offer a warm welcome on arrival, a staff and child photo register board, a structured daily routine, child helper rotas, lots of continuous encouragement and praise and warm interaction. In addition, staff act as good role models, remaining cheerful, patient, calm and consistent throughout the sessions. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are cared for consistently and according to parent's wishes in all areas of the provision. To support this parents receive an information leaflet detailing staff and their roles, setting information, daily routines and the Foundation Stage curriculum. They are also shown the information file with staff certificates, previous inspection reports, SENCO contact details and useful information on funding, child care and schools. Parents also see the policies and procedures for the playgroup which are displayed at all times. The complaints procedure, however, has not been updated to include the new required procedures in the event of a parents wishing to raise a concern. Parents also complete child record forms, they sign consent forms regarding care required and compete entry forms showing what their child can do. They are kept well-informed by staff through good daily communication on arrival and collection when they talk and exchange information with key workers. They also have notices displayed on the entrance board, information folders and meet with staff twice a year to discuss their child's progress and to look at records.

Partnership with parents is good.

Parents are encouraged to get involved in their child's learning. To support this they are informed of all forthcoming topics through newsletters and are encouraged to help within the playgroup and on trips. They are also encouraged to support their child in contributing to show and tell and the interest table.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by an established team of staff, who all hold, or are just completing an appropriate child care qualification. They attend regular training

opportunities and workshops to update their knowledge and skills to support them in meeting children's needs well. There are effective systems in place to ensure staff are, and continue to be, suitable and prepared to carry out their roles effectively. For example, an appropriate vetting procedure, an induction checklist and training and support to ensure staff can carry out their individual roles and responsibilities, such as the ENCO and SENCO roles. However, there is currently no formal appraisal system in place to monitor staff future development, such as training staff in the Birth to three matters framework.

Children are cared for within well-organised premises. Staff are well-deployed and work efficiently as a team in providing children with well-organised sessions. For example, they prepare the environment to ensure all areas are safe, warm and welcoming, they prepare activities for children to use on arrival, they work independently in carrying out chores and supervise children well. This all ensures children remain active, supported and motivated throughout the sessions.

There are effective systems in place to monitor the quality of care. For example, risk assessments, staff meetings, equal opportunity evaluations, assessments of progress, an effective key worker system, records of fire drills and action plans. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Staff keep all records relating to children up to date to ensure they continue to meet their needs, according to parents wishes. These are stored securely to maintain confidentiality. All documentation is well-organised to ensure information is easily accessible.

Leadership and management is good.

The playgroup has good systems in place to monitor the quality of nursery education and its strengths and weaknesses. For example, staff meetings are held each week and minutes kept for reference, staff complete activity evaluations each week and complete Sure Start self-evaluation as an on-going working document. In addition, staff keep written action plans for all recommendations and key issues from previous inspections and meetings with the Local Authority to improve their practice. The playgroup shows a commitment to improvement. For example, they have close links with the Local Authority, external agencies for children with additional needs and view all recommendations positively. They have good liaison with the local school which most children attend. For example, children visit the reception class, meet the teachers, join in school events and staff reflect consistent teaching methods, such as the Jolly Phonics letter scheme. In addition, children starting school have a 'starting school week' during the summer term with practical activities to support them. This all provides children with a smooth and consistent transition into school.

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

At the last care inspection the playgroup agreed to include, in the child protection policy, the procedures to be followed in the event of allegations being made against a member of staff. It also agreed to make sure that there are resources available each session to reflect positive images of ethnicity.



The playgroup has updated the child protection policy which now includes the procedures to be followed in the event of allegations being made against a member of staff. The playgroup has extended its multi-cultural resources and now provides children with good quality play provision which reflects positive images of diversity.

At the last nursery education inspection, the playgroup agreed to develop the system for assessing children's progress, so that it clearly helps staff in setting sufficient challenges to support all children's needs in future planned activities, including those who learn at differing rates. It agreed to extend the opportunities for children to develop their understanding and use of numbers, such as solving simple mathematical concepts, and in linking sounds with letters within everyday practical situations.

The playgroup has developed the system for assessing children's progress. As a result, staff offer realistic challenges through skilfully supporting and extending activities according to each child's stage of development. Through planned and spontaneous activities, children are developing a good understanding of numbers and mathematical concepts. The playgroup have introduced the Jolly Phonics scheme as well as other activities to develop children's understanding of linking sounds to letters.

### **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.

## **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):

- improve children's hand washing routines to further promote good standards of personal hygiene

- develop systems of assessing younger children's progress to ensure each child's next steps are planned accurately to encourage them to develop to their full potential

### **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):

- provide children with more easily accessible resources to encourage them to spontaneously extend their own creative development

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