



Bramingham Park Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY291389
Inspection date	17 May 2005
Inspector	Paula Durrant
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Registered person	Kidsunlimited Limited
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Bramingham Park Nursery is one of 45 nurseries run by Kids Unlimited. It originally opened in 1996 and changed ownership in 2004. The nursery operates from seven rooms in a purpose-built, two storey building. It is situated on the parameters of a residential area on the outskirts of the town of Luton. A maximum of 134 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each week day from 07:30 to 18:30 for 52 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 103 children from 0 to under 8 years on roll. Of these 49 receive funding for nursery education. Children in attendance come from a wide area; this includes other towns and villages in Bedfordshire. The nursery currently supports children with special educational needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 27 staff, of these 18 hold appropriate early years qualifications. Four staff are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well planned daily routines and planning programmes. They are suitably encouraged to develop their independence when washing hands and wiping their noses. Younger children are confident and know when to wash their hands, such as following a painting activity. However, poor positioning of hand towels in the older toddler room restricts children in fully completing their task without adult intervention as the location of the hand towel unit is too high. Older children were observed participating in a bathing dolls activity demonstrating care and consideration, such as not getting the soapy suds in the dolls eyes and using clean dry towels to wipe their faces. Excellent procedures such as staff consistently wearing disposable gloves and aprons for nappy changing sustains high levels of hygiene and supports the prevention of cross infection. Children are encouraged in their independence when accessing toilet facilities, however older children's privacy is compromised as some cubicle doors are broken. Children's welfare is protected by the use of accident and medication records which comply with required standards.

Children benefit from a healthy diet. The nursery has an exceptional food programme that is carefully monitored by qualified nutritionists. Children's individual dietary needs are appropriately accommodated and consideration is in place to enhance the food provision further with the introduction of organic fruit and vegetables. Older children and babies have regular access to water throughout the day, but children aged 12 to 24 months are not sufficiently offered drinks at regular intervals other than at set snack and meal times.

Older children exercise regularly which supports their physical well being. Most children have daily access to the secure outside segregated gardens, however babies do not always have daily fresh air due to organisational restrictions. Consideration is being given to develop physical provision for younger children. An action plan is in place to extend current practice for the younger age groups. For example, baby yoga, which some staff have recently had training in. Toddlers practice physical skills as they access a variety of age appropriate climbing equipment within their base room.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children are able to play in a spacious environment that is clean and generally well maintained. This means that they can move freely within their base room and access age appropriate resources. The nursery has good security systems but they are not always effectively used. For example, staff do not always know who has accessed the premises. Parents do not always abide to the appropriate nursery procedures and strangers are sometimes not challenged or escorted by staff when on site. Children's risk of accidental injury is compromised through poor staff deployment. Staff do not always recognise when children require assistance or close supervision. This results in younger children using the internal climbing frame unsupervised. The nursery has vigorous and comprehensive procedural systems to promote good health and safety practice within the nursery. Effective risk assessments are undertaken regularly and all new staff receive a full induction inclusive of Health and Safety procedures. However, poor organisation within the setting impedes on children's total well being. For example, staff are not used flexibly to benefit the overall care of the children who attend.

Most children have access to a sufficient range of safe, good quality and developmentally appropriate resources which are well organised in child height furniture to encourage independent access. However, poor organisation and preparation of activities for younger children when sessions come to an end leaves children waiting for an inappropriate length of time. For example, younger children sit without any toys, amusement or staff engagement for unacceptable lengths of time having finished their meal, waiting for their nappy to be changed.

Children are not sufficiently protected because procedures to promptly inform the regulatory authority of new staff are not adhered to. Failure to notify the designated authorities and act promptly on information gained potentially puts children's safety and welfare at risk. Staff have attended basic training in Child Protection and there are appropriate policies in place. However, the designated person does not put the procedures into practice.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is inadequate.

There are major differences between the quality of experiences offered to children under one and those provided for other children. Practitioners have good relationships with babies. They respond well to their individual needs ensuring that operational procedures do not interfere with good childcare practice. For example, staff share the role of recording daily feeds, with one person taking lead responsibility whilst the other remains engaged with the children. Babies are happy and content. They are highly vocal due to the positive levels of communication and skilled interaction by suitably trained and experienced staff. Children aged over one, do not receive the same level of care. Although ratios are adhered to and in some cases exceeded, staff do not demonstrate an adequate understanding of meeting children's individual needs. Children are left to fend for themselves and are not satisfactorily

supported in their play. For example, children aged 15-24 months cannot freely access craft activities and have to wait their turn. The spontaneity of children making independent choices in their play is lost by the rigidity of the environment and staff's management of the activity. Children aged 2- 5 years potentially gain a varied range of practical activities in order to enhance their all round development, however staff fail to respond to the needs of the children because they do not move with the flow of play or children. This means that children's self esteem is not effectively nurtured. They gain limited direction or communication and recognition of achievements is lost. This results in children seeking out unfamiliar adults in order that their requests are heard. For example, a group of children expressed an interest in having a story read to them. Once the story was completed they took turns in finding further books to be read. Staff were aware of the activity but showed no interest in taking over the lead or in re-directing and engaging the children in further activities.

Activity plans for all ages are well written and are in line with appropriate guidance, which includes Birth to Three Matters and the Foundation Stage. However, the effectiveness of children's learning is limited because inexperienced and unconfident staff fail to grasp the essence of teaching children through play. They have no ownership of their planning and interpretation is very much dependent on the training and experience of individual staff members. Rigidity of covering set planned activities means that the incidental everyday learning is missed. For example, staff use closed questions when talking with the older children. This means that older children are restricted in their language development. Limited opportunities for children to experiment and express their thoughts freely hinders new words and the extension of vocabulary. For example, staff questioned a child as to the shape of a ruler, but laughed at the response and failed to extend or discuss further. The child remained confused by the response as it did not reaffirm whether or not their answer had been correct.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is inadequate.

All children, including those from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and children with special needs are warmly welcomed in the nursery. Practitioners ensure that resources positively represent the children who attend and there are designated personnel to support and share parental guidance with staff in order to accommodate specific individual needs. For example, the nursery have worked in partnership with carers and external professionals in order to ensure a safe and stimulating environment for children who have visual difficulties. The curriculum effectively supports the introduction of children developing a sense of belonging and learning about the wider world. Shared topics ensure that all children are introduced to different cultures and beliefs. Older children are encouraged to develop an awareness and sensitivity towards living things as they observe the life cycle of a butterfly; care for the goldfish and participate in an extra curricular gardening club, where they plant seeds and nurture living plants. Children's behaviour is highly variable throughout the nursery dependent on the time of day and the activities on offer. Younger children are firmly nurtured and are developing the concepts of sharing. Although there are clear guidance procedures to be followed and there is a

designated person responsible for supporting and monitoring behaviour management this is ineffective. Staff raise their voices to be heard above the unacceptable noise levels which erupt. Poor behaviour impacts negatively on children's opportunities to learn and achieve. Children are confused by the inconsistent messages given. For example, when toddlers entered the garden poor teamwork and communication led to children becoming distressed and upset as they did not understand why they were made to return. Children were left to run around the room hitting one another unnoticed, whilst others clung to the legs of staff as they cried in bewilderment. Older children take advantage of the free flow system between rooms running back and forth as the session gains momentum. Again children are given no direction by staff, therefore they continue. Children are quickly disinterested because staff do not effectively engage them in purposeful play opportunities. Children do not understand the codes of conduct and although older children receive a labelled badge for achievements gained during the session, no verbal praise is given by staff and children do not understand why they gain a sticker. It therefore has no meaning or purpose.

Overall, children benefit from a positive partnership with parents. Although there have been significant changes to the nursery parents and carers have remained fully informed. Communication channels are an attribute to this provision. Good methods to share and relate information ensures an effective two way relationship between home and nursery. This means that children's individual needs are known and accommodated within nursery life. For example, babies who do not settle to sleep in cots are comforted and nurtured sensitively to sleep.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Practitioners are guided by strong company policies and planning mechanisms, but poor implementation of these systems effects the quality of care provided. Although curriculum planning is appropriate across all age groups; limited choice of play materials for the under three's; rigidity of the daily routine; poor staff interaction and inappropriate implementation of the behaviour management policy effects the quality of care offered to the children. All staff receive thorough induction training, inclusive of health & safety, but most staff are not vigilant in their practice. Staff deployment is ineffective and this compromises children's total wellbeing. Overall, the nursery does not meet the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

The nursery have made some progress since their last inspection. Staff now ensure that registers are maintained appropriately, reflecting clearly the children in attendance. This potentially supports the welfare and safety of children and promotes evidence of compliance to ratios in line with the National Standards. Senior management continue to develop and extend their staff's skills through access to regular training opportunities and through a mentoring scheme, however staff interaction with children is highly variable throughout the setting. Some less confident staff rely heavily on procedural practice and this over takes the care of the children.

Some improvement has been made in the selection and development of resources for the youngest age group. New resources are in place, although these still remain insufficient in number and diversity. The area for the youngest age group has much improved. Soft furnishings and relocation of current furniture has given the room a more homely feel. Children are settled and gain an increase in play opportunities.

Complaints since the last inspection

A concern was raised in relation to Standard 13: Child Protection. Ofsted passed the concerns to the Police and Social Services to investigate on 8th February 2005. The Police and Social services decided to take no further action. Ofsted requested that the nursery complete an internal investigation. Ofsted is satisfied that the registered person has taken appropriate steps to address the concern. The provider remains qualified for registration.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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

- demonstrate how managers will support and monitor staff to ensure that children's individual needs are effectively met at all times of the day.
- ensure staff support children in gaining a variety of first hand experiences which enable them to make choices as they develop their knowledge skills and understanding.
- inform Ofsted of any changes, or significant events within 14 days.
- ensure when managing incidents, comprehensive records are suitably maintained in adherence with local Area Child Protection Procedures.
- demonstrate how equipment and toys will be provided to help create an accessible and stimulating environment for children.
- demonstrate how you will ensure that strangers are unable to access the premises.
- ensure that practices enable children to rest safely without disturbance.

- ensure that children are kept safe and staff are able to recognise, react and prevent risks to children.
- ensure that children's individual needs take priority over daily the routine.

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

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