



Buttercups Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY226083
Inspection date	21 March 2007
Inspector	Susan Mann
Setting Address	Gull Coppice, Whiteley, Fareham, Hampshire, PO15 7LA
Telephone number	01489 881802
E-mail	
Registered person	Buttercups Nursery School
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 outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Buttercups Pre-School Nursery has been registered since 1998 and has been in its current premises since 2002. It is a privately owned, family run group that is situated in a community centre in Whiteley, Fareham. The nursery serves children from the local and surrounding areas and has systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those that have English as an additional language.

The nursery is registered to provide care for 24 children aged from two years to under five years, although it is the policy of the group not to admit children before they reach the age of two years and nine months. There are currently 42 children on roll, of these, 38 receive funding for nursery education.

The nursery provides full care and is open Monday to Friday from 08:00-18:00 for 50 weeks of the year. Children can attend on a full or part-time basis.

There are six staff that work with the children, five of whom work full time. Of these, four hold a relevant early years qualification. The nursery receives support from advisory teachers and a Pre-School Learning Alliance development worker.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the nursery. They enjoy a wide range of routines and practices that enable them to stay healthy. They are protected from infection because hygiene procedures are strictly followed. Children know to wash their hands when they are dirty, or when they have been to the toilet. Foods are safely stored and prepared. Children are well cared for should they become unwell or have an accident whilst at the nursery. This is because staff are suitably trained in first aid, and they have clear procedures in place to ensure children are well cared for. Staff are especially concerned with children's well-being, and are very attentive to their needs.

Children enjoy a wide range of healthy foods and drink either milk or water. They choose their sandwich fillings from a pictorial menu each morning in readiness for lunch time, and they benefit from hot meals for tea which are carefully planned to provide variety and nutrition. Children enjoy their snack and mealtimes, engaging in a great deal of conversation and laughter as they eat together. They develop their independence at these times, choosing their own snacks and pouring water from the water cooler. Children are learning about how to promote their own health. They clean their teeth after lunch, and staff talk about why this is important to do. They also learn about healthy foods and this is reinforced by colourful and informative displays around the room.

Children thrive at the nursery because they have everyday opportunities to play outdoors in the fresh air. They are able to play outdoors as well as inside, and are accomplished at putting on their wellington boots and coats when they go out to play. They climb and run around, and they explore plants and the natural environment. They talk about the weather and the seasons. They also draw, dress up and play with a wide variety of toys and resources. For example, children enjoy acting out the story of 'Jack and the Bean Stalk'. They pretend the climbing frame is the giant's castle and the slide is the beanstalk. Children gain great benefit from learning in the outdoor environment because it encourages them to improve their physical well-being.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safe in the warm and welcoming nursery. The stimulating and bright environment is decorated with attractive and informative displays of children's work. These enhance children's learning and help develop their understanding. For example, children have been learning about

the life cycle of tadpoles and frogs. Pictures and small models of tadpoles and frogs, alongside a tank of real tadpoles, gives them greater understanding of how tadpoles change. These images produce colourful and appealing surroundings where children know that their work is valued. Children can play with a wide range of toys and resources that are organised at low level so that they can access them easily. This helps them to develop their independence because they can choose and tidy away with ease. Furniture is comfortable and appropriate for the children to use. They are able to rest on roll out beds if tired. Staff are attentive to children's physical needs and help children to realise when they need to relax. However, at present there is no cushioned or soft area where children can sit and take a break from playing.

Children's safety is carefully considered and assured by the staff. Thorough risk assessments are made to ensure that children are not put in danger. Doors are kept locked to ensure that children do not leave the premises unaccompanied. Children regularly enjoy outings where they learn about how to stay safe. They demonstrate a clear understanding of following rules that ensure their safety, such as listening to instructions and keeping near one another. Children know how to evacuate the building calmly in the event of an emergency because they practise this procedure regularly.

Children are protected from harm and neglect because staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children's welfare. Staff have undertaken training to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of possible abuse. The nursery has appropriate recording and reporting procedures in place.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children relish their time in this vibrant nursery. They demonstrate an exceptionally high level of confidence in their knowledge and abilities. This allows them to try new activities and they are eager to accept the different challenges offered to them. Children are extremely confident in their speech, and demonstrate accomplished language skills as they talk about what they are doing. For example, a child is very self assured as she talks about the tadpoles, explaining that some have died, but many are still swimming around. Children are engrossed in their play because they are able to do things they find interesting. Activities and resources are exciting and well presented, and children delight in participating. For example, children learn about information and technology in ways that are meaningful to them. They take photos of a model they have built, concentrating whilst using the digital camera. They then move to the computer to download the photos and are thrilled to print them off. They then proudly display them on the wall.

Younger children benefit a great deal from working alongside the older children. They delight in a wealth of activities that are carefully planned and tailored to their stage of learning, including story times and painting activities. They spend much of the day interacting with the older children, who provide valuable role models for them. This helps them to become independent and confident, especially because children are very kind and helpful to one another which helps the younger children to learn from them. For example, an older child helps a younger child to use the remote controlled car. He shows him to put the key in the top, and how to operate the controls.

Nursery Education

Teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are making extremely good progress towards the early learning goals. Children are highly motivated to learn and show exceptional levels of understanding and knowledge. Staff are highly effective in gauging what ignites the interest of the children so that they can actively contribute to their own learning experiences. The curriculum is exceptionally varied to provide a wealth of learning opportunities for all children both inside and outdoors. Children's learning is monitored through meticulous observation and assessments which chart their progress through the stepping stones. This process is significantly enhanced because parents are able to contribute, providing valuable observations of what children can do at home. These records are then used to plan the curriculum to ensure that it supports the individual requirements of each child. This is a highly effective method that allows children to make rapid progress whilst having fun in a happy environment.

Children flourish at the nursery because staff have an excellent knowledge of child development and how children learn. Staff are enthusiastic and animated as they speak to the children and this attitude is infectious, so that children are also keen and full of life in their approach to learning. Staff are patient and listen carefully to what children say, encouraging children to express their own thoughts and feelings. Children learn through a variety of methods that inspire them to think and discover. Staff provide clear directions and explanations that children are able to understand easily. They enjoy spontaneous play as well as focussed activities, outings and visitors, all of which provide purposeful and enjoyable learning opportunities throughout the day.

Children demonstrate an excellent understanding of language and literacy. They listen intently to stories and express their thoughts and opinions clearly. Many show confidence in their phonic knowledge, routinely linking sounds and letters. Children make marks and many are able to form recognisable letters when writing. Children develop exceptional mathematical skills through enjoying a range of fun activities which help them to understand counting and calculating. For example, children enjoy using jelly beans to practise counting and calculating. They demonstrate superb control of pencils and one-handed tools. All children are accomplished at spreading butter on their crackers at snack time, and obviously enjoy preparing their own snack in this way.

Children enjoy a wealth of innovative opportunities to play and develop. They are curious and interested. They enjoy dressing up outdoors to engage in imaginative play. Even in the cold weather, a child happily dances around the garden wearing a pair of fairy wings over her coat. They have daily opportunities to express themselves creatively through art and craft media and materials. Children develop an understanding of other cultures through being encouraged to think about things that are relevant to their own experiences, and so are more easily understood. For example, children consider which countries fruits and vegetables come from, how they grow, and how they are transported by people that buy them. They link this into a favourite story, 'Handa's Surprise'. Their learning is then extended by an outing to the local supermarket where they buy fruits and vegetables to bring back to nursery to taste. Children's learning is greatly enhanced because they are continually challenged to extend their abilities, whilst being given excellent support by the exemplary staff who know their capabilities so well.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are happy and eager when they arrive at the nursery. They are familiar with routines such as self registration and hanging up their coats and quickly settle to playing. Children demonstrate a very strong sense of belonging. They are considerate to one another, and willingly participate in helping with tasks such as tidying up and preparing for snack time. Children work harmoniously with one another, and enjoy each other's company. They enjoy a good humoured rapport with one another and with the staff which helps create the cheerful atmosphere that exists in the nursery. Children learn about our diverse society through using a range of resources that reflect a wide range of cultures and beliefs. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is being fostered.

Children display very good behaviour. They understand the rules of the setting because staff are clear in their explanations and these are consistently applied. Unacceptable behaviour is explained to children through visual and verbal means. Children are in the process of developing a talking album that contains photos and recorded messages of how to behave when at nursery. This involvement in developing rules and explanations helps children to gain a greater understanding. Children are given frequent praise and encouragement which helps them to manage their own behaviour successfully.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are given very good support. Staff have effective systems in place which ensure that the nursery is an inclusive environment where all children are able to progress. Staff communicate thoroughly with parents in partnership to meet children's needs. They also liaise with additional agencies for advice and support when required. Children who have English as an additional language are also given good support to help them to settle effectively and benefit from the curriculum.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. Children flourish because parents are actively involved to play a key role in their child's care and education. When a child starts at the nursery, parents are given a wealth of detailed information about the settling in process which is both useful and reassuring. Staff are acutely aware how daunting it can be for some children and their parents when they start at nursery. They provide a sensitive and professional approach to ensure that it is a successful and gentle process. Parents receive a wealth of information about what their child is learning through daily discussion and newsletters. These opportunities to communicate are significantly enhanced by detailed and informative daily diaries which provide a valuable two-way link between home and nursery.

Parents are warmly welcomed into the setting. They are greatly appreciative of regular opportunities to become involved in activities and events. They also visit the nursery in planned 'Happy hours' where they can come and play alongside their children, which gives them a greater understanding of how their children settle and what they do whilst at nursery. Parents attend regular meetings with key workers to discuss their child's well-being and progress. Children's achievements are shared between home and nursery which provides a coherent approach to planning their individual next steps of learning. Parents are invited to provide written observations on children's experiences at home, which help create a comprehensive picture of their knowledge and development.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

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

Children are well cared for because the policies and procedures of the nursery are robust. They cover all aspects of managing children's health, safety and well-being. All staff demonstrate a good working knowledge of policies, and parents are given copies for their information. This means that children receive a consistent approach to their care when at the nursery. Procedures covering staff recruitment and induction are comprehensive to ensure that adults working with children are suitable to do so.

Leadership and management are outstanding. Children's experiences at the nursery are significantly enhanced by exceptional organisation. Children benefit greatly from the forward thinking management of the nursery that provides childcare and education of a consistently high standard. Managers are dedicated to their role. They provide a clear vision of the aims and objectives of the provision that are wholly child focussed. The provision of nursery education is monitored meticulously to ensure that children are receiving high quality support and making excellent progress.

Frequent staff meetings allow time for discussion and forward planning. Members of staff are given a high level of support to develop their professional expertise through monthly supervision meetings and appraisals every six months. Training is carefully planned and given a high priority to ensure that children receive skilled support. Organisation of staff deployment, required documentation and record keeping systems are exemplary. This means that children's needs are always a priority, and they are fully supported in achieving their full potential.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection three years ago, the nursery was asked to develop systems to ensure that there is a member of staff with a current first aid certificate on the premises at all times. All staff have undertaken training in first aid, and so are able to give appropriate care to a child who becomes unwell or who has an accident. The nursery has developed its documentation to include details of Ofsted in its complaints procedure. Parents now provide written consent for their child to receive emergency treatment in order to facilitate rapid provision of care if necessary.

In the provision of education, evaluation systems are now extremely robust to ensure that children make excellent progress towards the early learning goals. Children's assessment records are detailed and are used to develop future planning in order to incorporate individual needs. Plans are thoroughly evaluated to monitor their success and effectiveness.

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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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 outstanding.

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 a comfortable area where children can relax and play quietly when they wish.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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