



Busy Bees Montessori Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY240142
Inspection date	02 March 2007
Inspector	Susan Tuffnell
Setting Address	77 Park Road, Rushden, Northamptonshire, NN10 0LH
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Registered person	Magic Nurseries Ltd
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 outstanding. 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?

Busy Bees Montessori Nursery was registered in 1991. It is located near the centre of Rushden and has its own car park and outdoor play area. The accommodation consists of two separate buildings. The pre-school is in a purpose built unit that consists of two main teaching rooms. The nursery comprises of three rooms and operates on the ground floor of the original building. The after-school club is on the first floor. A maximum of 96 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 all year round. There are currently 80 children on roll. There are 35 children who receive funds for early education. The nursery currently supports children with special needs and also support children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs 13 members of staff. All hold appropriate childcare qualifications. The manager is supernumerary. Teaching includes some aspects of the Montessori philosophy. The nursery is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through extremely well-planned daily routines which focus on independence skills and keeping children healthy. Significant teaching in self-care gives children confidence in toileting. Older children have a secure awareness of how and why we wash our hands and when it is important to do so. For example, before meals and snacks and after messy activities. Younger children develop their understanding through watching others and through the positive role modelling of the adults. Staff are extremely effective at supporting children in this area and are sensitive to the children's privacy. For example, staff pull the curtain across the cubicle. The children are protected from infection through effective hygiene routines which are practised by the nursery. For example, the high level of attention by staff when providing personal care to babies and younger children. Highly effective policies and procedures fully protect children's health and ensure consistent attention to children's wellbeing. For example, the sick child policy, good recording of medication and accidents and risk assessments all contribute to a healthy child. Staff are well informed about children's health issues and substantial records and documents are in place. All staff have first aid training and are deployed around the nursery to administer first aid to the children as soon as possible to prevent them becoming distressed. Attention to hygiene in all areas of the nursery is exemplary.

Children are provided with a versatile and imaginative menu based on healthy eating. Freshly prepared and cooked food and snacks give children a wholesome, nutritious and balanced diet. Children really enjoy their meals and staff make this a sociable and relaxed time. Children are encouraged and supported by staff as they help themselves from the serving dishes and learn to use cutlery correctly. Cooked meals are provided according to the dietary requirements of the children. Children with food preferences and allergies are looked after very well. Wherever possible specially prepared food is matched with the main menu so that all the children feel included and valued. For example, vegetarian sausages are used when the main menu is meat sausages and vegetarian mince is used alongside meat dishes. Children enjoy food and snacks from many different countries and are encouraged to learn about healthy eating. Children have a choice of milk or water at meal times and fresh water is always available.

Children get plenty of robust physical exercise. They have outstanding opportunities to develop physical skills in the attractive and well equipped outdoor play area. Children confidently use a variety of large and small equipment. They show excellent skills as they peddle three wheeled bikes and are motivated by staff to try different things such as learning to throw a Frisbee. Children are stimulated by some unusual and vibrant equipment. They run with the colourful streamers so they catch the wind and attempt to spin foam tubes to make them hum. Children also have excellent opportunities to use their bodies in different ways as they dance and move to music. Small motor skills are fostered well with a comprehensive range of natural materials to explore and investigate. For example, treasure boxes contain wood, plastic and sea sponges. Babies and toddlers have access to bright and attractive play materials which are tactile and stimulate their exploratory impulses.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children's safety is of the highest priority within the organisation of the nursery. Staff are vigilant when recognising hazards and take positive steps to minimise these. Systematic risk assessments with excellent recording are carried out and all staff share in the responsibility for keeping children safe. Accident records are used to identify areas of risk and steps taken to reduce these. Each area of the setting is well-planned, with space for children to move freely and safely around activities and play areas. Impressive and well implemented safety and security precautions are in place to promote and safeguard the children's welfare. For example, security at the entrance and outside play area. Staff help children gain an awareness of keeping themselves safe in the nursery as they explain and practise simple procedures such as emergency evacuation. Comprehensive safety measures are in place to protect the children from harm. Children use an extensive range of safe, good quality and developmentally appropriate toys, furniture and equipment. These are well-planned and organised throughout the setting with lots of child height storage units to encourage children to become independent and gain safe access to their resources. Low level storage units have clear labelling and pictures to help children to put items away correctly. Equipment and activities are attractively presented to help children learn to respect and look after their resources. In the rooms with less mobile babies all equipment is bright and cheerful, easily accessible and promotes mobility. A good level of supervision is maintained by staff to support and guide the children during their play. The overall environment throughout the nursery is stimulating, bright, cheerful and child orientated. Colourful and attractive posters are situated appropriately where children can see them and children's creative work is well displayed to give them a sense of achievement and pride in their own work. The superb outside play area is well-planned with safety in mind.

Children are very well protected. Their welfare is safeguarded and promoted through current policies and procedures. Staff are secure in their knowledge about child protection and comprehensive procedures are in place and implemented effectively. Concerns are dealt with in a sensitive and confidential manner. There is a procedure in place to clearly show the steps to take in the event of any allegations made against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are happy, contented and secure throughout the nursery. They confidently access the stimulating and challenging range of activities and are forming secure relationships with staff and other children. Staff have an excellent understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and this has a positive effect on the younger children's enjoyment and achievements. Staff have gained a secure knowledge about what children can learn. Planning for 'Birth to three matters' clearly reflects all areas and children's progress is well documented and shared with parents. Children exhibit wonder and fascination at activities and are eager to participate. For example, children explore bottles filled with water and food dye. They watch with great interest as the water changes colour and use the liquid to 'paint' the walls outside. Staff are skilled at extending this activity as more children become interested. Babies and young children receive lots of cuddles and have strong relationships with key staff which increases their sense

of well-being and contentment. Younger children exhibit great delight when joining in with activities, they use natural items such as brushes, sea sponges and wooden pegs which give them superb opportunities to explore, investigate and discover a range of materials. Children's mobility is extended through the first hand support offered by staff as they move freely and easily around the room. Children of all ages and abilities use a range of creative materials such as painting and collage to create individual pieces of work. Through the meaningful praise and encouragement of staff children are developing a sense of well-being and self-esteem. They exhibit high levels of confidence and this has been achieved by the consistent support and direction of staff. For example, young children are engrossed in the shaving foam and water activity. They make patterns in the mixture and tracks with toy cars. They copy staff as shapes are made in the foam and named by the children. Children extend this activity into other areas by rubbing foam on plastic bottles and adding sand to the foam.

Nursery Education

The learning environment for communication, language and literacy is outstanding. Extensive labelling and the excellent use of visual symbols enables children to identify objects by picture and word and helps children link letters to sounds. Children recognise that print carries meaning. They practise writing and mark making in play as they use pencils and paper in the Chinese restaurant. Language skills are fully extended by adults as they engage children in conversation, ask open ended questions and encourage listening skills. The book corner contains a quality range of literature. For example, information books give children a wealth of knowledge and some are linked to topics and festivals. Children are eager to take part in activities and join in with others. They show great confidence as they make up new verses for a popular song at group time. Staff are skilled at extending the range of activities which support the children's learning and enable them to make progress. Children have a wonderful sense of belonging as they form secure friendship groups and seek out friends to play with. Children share and play cooperatively together. They are polite and considerate. For example, children take turns on the climbing frame and the balance beam. Children participate in many planned activities that encourage matching, sorting, size, shape and simple problem solving skills. For example, they count the number of boys and girls at group time and have excellent opportunities to count as they join in with songs. They count confidently numbers one up to 10 and back down again. Numbers are reinforced in lots of play situations. Children have a growing concept of volume as they pour rice into different size bowls. Children discover the world around them by investigating natural objects. They handle shells, conkers, corks, feathers, leaves and wood and use them creatively in collage pictures. Children's imagination is stimulated as they investigate everyday objects such as keys, chains, rubber tubes and cardboard boxes. They show a keen interest in nature. Children learn about wild birds as they fill the bird feeders and water container. Pictures of native birds are displayed on the fences in the play area so children can identify the visitors. Children's faces show wonder, awe and delight as they catch the breeze with colourful streamers and watch the wind chimes. Children move with confidence around the play areas negotiating obstacles and manage equipment with ease. Their physical development is enhanced by the range of varied outdoor equipment available to develop their climbing and balancing skills. Children are very keen to try new skills and show interest in Frisbee throwing and ball games. They gain a sensitive understanding of different cultures and beliefs through the range

of topics, resources and discussions that take place. For example, children work together to make a Chinese dragon for their display and practise using chop sticks in the Chinese restaurant.

Children's progress and achievements are clearly linked to the stepping stones. Staff find out about children's interests, skills and needs and build on this information to help children achieve as much as they can. Considerable information is collected from parents when children start at the nursery, in the form of a booklet 'all about me'. This describes all aspects of the children's care and learning from the parents point of view and gives staff a very good platform from which to plan. Very detailed assessment is used to identify children's entry profile and starting point before moving them forward. The assessments give clear and concise evidence of the children's progress and achievements and are used to inform future planning. Each child has an attractive and detailed folder containing varied examples of their work and staff comments linked to the stepping stones. Records give a thorough picture of progress and as each stepping stone is reached it is highlighted and dated. Assessment records are given to parents when children leave the setting.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff enrich the experiences for all children with well-planned activities and resources. They have a very good awareness of children's starting points and use this to plan the next steps in their development. Staff are excellent communicators with the children, they know the children well and give attention to each child. Staff's enthusiasm and high motivation encourages children to join in and take part. Consistent staff impacts on children's confidence and security within their base room. Staff know when to step back and let the children take over an activity, creating a realistic balance between adult-led and child-initiated play. Staff are successful at motivating children to capture their interest and arouse their curiosity. For example, the theme of Spring contains investigation into planting seeds and flowers and links to colours and shapes. Staff extend this topic to the children's home by asking them to look for plants in their own gardens. Staff take time to explain to the children what is expected of them and are very positive and patient role models. They encourage children to try things for themselves and support them well as they aspire to do so. Small groups work very well to maintain children's interest and increase their concentration and language skills. Staff respond positively to children's requests. For example, children take the lead in deciding to extend song time so new verses could be made up by the children and sang. Staff encourage children to ask questions and do as much as they can for themselves. For example, children are asked to search for particular items in the outside play area and are not immediately helped by staff. Children are rewarded with praise and positive language for their efforts. Children's education is greatly enhanced by qualified and experienced teaching staff which impacts directly on their successful accomplishments and the delivery of a sound educational programme. Planning is very detailed, easy to follow and covers all areas of learning comprehensively. This gives a clear picture of the aims and objectives of each activity and the learning intention. Activity planning clearly shows the activity, the grouping of children, the main learning intentions, key vocabulary to introduce, resources, how the activity can be adapted for individual children and an evaluation. Staff are enthusiastic, patient and caring and this impacts greatly on the children's enjoyment and learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children have access to an extensive range of resources and activities to promote a positive view of the wider world and increase their awareness of diversity. Children take part in a range of activities of both familiar and unfamiliar festivals and celebrations. For example, Christmas, Easter and Chinese New Year. Children gain knowledge and experience of different customs by participating in a range of activities. For example, working together creating a large dragon for Chinese New Year and making passports. Staff have positive attitudes and present themselves as sensitive role models. This helps children relate to others and gain a secure understanding of the needs of others. For example, the staff make considerable efforts to support children as they learn about each other. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are valued and respected as individuals and all their needs are well documented and implemented. Children thrive in their environment where they are engaged and nurtured free from any type of stereotyping. Staff are clearly committed to supporting each and every child and promote a truly inclusive environment where every child matters. Detailed pre-registration forms gain full information from parents about each child in order to fully meet their needs.

Behaviour is exemplary from the older children as they happily share and take turns. They discuss and make their own rules with support from the staff. The relevant rules are displayed to reinforce this with the children. All children have a good understanding of the boundaries within the nursery and respond to direction from adults in a positive fashion. They eagerly respond to the consistent approach followed by all adults. This impacts clearly on their security and confidence as they know what is expected of them. Children develop secure levels of self-esteem with consistent encouragement and support from the staff. Highly effective behaviour management defuses situations and distracts and engages children in worthwhile activities. For example, children are busy, occupied and interested in the activities. Staff have high expectations for all children and are excellent role models.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. This contributes significantly to the children's sense of belonging, security and well-being. Parents' play an active role in their children's care and a two way sharing of information is encouraged with the use of a daily diary for younger children that includes information on children's care and learning. Staff are available throughout the nursery to talk to parents about children's enjoyment of the activities. The children's achievement folders are always available to parents and they are able to add their own comments for staff. Parents are invited to twice yearly parent evenings and have opportunities to discuss their children's care and education with the key worker daily. Their involvement impacts greatly on the children's good health, safety, care and learning. Staff are approachable and friendly, helping parents feel secure and at ease, confident with the care provided for their child. Parents have significant information about the 'Birth to three matters' format and how the nursery implements this. Extensive information about the Foundation Stage and curriculum is available to them so they gain an understanding about how their child will make progress and how this can be supported at home. Clearly detailed plans are displayed in each room so parents gain a further insight into the type of activities their children take part in. Parents have access to an excellent and fully comprehensive range of policies and procedures. A very good brochure gives parents information about the nursery and includes an explanation

about the Montessori method. The attractive brochure contains detailed information about the setting, activities and planning. Regular questionnaires for parents and children ensure that partnership with parents is very successful and children are given the best care. As an example of the success of the partnership parents bring items from other countries for the nursery to use, such as bi-lingual books.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is greatly enhanced by the quality of organisation. Leadership and management is outstanding. This benefits the children as they move through the nursery from baby room to pre-school. The nursery manager continually extends her knowledge through training and provides a thorough training programme for staff. The manager is responsible for all aspects of the nursery which includes ratios and deployment of staff, the operational plan and staff training and qualifications. She is very well supported by the quality assurance manager and the operations manager. They regularly visit the nursery to ensure that standards are consistently high and policies and procedures are in line with current legislation. All staff have a secure knowledge of the National Standards which they apply throughout the nursery. This is further enhanced with their knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. High regard for the well-being of the children, their group sizes, adult support and well-planned activities, contribute to children's enjoyment and achievements. Staff in the pre-school room are enthusiastic about the children's care and learning and this is echoed by staff throughout the nursery. The manager, deputy and room leaders work closely together and have built a stable, positive and highly motivated staff team. An inclusive environment has been created which clearly shows that each child matters and the management have a clear vision for the future development of the nursery.

The nursery is very well-organised with both indoor and outdoor space effectively arranged to maximise the play opportunities for children. This leads to an extensive, imaginative and safe environment the children can enjoy. Excellent use of low-level storage units in all rooms enables children to develop independence and contribute to the safe organisation of their own environment. Children are able to take part in this organisation by helping to tidy away items used in the appropriate marked boxes and shelves.

Highly effective organisation of all records and documents ensures children's welfare. Staff are committed to the continuous evaluation and improvement of their practice. They regularly monitor and improve the quality of their care through comprehensive evaluations and staff meetings. New staff have a well-planned induction process. They are appointed a senior member of staff as a mentor to help them settle into their role. All complaints are logged and procedures are carried through meticulously. The manager and deputy manager work closely with staff, visiting the rooms throughout the day to ensure consistent standards. The leadership and management team have a robust and rigorous system in place to ensure the children are cared for by staff with appropriate qualifications and experience and an effective induction and assessment system is an integral part of this process. The overall team spirit and morale is excellent throughout the nursery with the high levels of support provided by the management team.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the nursery was asked to provide all children with a wider range of opportunities to be active, indoors and outside, as well as free access to quiet, comfortable areas in which to relax or play quietly. Review the daily routines and the organisation of the environment provided for the under three's to better promote their individual needs and welfare and ensure that the child protection policy includes a statement that includes procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer. The provision for children under three to relax and play quietly is satisfied. All the rooms provide sleep and rest areas. Physical activities have been extended for all ages and include active play indoors and outside. The daily routines and the organisation of the environment provided for children under three has now been satisfied. Rooms are organised to separate the children into three age groups. The child protection policy now has a statement that includes procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer.

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

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. 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

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

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