



Teddy Bear Corner

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY339752
Inspection date	23 January 2007
Inspector	Christine Lynn Williams
Setting Address	St Nicholas Primary School, St Faiths Road, Alcester, Warwickshire, B49 6AG
Telephone number	01789 400816
E-mail	sue.blundell@tesco.net
Registered person	Teddy Bear Corner Limited
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Teddy Bear Corner is one of two privately owned nurseries run by the same provider. It opened in 2006 and operates from a room in a purpose-built building which forms part of St. Nicholas Primary School. It is situated in the village of Alcester. A maximum of 54 children may attend the setting at any one time for nursery education or out of school care. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 57 children aged from three to eight years on roll. Of these, 36 children receive funding for early education. Children attend from the local area and St. Nicholas school. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties.

The nursery employs seven members of staff on a rota basis. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from a local authority mentor teacher and undertakes forest school activities.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is fully protected because staff recognise and reduce all risks. They take effective steps to prevent the spread of infection by cleaning throughout the day, in-between activities and ensuring that toys and resources are always clean and in good order. Excellent toilet and washing facilities set good examples and help children to move towards independence at an early age. For example, colourful hand washing pictures and symbols are used to remind them to wash and dry their hands properly and staff monitor the routine to ensure children use liquid soap and paper towels correctly. Children's health and medication needs are clearly recorded and daily contact between parents and key workers ensure staff are kept well informed and up to date about children's health issues. The duty manager is first aid trained and there are well stocked first aid boxes kept in the kitchen area and taken on trips and during forest school activities. Accident details are appropriately recorded and used as discussion points during staff meetings. This ensures staff are constantly monitoring the impact accidents may have on children's health and can quickly and effectively identify improvements or actions that will further protect children.

Children are given an outstanding level of very clear messages about how to keep themselves healthy. For example, they learn about the importance of healthy eating; are provided with nutritious, balanced meals and take part in an extensive range of different physical and outside play that ensures they get plenty of fresh air and exercise. Highly nutritious, balanced meals and snacks are provided and staff show an excellent understanding of the importance of providing children with good nutrition in order for them to become physically strong and healthy. Hot meals include ingredients that are freshly bought, prepared and cooked. Vegetables and fruit are purchased fresh from a local farm shop and include a wide variety of different seasonal vegetables, such as butternut squash. Weekly menus are produced in advance so that parents know what their children are eating and these are developed by an experienced and well qualified cook. As a result, the setting has achieved a silver award within a local 'Healthy Heart' scheme. Staff use many stimulating learning opportunities to promote an understanding of healthy eating. For example, children often visit the farm shop to choose their own fruit and vegetables and children's enjoyment and learning during cooking activities are further enriched with lots of healthy eating messages. Drinks are always available with children able to quickly reach their own bottled water at any time. Mealtimes are relaxed, social occasions when children and adults sit together around the table to appreciate their time together. The table is laid out attractively with each child having their own lunch mat, knife, fork and spoon and small tea lights are lit to create a warm, cosy time when children can enjoy eating. They learn to use appropriate cutlery, give thanks for their food and help to clear away afterwards by scraping leftovers into a bowl and cleaning their table mat.

Extensive outdoor play in the garden and during forest school activities maximises children's physical ability and helps them to develop extremely positive attitudes to gaining lots of fresh air and exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle. Outside areas are used to best effect in helping children to be physically confident and independent. They use the nursery garden and outdoor classroom areas with gusto, enjoy the benefits of weekly swimming lessons and take their learning outside during regular forest school activities at a nearby wood. As a result, three and four-year-olds move with exceptional confidence and control and learn to use their bodies in new and exciting ways. They run up hills, peddle bikes and climb in the nursery garden and challenge themselves in the woods as they climb and balance on fallen trees, scramble up banks and slide down hills on their bottoms. They splash in puddles, kick up leaves and show awe and excitement as they run freely through the woods. Four year-olds show very highly developed skills as they run, climb and slide with ease and grace through the woodland undergrowth. They jump over tree roots and demonstrate a keen sense of space as they crawl under bushes. They often let their imaginations run freely as they make the most of being outside in the woods or when enjoying regular movement and music or action song sessions, and show a good awareness of what happens to their bodies when they are active. For example, they know that putting on thick socks and to always keep moving will help keep them warm on even the coldest days.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a colourful and stimulating atmosphere where they can freely choose what they want to play with, can learn, explore and develop safely with close adult support. Creatively designed curriculum zoned learning areas, colourful displays, photographs and children's art work create an exciting and child-friendly atmosphere within a spacious, airy and self-contained area of the school. There is a reception area which displays posters, policies and procedures for parents and this area can be viewed by the office secretary for increased security. Outside areas are used constantly, with large patio doors leading out into a covered outdoor classroom area and secure garden which children access freely throughout the day.

Children's safety is given a high priority, while still allowing them the opportunities to stretch themselves and take risks within a safe environment. Clear boundaries and careful discussion help children to develop an increasing awareness and understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They know and talk about the important safety rules to follow when enjoying activities in the woods, learn to use tools and sticks safely and are carefully shown how to climb over tree roots and uneven ground. An extensive and detailed risk assessment ensures that all potential risks to children have been thoroughly assessed and effective procedures and practices put in place to minimise these. Children regularly practise the emergency fire drill and follow the nursery's Golden Rules which keep them safe and happy when they are playing. Accident records are monitored, analysed and discussed at staff meetings so that problem areas or issues are identified and action taken. Health and safety issues are included in the staff induction programme to ensure all adults are clear regarding their roles and responsibilities. There are very clear procedures to ensure children are only collected by authorised people. For example, all visitors are viewed through a window before security locks are opened, parents sign registers at arrival and collection time and lost and uncollected child policies enable staff to respond appropriately should either incident occur.

Adults have a good understanding of how to safeguard children and recognise that this is their first priority. They are vigilant, aware of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse and know the appropriate procedures to follow should they have concerns about a child. Good policies and reference guides are kept close to hand at all times and this ensures that current, best practice regarding child protection is always followed.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff develop warm and caring relationships with the children in their care and this is very evident. A key worker system is used effectively to gain information about young children's individual routines, needs and preferences and provides a continuity of care that ensures children develop a sense of belonging with familiar and trusted adults. Staff are attentive, join in with children's play and respond well to children's actions, expressions and what they say. Children's creativity and natural curiosity are valued and the nursery day is organised to make the most of children's concentration and stamina.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff plan a stimulating educational programme that maintains children's enthusiasm and thirst for learning and draws on detailed assessments of what children can do. This ensures children move forward in their learning. Some areas of the curriculum are promoted exceptionally well, with a strong emphasis placed on outside learning and developing children's confidence, self-esteem and independence. Children self-select resources, activities, decide what they want to do and so are confident in initiating their own learning and play ideas. As a result, they are enthusiastic and motivated learners.

Nursery topics are planned to reflect those being used in the adjoining school's reception class, so that there is a cohesive approach to the Foundation Stage curriculum. Planning highlights what children will learn, based on the stepping stones for progression. Staff work closely with children in their own key worker groups and get to know children's individual strengths and weaknesses well. However, planning does not help all staff to focus on how they can adapt learning experiences to support those children who learn at different rates or who have specific needs. As a result, some children are not able to reach their full potential. Staff are playful adults who join in with children's activities and spark their imaginations. They give children plenty of time to explore and apply their learning and use effective open-ended questions that make children think and allow them to show what they know. Children are encouraged to be physically active throughout the day, while zoned curriculum areas provide quiet areas for them to sit and develop their concentration and perseverance. Overall, a broad and varied curriculum is offered which results in children making good progress in all areas of their learning.

Some aspects of children's development in the area of communication language and literacy are very strong. Children are confident speakers who talk freely and expressively at circle times, during activities and when discussing their favourite stories and books. All children are quick to share their ideas and some older four-year-olds show a highly developed vocabulary and strong negotiating skills. Children see some familiar words displayed around their learning rooms and enjoy a variety of good quality story and reference books. They join in enthusiastically

at story time and frequently sit quietly to look at books or to pretend to read their favourite story to their friends. Effective methods are used to help children to link sounds to letters and children have lots of opportunities to recognise their own name. They make marks freely as they draw, use paint, dough and gloop and some older children are beginning to form recognisable letters and to write their own names. However, writing for a purpose is less well supported with limited opportunities provided for children to make marks during their imaginary play or to use their early writing skills to record and tally during counting or exploration activities. As a result, children are not developing fully in this area.

Children show they are developing strong and positive attitudes to mathematics. Counting and number recognition is threaded through most activities, and these include purposeful first-hand experiences such as counting the number of children and adults present at forest school, or recognising numbers on puzzles and card matching games. They regularly hear staff using mathematical language and show a good understanding of shape and size. There is a very good range of mathematical resources to encourage children to match and sort. Some four-year-olds are beginning to develop a sound understanding of simple mathematical concepts and how to solving simple number problems such as working out how to share two pens between four children. As a result, children are becoming confident mathematicians.

Staff support children's learning in the area of knowledge and understanding of the world particularly well, providing a wealth of exploration activities that encourage children to observe, question and explore their natural curiosity. Regular forest school activities are offered within a local wood and these visits help children to respect their environment and learn about nature. Children become absorbed and fascinated as they observe seasonal changes, talk about the weather and learn simple science skills. For example, they talked in awe about the deer tracks they found, noticed excitedly that jumping on one end of a fallen tree made all the branches move and enthusiastically broke the ice on frozen puddles. They learn to care for living things as they gently pick up worms and find a good home for them in the nursery garden or plant bulbs and watch them grow. Children explore and investigate objects and materials using all of their senses. Cooking activities, sand, water, sensory boards and topic work provide stimulation and a variety of tactile experiences. They learn to design and make things with a variety of different shaped and sized resources and use their imagination widely to build towers and houses. There is good use of Information Technology, with computers available at all times throughout the day where children can create pictures and print them out, or use simple computer programmes to develop their story telling and mathematical skills.

Children's creativity is valued and encouraged. They use their imaginations widely, make up their own games and stories and act out familiar roles. For example, they make tea, dress up, play with dolls and pretend to have a picnic in the home corner, and often make up their own games as they play in the nursery garden and woods. They express themselves freely through paint, drawing, collage work and a wide variety of different materials and these are laid out so that children can self-select both what they want to do and the materials they want to use. Children enjoy regular music sessions, listen to lots of different music, join in enthusiastically at singing time and often sing spontaneously as they travel to the woods or play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children show high levels of enthusiasm, independence and consideration for others due to the positive support, praise and encouragement they receive. Their individuality is widely valued and staff build children's self-esteem very effectively by providing lots of opportunities for children to be cuddled, comforted and made to feel that they matter. Children settle quickly and develop a strong sense of belonging within the nursery. They all belong to a key worker group and this helps them to form close relationships with the adults that care for them.

Children are encouraged to be confident and motivated learners due to the wealth of activities staff provide to develop their personal, social and emotional development. This underpins the rest of children's learning and ensures they are willing and eager to try new things. Children's self-care and independence is supported extremely well. They put on their own coats and boots for outside play, choose their own resources and activities, show independence in toileting and hand washing and help to clear away at meal times. High expectations are set for behaviour, sharing and working together, and these are consistently and sensitively enforced. They learn the nursery's 'Golden Rules' for playing together, being kind, sharing their toys and being friends, and develop sensitively towards others through gentle prompting and good role models. Clear instructions, praise and carefully planned activities allow four-year-olds to begin to develop self-discipline and the skills to co-operate to get things done. For example they know the rules that keep them safe when they are playing in the woods and work together very well as they clear away their lunch or find a home for a worm. As a result, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children develop a good understanding of the wider world as they play with carefully selected resources that help them to acknowledge a diverse society. Positive role models are seen as they play with dressing up clothes, small world toys and books and some children learn to sing songs and use simple words in another language during weekly French lessons. They feel valued as they celebrate and talk about their own birthdays, achievements or significant events in their lives and also participate in a range of celebrations and festivals such as Diwali and Chinese New Year. The nursery is committed to inclusion and staff keep thorough records of each child's individual needs and all aspects of their progress.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit greatly from the strong relationships between their parents and staff. Parents and children are always warmly greeted by staff on arrival and time is made for a friendly verbal exchange of relevant information. Information linked to the Foundation Stage is clearly displayed on the parents' notice board and activities are highlighted, ensuring the parents are aware of the experiences their children are having. Parents can access their child's records at any time and formal meetings are arranged twice a year when parents can talk to staff about their children's progress. Clear information about such things as staff qualifications, policies and procedures are included in the parents' welcome pack and newsletters and notice boards are used to keep parents well informed at all times. Some activities are arranged to promote parents' understanding of the type of experiences their children are having and to join in with the fun. For example, parents are encouraged to attend an introductory forest school session and to share in the learning at home by practicing letter shapes and sounds with their children. There is also a parents' support group known as

'Parents Corner' which supports new parents and meets with staff bi-monthly to discuss how the nursery is run and how children are cared for. Parents' views and concerns are respected and there is a written complaints procedure and recording system in place to ensure that this happens. However, the complaints procedure is not fully up to date with recent amendments to the National Standards.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is supported by enthusiastic and committed staff and strong leadership. The nursery owner has a clear philosophy on the care and education of children and each child is treated as an individual because staff are given responsibility for small groups at a time. Staff work as an effective team, understand their roles and work well together. There are robust recruitment and induction procedures to ensure that children are well protected and a high priority is given to children's health and safety.

Leadership and management of funded children is good. The nursery owner effectively steers the work of managers and staff, setting clear objectives for how children will learn and paying close attention to how resources and play space is organised and used. There is a strong emphasis on outside learning and this is used effectively to promote children's learning across all areas of the curriculum. Staff are actively encouraged to access training and keep up to date with current early years thinking and there are close relationships formed with both parents and outside professionals. There is a commitment to assessing the strengths and weaknesses of both the setting and the educational programme. This is achieved through regular meetings with staff and close relationships between all adults involved in the setting. There are clear lines of communication and support within the nursery and regular meetings are held with school staff so that a cohesive approach to promoting the Foundation Stage curriculum is achieved. This allows reception teachers to build on the foundations of learning that have been developed within the nursery.

Good documentation, policies and records ensure children's health, safety and well-being are always carefully considered. The nursery's operational plan is readily available to parents and there are clear and effective methods for ensuring nursery policies and procedures are clearly understood. Overall the children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 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):

- update the complaints procedure to reflect amendments to the National Standards and share this with parents.

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):

- further develop planning to include details of how children's knowledge, understanding and skills can be extended and how learning experiences can be adapted to suit those who learn at different rates or who have specific needs
- further improve opportunities for children to use their emerging writing skills for different purposes such as lists, instructions and tallying.

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