

Bolton Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY292208
Inspection date	28 September 2007
Inspector	Diane Roberts
Setting Address	Colby Lane, Bolton, Appleby, Cumbria, CA16 6AW
Telephone number	017683 62468
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Registered person	Bolton Nursery 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Bolton Nursery is run by a voluntary management committee. It opened in 2004 and operates from a purpose-built nursery unit within the grounds of Bolton County Primary School, near Appleby, Cumbria. A maximum of 35 children under eight years may attend at any one time, of whom no more than nine may be under two years. The nursery is open each weekday for 51 weeks of the year. It offers full day care from 08.00 to 18.00, before school care from 08.00 to 08.50 and after school care from 15.30 to 18.00. The setting also provides a holiday club during school holidays, from 08.00 to 18.00 and sessions from 09.00 to 15.30. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 46 children aged from birth to eight years on roll. Of these, 18 children receive funding for nursery education. The setting provides care for children aged up to 11. Children attend from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties or disabilities. There are no children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs seven staff. All of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two staff members are working towards a further qualification. The nursery is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean and tidy environment. Throughout the nursery there is a good level of cleanliness and the building is well maintained. Children generally learn about simple health and hygiene practices as part of their daily routine. For instance, children routinely wash their hands before and after eating snack and lunch. They can easily access paper tissues for nose wiping, thereby encouraging independence. Children stay healthy because the setting generally follows appropriate health and hygiene guidelines. Clean bedding is used for each child and anti-bacterial sprays are routinely used to clean changing mats and worktops. To further protect children from cross-contamination, staff consistently wear protective clothing such as gloves and aprons when nappy changing. Children are reminded throughout the day about the perils of unhygienic practices such as licking outside play equipment.

Staff, in the main, protect children's health by taking appropriate steps to minimise the spread of infection. Accident and medicine administration records are appropriately signed by parents to acknowledge that they have been informed. However, there is inconsistency in recording. For example, some records do not include the time or date of the accident or the name of the person who dealt with it. The practice of filing accident and incident records in the operational plan or including other children's names on accident records makes it difficult to maintain confidentiality. Written permissions to administer medication are in place. However, the written consent giving permission to administer a simple pain-killing medicine if needed lacks clarity and could be detrimental to a child's health. One such consent does not include the surname or date of birth of the child. Hence, although written permissions and records of all medicines administered to children are in place, they are not accurately maintained.

Children are able to rest and sleep according to their respective needs. For instance, a member of staff spots a child showing signs of tiredness. The member of staff gently asks whether the child would like to have a rest on a floor cushion. Children are encouraged to discover and learn about their bodies and their emotions. A recent topic named 'Ourselves' encouraged children to learn about their bodies through play and explore a range of emotions and feelings. However, the teaching of self-help skills is inconsistent. For instance, some children are encouraged to put on their own coats or painting aprons and some are not. At snack time, a member of staff sets the table with plates and cups rather than encouraging the children to do so.

Children over two years enjoy the social experience of sitting together to eat their food at snack and lunch time. They happily sing a please and thank you song before they start to eat. Throughout the snack or meal time good manners are occasionally encouraged by staff as they remind children to say please and thank you. Water is available at the table, together with milk. Children, expertly and with pride, pour their own drinks from a small jug. Staff ask children what they would like to drink then pour their selection from the larger, less manageable vessel into the child's smaller one. Hence, children's independence is encouraged. However, other than with food, water is not consistently available or actively promoted by staff. Good hygiene practices are generally followed such as hand washing before and after eating. However, plates and dishes that are knocked to the floor are not routinely changed or washed before use.

Children learn about healthy eating through a range of planned activities. For instance, children make a healthy vegetable soup by each bringing in their choice of vegetable. Together with the staff, they talk about each vegetable as the vegetables are cut up and put in a pot. The children later listen to a story about an enormous turnip to support their activity. Children eat healthy snacks of fresh and dried fruit. However, the practice of handing raisins and pieces of cut apple to children rather than passing the fruit around on a plate means that staff are setting a poor example. Children really enjoy their snack of crackers, spread and cubes of cheese. They can apply their own spread with a knife knowing that staff are close by for support and guidance if needed. A toddler under two years confidently and independently feeds herself with cubes of cheese. However, other young children are fed by staff rather than be encouraged to feed themselves or be actively involved in the process.

Children's health benefits from breathing fresh air daily. They take part in regular physical play outside in the enclosed play area. Children take pleasure in using good quality equipment such as hockey sticks and balls. Staff give sound guidance so children develop an understanding of how such equipment works and how it is used safely. A child skilfully steers a ball along the ground with his hockey stick and shows another child how it is done. The second child smiles as he concentrates displaying his pleasure when he copies his friend. Children are cultivating a sense of space. This is demonstrated as they persevere in repeating some actions such as hitting a ball with a hockey stick as they develop a new skill. Children under the age of two years have regular trips to the park and are able to play on the equipment there.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in an environment which is kept clean and adequately maintained. They are kept secure and are well supervised by a good number of staff. Children know how to evacuate the building safely as evacuation procedures are practised regularly and a clear record is kept. Safe collection procedures ensure children leave with a known adult. There are clearly defined procedures in place to be followed in the event of a child being lost or not collected. A sound system for recording visitors further assures children's security. Children are beginning to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe. For instance, they help to tidy away equipment and move things that they may trip up on. Children attending the after school facility learn to keep themselves safe through discussion and activities. Appropriate safety equipment is in place such as smoke alarms, socket covers and a barrier-gate between the baby room and the main playroom. Harnesses are consistently used in high chairs and buggies. Children are able to select toys from a range of clean, safe and good quality equipment, set out by staff. However, although toys and equipment are generally checked for safety, staff do not risk assess the use of equipment. For example, they do not question whether a child is too heavy or too tall to safely use a high chair or whether it is an age-appropriate seating arrangement.

Staff have suitable knowledge of potential signs and symptoms of child abuse and reporting procedures, thereby children's safety and protection is sufficiently assured. The setting has recognised they would benefit from an update with regard to child protection issues, but to date staff have not completed a refresher course.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are confident and are greeted on arrival at the setting. They can generally choose where and with whom they wish to play within their designated play room. At times, throughout the session, children are given opportunities to self-select their activities. However, for one activity, a large group of children aged two to four years is limited to the book area for up to thirty minutes with a member of staff, although there are other staff available. Children under two years have some choice of activity from a limited range of resources chosen by staff. For instance, a baby under twelve months gurgles with pleasure at the different sounds made as he handles a tray of pasta on a low level table. However, over time, limiting a child's accessible resources limits challenge. On one occasion, a toddler is printing using paint and cut vegetables. Because the child is, albeit safely, strapped into a high chair the child cannot freely choose to leave the activity or select another. Babies and young children enjoy listening to stories, rhymes and songs learning about words and meanings as they play. A young child brings a book to the adult to read. The child is welcomed by the member of staff and the child happily snuggles up to the adult as she sits on the floor. A baby has a spontaneous game of peek-a-boo using a see-through plate. The staff enthusiastically join in and other children laugh. On the wall in the main playroom, there are blank faces on the wall at child-height. Children can attach their own selection of eyes, noses and mouths to depict their feelings at any one time. For instance, a happy face with smiling eyes and a big smile. Other creations and photographs are attractively displayed around the playrooms. Children can express themselves in a variety of ways. For instance, they enjoy experimenting with the good selection of accessible media such as paint and collage materials. Although the after school facility was not observed at the inspection, it is clear that children attending benefit from a wide range of experiences. For example, children have made insect sculptures and bug jelly. They take pleasure in modelling with recyclable materials such as boxes and plastic containers. They like to make cookies and are actively involved with the adjoining school's nature garden.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff's knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage generally helps to improve children's achievements. When each child begins at the setting, parents are encouraged to share with staff what their child already knows and can do. Staff plan according to the six areas of learning. However, only a limited number of observations have been made and there is a lack of accurate monitoring of individual children's daily activities. This, in time, could hinder planning for the possible next steps in each child's development and learning. Adaptations are made within the planning tool for different ages and abilities of children. However, in practice, these adaptations are not consistently made as the relevance of the activity does not always match the different levels of each child's needs. For instance, an activity focusing on mathematical development was delivered to all children aged two to four years.

Children have opportunities to share and enjoy a range of rhymes, songs and stories. Children enthusiastically join in with the song about five little monkeys jumping on the bed. They demonstrate good voice control by raising their voices at the right time. Body language such as pointing is used appropriately. Thereby, children are developing links between their gestures and words. Children like to listen to their favourite stories such as 'Little Red Hen' and 'The Enormous Turnip' and join in and recall. Activities are provided that give children the opportunity to practise manipulative skills. For example, children are able to roll out the malleable dough with rolling pins and spools. They are encouraged to hold such tools efficiently. There is a good

display of different text, such as big and small letters, around the main playroom. However, children do not have sufficient opportunities, such as labelling their work, to practise writing letters. Children enjoy joining in with number rhymes and songs. They are willing to attempt to count with numbers in the correct order. For instance, staff ask the children how many children are there altogether and how many of these are boys or girls. Children show an awareness of similarities in shapes in the environment. For example, a child working with dough says that the shape she has created is a toilet seat. The shape is oval with a hole in the middle. Staff use position language such as 'in front' and 'behind' throughout the session.

Children learn through interaction with each other and with adults. They gain information from adults through explicit teaching. For example, with regard to health and safety in the use of sports equipment such as hockey sticks. They copy one another using the sticks and they show each other what to do. Children have opportunities to explore natural resources such as sand. A range of small world resources, such as cars, trucks and other forms of transport, raises children's interest. Children have access to a computer in the book area. However, as this area is well used for group activities there is little opportunity for children to learn how to operate or complete a program on the computer. Within the role play area there are opportunities for children to use technological resources such as telephones. The setting increases children's awareness of their own and other cultures. For instance, children celebrate festivals such as Harvest and Easter. Children have access to a wide range of materials and resources to enable children to explore colour and texture. A child enthusiastically talks about a picture he has created. Children are learning to link sound to music. For instance, music is played whilst children are tidying up, their efforts increasing in speed alongside the music. A child asks a member of staff for a particular CD before lunch. Once the CD is playing, children and staff have good fun, swinging their hips and stretching to the 'Funky Monkey', thereby, children are learning to move to music and dance.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from a sufficient range of activities and resources which helps them to value diversity. These include visits to a museum and library in the neighbouring city of Carlisle. Links with the adjoining school ensures that children aged three and four benefit from joining in with some of the school's activities. Throughout each session there are times that children are allowed the freedom to follow their own learning agendas. However, in the main, activities are planned and led by adults. Children are learning acceptable codes of behaviour through visual displays of the rules of the nursery. For example, such statements as 'we sit and listen' and 'we wash our hands' are illustrated with a photograph of a child doing the relevant actions and displayed on the playroom wall. During the inspection, the after school facility that meets in a room adjoining the main playroom was not in operation. However, attractive displays show that children attending this setting have devised their own rules illustrated with pictures. These include such issues as taking turns, helping others and not being rude. Photographs of individual children with speech-balloons explain the rules. This imaginative use of photographs and development of house rules helps children with their sense of belonging. Children under five years behave reasonably well with the setting adopting appropriate strategies. However, some changes of behaviour, although verbally noted by staff, are unrecorded. Overall, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Good use is made of a fixed notice board in the entrance hall. This provides information, such as the registration certificate and staff photographs. At the start and end of each session, staff welcome parents and are available to

discuss their child. Staff obtain the relevant information from parents in order to be in a position to give appropriate care. Staff build good relationships with parents, which enables them to resolve concerns quickly and informally. The written complaints procedure is clearly displayed, although the telephone number of the regulator has not been updated.

Assessment records chart children's progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. However, these are not consistently or frequently updated. Information is provided in the form of a prospectus which informs parents of what the six areas of learning are and how children work through the stepping stones. Parents are informed about their child's achievements and progress and are encouraged to share what they know about their child, especially before a child starts at the setting. Parents are encouraged to be involved with their child's learning. For instance, before a recent activity involving healthy eating, parents were asked to contribute a vegetable for the making of vegetable soup. In specific circumstances, staff take photographs throughout the week of activities and parents can then talk about the experience with the child. The setting has a 'time for yourself' policy for parents. This means that children can attend for a further three times in a month if there is space available.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting has recently seen a change in both management and staff. Sound recruitment and vetting procedures by the committee ensure children are well protected and cared for by staff with knowledge and understanding of child development. Staff improve their knowledge by attending appropriate courses. There is a clear system for registering children's and staff's attendance on a daily basis, showing hours of attendance. However, records do not show where each member of staff is deployed during the day. The good ratio of adults to children supports children's care, learning and play. However, at times, the large group sizes do not effectively contribute to children's enjoyment or ability to take an active part in the setting. Children aged under two years are cared for in groups of no more than nine. However, arrangements for staffing in the baby room do not consistently minimise the number of carers for the individual child.

Leadership and management of the nursery are satisfactory. By attending relevant training courses to improve management, the manager shows good commitment to broadening her knowledge and skills. The setting is developing methods of assessing its own strengths and weaknesses. This includes the effectiveness in monitoring and evaluating the provision for nursery education. The committee, together with the manager, is working towards building committed teams. Staff meetings take place to evaluate practice.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting agreed to improve children's safety and security by making sure parental signatures are obtained after administering medication, reviewing the allegations procedure and making sure that staff's attendance and deployment is clearly recorded. In general the setting has everything in place as agreed. However, the deployment of staff is still not clearly recorded.

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.

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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 further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- review prior written consents of parents with regard to non-prescription medication to make sure it is only given where there is a specific health reason to do so. Review procedures for completing and storing accident and incident records to make sure they are accurate and confidentiality is maintained
- review arrangements for the provision of fresh drinking water to make sure it is readily available to children in a variety of ways and actively promoted
- consider how staff are allocated to work with babies and children under two years to ensure consistency of contact and continuity of care. Review the recording of staff deployment to make sure it is clear and accurate. Review the organisation of sessions for under fives to ensure that children are always fully involved in, and challenged by, activities

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):

- review methods of observations of children to make sure early years experience builds on what each child already knows and can do, recognising that children develop rapidly during the early years.
- review opportunities for children to develop crucial knowledge, skills and understanding that help them make sense of the world especially in respect of information and communication technology.

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