

Buttercups Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY335013
Inspection date	16 March 2007
Inspector	Cilla Burdis
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Registered person	Sunderland North Community Business Centre
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Crèche

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 inadequate - notice of action to improve.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Buttercups Nursery opened in September 2006. It operates from a purpose-built building, which is situated on the site of the Sunderland Customer Services Centre in the Downhill area of Sunderland. A maximum of 25 children may attend the nursery at any one time. A maximum of 11 may attend the crèche at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.45 to 18.00 for 50 weeks of the year. The crèche operates, as and when necessary, to provide care for children whose parents are attending training and parenting courses in the building. All children share access to secure, enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 25 children aged from 0 to under 5 years on roll; of these, two children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a close catchment area, as most of their parents live locally. There are currently 31 children, aged under-5years, on roll in the crèche. The nursery and crèche have systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs eight members of staff, three of whom work in the crèche . All members of staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two members of staff are working towards a higher level qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by staff, who follow the policies and procedures that have been developed in order to promote the health and welfare of the children. The staff ensure that written permission for administering medication and seeking emergency treatment is obtained and systems are in place to record and inform parents if any medication has been administered. However, records of parental requests to administer medication only if it is required do not state clearly that the medication was not given. This impacts negatively on the welfare of the children. All staff are trained in first aid, which further enhances children's care and welfare. There is a clear sickness policy, which is shared with parents to protect children from illness and infection. All babies and children sleep according to their individual needs. Sleeping children are closely monitored and checked at regular intervals to ensure their comfort and safety.

Staff follow good hygiene procedures. Tables and chairs are cleaned before and after eating and staff wear disposable aprons when serving food. Children's nappies are changed in a hygienic manner. Staff use aprons and gloves and clean the changing mats after use to prevent cross infection. Records are maintained to ensure all aspects of the procedure have been implemented. Cleaning charts and a sterilisation rota make sure toys and equipment are cleaned and checked regularly to ensure good health and safety. Babies' dummies are stored in individual, sterilised containers to reduce the risk of cross infection.

Children have a healthy and varied diet. Meals are provided in accordance with parental requirements. The meals are supplied by Sunderland North Community Business Centre's restaurant, which is based in the same building as the nursery. The food is freshly cooked in their kitchen. For lunch, for example, the children enjoy fish fingers with vegetables and potato. They eat well and enjoy the social support of the staff. The children are able to make choices from the vegetables provided, however, the independence of the older children is not being developed through opportunities to set the table and help serve the meal. In the Caterpillar room drinks are available at all times as a jug of water and cups can be easily accessed. Snacks of dried fruit are also readily available. Babies are offered drinks on a regular basis. Parents provide milk for their babies which is stored in the fridge until it is ready to be used. Milk is discarded if not used within an hour of reheating.

Children are able to have fresh air all year round as they have regular access to the outdoor play areas. Resources to promote physical development, however, are limited. The resources available do not provide sufficient challenge by enabling children to try out and master a range of new skills. Currently, however the children have weekly Tumble Tots sessions in order to provide more variety and challenge. In addition, the older children visit Busy Bodies once a week where they enjoy ring games and parachute activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The premises are secure at all times and staff effectively monitor access to the nursery. All the children's rooms have high level handles to make sure children are unable to open doors themselves. This ensures children are safeguarded well. The nursery is made welcome to children and parents. Staff are very friendly and approachable. Wall displays include children's artwork and photographs of the children participating in activities. This shows that the children and their work is valued and helps children develop a sense of belonging. All areas are organised to enable children to move freely, safely and independently. At times however, the floor in the Caterpillar room becomes untidy, which impacts on children's safety. The nursery is organised to allow children to make choices and become involved in activities, such as art and craft activities, role play or to rest and relax in a quiet area of the nursery. Good quality resources are provided, which are monitored and checked regularly for safety. This ensures children can explore safely. Resources reflecting positive images of diversity and resources to extend children's physical skills, however, are limited. Each room opens directly onto a safe and secure outdoor play area. This area is used as an extension of the indoor environment and accessed regularly by the children.

Good levels of safety are maintained throughout the premises. Health and safety procedures are understood and followed by all staff to protect children whilst on the premises and on outings. Daily safety checks are undertaken to ensure the environment is safe before the children arrive. Good systems are in place to ensure children are kept safe in the event of a fire. Equipment is regularly checked and maintained, and children practise fire evacuation so that they become familiar with routines and learn about keeping themselves safe.

Children's welfare is safeguarded well by staff who are aware of the child protection procedures. They have a good understanding of signs and symptoms of abuse and know what actions to take if they have any concerns about a child in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time at the nursery because the staff establish warm and positive relationships with the children, helping them to feel settled and secure. The children are happy to be involved in the variety of activities provided. Some children in the Caterpillar room however, have difficulty focusing on activities at times. This can impact negatively on the learning experiences of children participating in group activities. Staff encourage children to be confident and develop their self esteem through consistent praise and encouragement. A variety of creative activities including painting, baking and play dough promote children's self expression and co-ordination whilst they have fun.

Children's sensory awareness is promoted well throughout the nursery. The babies have access to treasure baskets containing a variety of materials so they can explore different textures. Low level mirrors encourage babies to watch their reflections and develop a sense of self awareness. Photographic displays of the children are also at low level, which further stimulate their visual awareness. Children are encouraged to explore a variety of materials, such as scarves, hats, jelly and shaving foam. All age groups participate in baking activities at a level they can enjoy. The younger babies are able to explore the different tastes and textures whilst the older babies develop skills such as, mixing and scooping ingredients onto spoons to place in the mixing bowl. The baking activities are extended to take into account the abilities of the older

children who are encouraged to weigh, measure and discuss the activity as it progresses. Staff encourage the children to count out the eggs required and to take turns as they add and mix the ingredients.

Children are encouraged to explore the environment. The children in the Caterpillar room observed and chatted about the ladybirds they had brought back from an outing. They laughed with excitement as the ladybirds crawled up their arms. The children also have their own vegetable patch. They have planted seeds and enjoy monitoring their development.

Activities in the crèche are planned in advance and adapted to meet the needs and interests of the children attending. A focussed activity is planned for each session, which extends the children's learning. The crèche is well resourced and provides an attractive and stimulating environment for the children. Wall displays include evidence of their activities. The children have been tasting foods from around the world. Staff have put together a very informative wall display showing the types of meals eaten in different countries. Children's sensory awareness is developed through the resources available in the crèche and regular access to a sensory room, which has a range of resources including lights and sound beams.

Staff working in the nursery and crèche have a good understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, which they use effectively to support the development and well-being of the under-3s. They plan for children's individual needs, regularly reviewing these and planning for their next steps. Babies receive a lot of cuddles and eye contact from staff. They are able to develop a bond with their key worker, which increases their sense of well-being. They benefit from routines, which are consistent with their routines at home. The older children display a sense of belonging as they help themselves to resources and join in activities. They relate well to staff and show a good awareness of nursery routines. Some children however, do not show respect for the environment by taking care of the toys and putting them away after use.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. The staff, who work with the pre-school children, do not have a good enough understanding of the Foundation Stage, the early learning goals and the stepping stones children take in order to achieve them. Staff do not assess the children's starting points in order to build effective plans for the children based on their individual interests and abilities. Staff are not planning experiences and activities for children in a way that ensures that the six areas of learning are being covered. As a result, they are not monitoring how regularly and frequently the areas are covered in order to help children to consolidate their learning. Staff are not making observations and assessments of children and therefore they are not ensuring that children receive sufficient challenge or support in order to make progress. This has a negative impact on children reaching their full potential. Staff interact well with the children. They ask questions, which encourage children to think about and recall what they have been doing.

Children are able to be independent. They visit the toilet and see to their personal needs as required. They confidently request support from staff if required. The children's opportunities to freely express their creativity and develop their skills during art and craft activities are well supported. Children are able to explore and experiment with paints, shaving foam and play dough. Children experiment with colour by mixing together different coloured paint. Staff encourage children to consider and discuss how, by mixing two colours together, they can make another colour. Children enjoy making marks through a variety of activities. They are giving meaning to their marks, for example, 'I am drawing my mammy and daddy'.

Mathematical language is included in fun activities. For example, children are encouraged to weigh and count during baking activities. Children confidently use the computer and develop good mouse control as they operate simple programmes. They are learning about the natural world as they grow flowers and vegetables and examine small creatures.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children receive a warm welcome into the nursery and settle well into the care of the staff. Children's individual needs are shared with staff to enable them to provide an environment in which all children are included. Details about the child including medical details, dietary requirements, fears and dislikes are recorded in individual children's profiles. The staff work with outside agencies to offer support to children if this is required. There is a policy on equality, which promotes anti-discriminatory practice for all children. There is a limited range of resources, however, that promote positive images of diversity. Children's experiences are broadened through visits to local community settings and from visitors to the nursery. This gives children the opportunity to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them. Children with learning difficulties are recognised and systems are in place to provide appropriate support within the nursery. Makaton, a form of sign language, has recently been introduced into the nursery as an effective form of communication with children who have learning difficulties. All the children, including the babies, are learning to communicate in this way. The children enjoy learning the different signs and it is proving to be a valuable form of communication throughout the nursery. Children are encouraged to be involved in play and learning and to develop relationships with other children. They are beginning to develop care and concern for others by learning to share and take turns. This approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children generally behave well and are learning right from wrong through sensitive reminders provided by the staff. Babies and children show a sense of belonging as they are continually acknowledged and responded to. Staff are good role models and treat all children with respect. Some older children, however, do not always take a respectful approach to the environment.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. An information booklet ensures parents are aware of how the nursery operates. The booklet includes relevant policies and procedures and information about the curriculum guidance. This information is complemented with displays and regular newsletters. Parents' views about their child's needs are actively sought before the child starts the nursery and there is a clear settling-in procedure. All families are made welcome and included. Parents have the opportunity to exchange information about their children, on a daily basis, with the friendly staff. Daily diaries are completed for the younger children, which the parents take home. This supports continuity of care and ensures the parents are fully informed of their child's time in the setting. The planning of activities and assessments of the children receiving funded nursery education however, are not being kept. This limits the information that is shared with parents and therefore impacts negatively on the well-being of those children.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The nursery is well organised and space is used effectively to provide a warm, secure and stimulating environment for the children. Staff know their roles and responsibilities and

effectively implement routines to provide a good range of experiences for the children. All staff display a good understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. However, staff caring for children aged over three years have limited knowledge of the type of activities and experiences required to ensure these children make progress in their development. The staff do not have a good enough understanding of how to implement the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage of learning in order to provide nursery education. As no observations and assessments have been made on these children staff do not have clear guidance regarding what the children are capable of and where they need support and challenge. Staff are very enthusiastic and committed to seeking training to further develop their practice, which impacts positively on the care provided for the younger children.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is inadequate. Management has not ensured that staff providing the nursery education are suitably trained and experienced. As a result, children are not provided with a curriculum, developed from their individual needs, to ensure they make progress towards the early learning goals. The manager of the nursery is keen to develop the nursery and has identified aspects she wishes to develop further. She has high expectations of staff and trusts them to work to the best of their abilities. The manager supports staff in accessing training because of the positive impact this has on the staff and their working practice. The staff work well as a team and are committed to the ongoing development of the nursery.

Policies and procedures are of a good standard. The documentation necessary for the efficient and safe management of the provision and the care and welfare of the children is maintained effectively.

Overall, the provision does not meet the needs of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the 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):

- ensure staff have sufficient knowledge and skills to meet the individual needs of the children they care for (also applies to nursery education)
- provide a range of resources that reflect positive images of the diversity of society
- further develop the skills and independence of the more able children at mealtimes.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- develop an effective planning system that ensures all six areas of learning are covered regularly and frequently and ensures children receive sufficient challenge
- make sure short term plans are developed from using ongoing observations and informal assessments of the children.

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

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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