

Bright Start Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	130677
Inspection date	15 June 2007
Inspector	Fler Wright
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Registered person	Brighton & Hove City Council
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?

Bright Start Nursery was first registered in 1993. The nursery is run by Brighton and Hove City Council. It is primarily the workplace nursery for Council employees. It is situated in central Brighton. Children have access to a secure outdoor play area. The nursery is open Monday to Friday, from 08:00 until 18:00, all year round.

The nursery is registered to care for 55 children at any one time and there are currently 86 children aged from six months to under five years on roll. Of these, 30 receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery offer support to children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and to those children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs a total of 24 staff. Of these, 22 have an appropriate childcare qualification, which is a minimum of level 3. The two remaining staff do not work with the children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are encouraged to learn how to keep themselves healthy through well structured routines. Older children are able to wash their hands independently at appropriate times throughout the day. They know they need to wash them in order to 'get the germs off'. The younger children in the 'Explorers' are also helped to wash their hands in child size sinks with soap and dryers, and staff talk to children about the reasons why they need to do this, helping them to learn from an early age the importance of the routine. There are good procedures in place to prevent the risk of cross contamination during nappy changes. Staff gather all relevant information regarding diet and medical history helping to ensure children's individual needs are met. Children who are infectious do not attend thus preventing the spread of contagious ailments.

Children enjoy a variety of nutritious snacks along with milk and water for their snack. Parents provide all other meals, that are prepared accordingly by a lunchtime assistant who has a certificate in food hygiene. Food is stored appropriately in a large fridge that is organised well, and helps to ensure children's food is not mixed up. Lunch times are very well organised for all children, and good use is made of the space and time available. Separate sittings help to ensure good staff interaction, so that all children get the most out of the experience.

Older children in the 'Adventurers' room have access to drinking water at all times in their play space, as a jug and cups are available. Staff are considering the possibility of preparing a drinks table in the future to further encourage children's independence and increase the opportunities for them to decide for themselves if they are thirsty. Younger children each have their own named beakers that they are able to access at any time. There is also a water cooler dispenser in the dining area that children are able to access at lunch times. All of these facilities help to ensure children are sufficiently hydrated.

Children enjoy a range of activities that help to develop their physical skills and contribute to keeping them healthy. The outdoor area is well resourced with a variety of equipment to help encourage their physical development. Climbing bars, slides, bridges, stilts and pull along trains are just some of the examples of the equipment available. Children are able to go outside more than once a day, helping to ensure they get regular fresh air. Babies and young children have a dedicated physical play room with associated equipment such as large soft play, and small stairs that they are able to access freely. They are encouraged to freely explore their dedicated space, helping to ensure their physical skills begin to develop from an early age.

Children move confidently and in a variety of ways. They are competent when using sit and ride toys and show co-ordination when jumping and running. Children's fine motor skills are developing well, and they are confident when selecting and using small equipment such as pencils, scissors and glue sticks.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have access to a bright, warm and welcoming environment that is well planned to meet the needs of the children attending the nursery. The children are split into two ends of the nursery. The older children are called the 'Adventurers' and have access to a large play space

with cosy book areas, and a separate creative room. The younger children, under two years are situated at the other end of the nursery, and are called the 'Explorers'. They have access to a sensory room, role play room, physical play room and a creative area. The way that the nursery is set up allows for free flow play and ensures all of the children experience a good range of activities and experiences on a daily basis. They each have safe and independent access to a good range of developmentally appropriate resources that are stored in or on, child size units.

Staff have a sound understanding of safety issues as regular visual and written risk assessments successfully minimise potential hazards around the nursery. Staff try to ensure children's safety on outings, although children's contact details are not always taken, meaning staff need to contact the nursery before the emergency services or parents in the event of an incident occurring. Staff deployment is effective and helps to ensure children are supervised and safe. The premises are secure, with a buzzer entry system in place, helping to monitor who enters the building. However, staff do not always approach those that are granted entry immediately. Children and staff practice the fire evacuation procedure on a regular basis, although the organisation of this does not always help to ensure everyone experiences the drill regularly.

Staff have an understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and know what action to take if they have concerns about a child in their care. This ensures they quickly recognise when a child is in danger and can act in the child's best interests. However, existing injuries that are discussed with parents are not recorded, meaning patterns are harder to identify, and records are not complete if ever staff had any further cause for concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy, relaxed and confident. They enjoy and learn from a good range of activities and experiences that help to encourage their learning and development. Interesting opportunities such as window painting, cooking and making play dough help to ensure they are well occupied. All activities are child led, meaning those participating gain a lot from them. For example, staff help children to make play dough and children are able to mix the dough and add the ingredients themselves, without having to worry about making a mess or being overly adult directed.

Children have access to good quality, stimulating toys that provide balance and challenge. They are organised to encourage children to take the initiative and develop increasing confidence and independence as they are easily accessible at all times. There are lots of photos around the nursery that help children to develop an important sense of belonging, as they can see themselves during their play. Staff present the photos in a way that interest children as they show the processes of activities they participate in. For example, children easily recall the time they made a butterfly cake, and the processes involved, as staff have made a book showing this. This helps children to remember what they have done, encouraging their thought processes. Children are very independent and are very used to the routines in place. They know the tambourine signifies tidy up time, and they eagerly help with this task. They line up with confidence and use the walking rope with ease when going to the garden or on short outings.

Birth to three matters is being implemented, and planned activities for the younger children help incorporate this into their daily play. This observation and planning system works well in the Explorers. However, the planning for the children aged between two and three years in the Adventurers room is basic. Staff use the learning environment planner to cover this task, meaning that children's needs and interests are not always taken into consideration, slightly restricting the way these particular children enjoy and achieve.

Babies are able to join in with a good range of sensory experiences. They get much enjoyment out of the music and singing sessions they participate in, and even young children concentrate for extended periods, showing they are involved, interested and enjoying their play. Children are independent and move freely between their dedicated areas. Freedom days once a week allow all children to roam around the nursery, meaning siblings are able to play together if they wish, increasing their enjoyment.

Staff know each child well, which reduces the impact of the lack of appropriate planning and assessment on the children. Staff are enthusiastic in their interaction with them, and their genuine caring nature helps children to thrive in the nursery environment. They spend time playing with children, helping them to develop new skills and make progress in their learning. They increase children's self-esteem through the use of regular positive interaction, and use effective questioning in order to further promote children's learning and development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make sound progress towards the early learning goals as the activities and experiences on offer cover the areas of learning on a daily basis. The person in charge of the Foundation Stage is a qualified teacher, and other staff working with the children have attended courses in this topic, resulting in a secure knowledge of the framework. However, the planning is basic and is currently in the process of being changed. At present, there are 12 main activities planned for each month, two under each area of learning. The activities and experiences on offer in the learning environment are imaginative and are changed throughout the day, helping to ensure children make sound progress in all areas. However, these are not always fully reflected in the written plans.

At present, there is no formal way of assessing children's progress, making it difficult to see how their skills are developing. Staff complete observations of children regularly, and these are transferred into scrapbooks for each child. They are accompanied by photographs, and are shared with parents, although a few have not been completed for some time. The observations are not used to inform the planning at present, and staff are well aware of the need to introduce a suitable assessment process as soon as possible. Although this potentially affects the way children are able to enjoy and achieve; staff know the children well, minimising the impact on them, as they are able to differentiate activities informally, as they are carried out. Staff have the desire to improve the planning and would like to implement a variety of different methods, in order to help encourage children to further enjoy and achieve at the setting.

Children are developing effective relationships and get on well with peers and staff, who listen with interest to their thoughts and stories and ask open-ended questions to help extend learning. Children's independence is encouraged as they are able to choose what they would like to do and where they would like to go within their dedicated space. This is further encouraged as all activities are child led, so children relish the opportunity to use their initiative and increase their confidence. Children help clear up after activities and are encouraged to work together. Most children are able to take turns and show regard for each other. Children show an interest in books, have their favourites, and enjoy stories throughout the day. Group times before lunch are used effectively, and form a key part of the education programme. Children learn important concentration, listening and social skills, and enjoy talking to staff about specific topics, increasing their learning potential.

Many children are confident as they count, and the equipment available helps to ensure their mathematical development is encouraged daily. Children have free access to a computer in

their play space and use the programmes with confidence and show good mouse control. Staff are considering allowing children access to the stereo, and ordering some programmable toys to help encourage further learning in this area. Children have many opportunities to express themselves creatively as various mediums such as paint, pens, sand and water are freely available in the creative room. Children make effective use of the role-play area that is set up as a variety of different places over time such as a shop, home corner and mermaids cave. Overall, children are motivated, keen to learn and are enthusiastic in their play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are treated with respect and are made to feel good about themselves. Photographs of their friends and low-level displays of their work help to give them an important sense of belonging. Staff encourage all children to participate in the activities provided which ensures they have an equal opportunity to maximise their enjoyment and potential. Children with English as an additional language are well supported. There are a range of resources and activities available to promote different cultures, and some that help to develop children's understanding of anti-discriminatory practice.

The designated special educational needs co-ordinator has a very good understanding of her role and responsibilities and has attended the relevant training. She works closely with outside agencies to ensure children's individual needs are met. She is a one to one worker herself, helping to ensure she is fully involved in her role. She is very committed, and has taken children to speech and language therapy herself, to ensure they have every opportunity to develop and learn.

Children are well behaved and benefit from regular praise and encouragement from staff to help build their confidence and self-esteem. Children are starting to show an understanding of working co-operatively, of each other's needs and of responsible behaviour as they share popular resources such as the physical play toys in the garden. They are usually willing to help each other and wait their turn. Behaviour incidents are not recorded, meaning patterns are not always easy to identify. The golden rules are displayed around the nursery, helping to ensure good behaviour is encouraged from an early age.

Partnership with parents is good. The parents of children receiving the nursery education grant receive good information about the Foundation Stage, and details of how to encourage learning at home in each area. Parents are very happy with the care provided and particularly like the consistency of staff and the nurturing environment. Regular newsletters and keyworker meetings help to ensure parents know what their children have been doing, and what is planned for the future. A parent's forum has been set up to enable parents to be fully involved with nursery news and development. The white boards in each room are a useful resource for parents as they show what the children have been doing, and the general care given to them throughout the day. All of the required permissions are in place helping to ensure children are cared for according to parental wishes. The nursery have received a complaint from a parent that has been appropriately addressed, although the details have not been effectively summarised in the complaints log. The information currently included in the log is not appropriate to share with other parents, which is a breach of regulation.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

There are a comprehensive range of policies and procedures in place that help to ensure the safe and effective management of the setting in order to promote children's welfare. However, a small number of these require improving in order to meet current guidance and further safeguard the children in attendance. Incidents and existing injuries are not recorded, and the logistics of the procedures followed for fire evacuations and contact on outings is not always effective. The medication record does not currently maintain confidentiality. The complaints policy contains the relevant information, although the management have not effectively summarised the actions taken as a result of a recent complaint. The paperwork contained within the complaints log is not suitable to show to parents as it does not maintain confidentiality. This is a breach of regulation.

There are rigorous procedures in place for recruiting new staff, and a thorough induction procedure is carried out. Children benefit from a relatively well-organised environment where they receive good adult support to help them feel secure and confident. Lunch times are well organised, and make the best use of the space and time available. Staff are well deployed which helps to ensure children are kept safe and secure.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They are dedicated, and show a genuine care for the children in attendance. However, all staff are well aware of the weaknesses raised regarding the assessment process. Evidence shows that the manager has failed to effectively monitor the way the curriculum is executed, and children's progress is monitored, as there has not been an assessment process in place for some time. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the nursery were asked to review the sick child policy and the procedure to follow in the event of an accident or emergency. Since the last inspection, the nursery have implemented a sick child policy and have amended the policies in order to ensure staff are aware of the procedures to follow in the event of an accident or emergency.

The nursery were also asked to address a number of key issues as a result of the nursery education part of the inspection. These were; to use everyday daily routines to help develop mathematical skills, and to develop procedures to ensure plans are evaluated effectively. Mathematical development is encouraged at meals times and at group times throughout the day, and there is a designated maths area in the play space to ensure children's understanding in this area is effectively promoted. A new manager has been employed since the last inspection, although the plans continue to lack any evaluative input, and a recommendation has been set at this inspection to ensure that they are effectively monitored in the future.

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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The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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 all existing injuries that are discussed with parents are recorded, and appropriate contact information is taken on outings
- improve the links between the planning of activities and the observations made of the children under three years in the adventurers room, in order to take account of their needs and interests
- ensure all incidents are recorded, and staff record the outcome of all complaints in a log suitable to show to 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):

- improve the observation system in order to inform the planning more effectively, and take account of the differing abilities of the children in attendance
- ensure a suitable assessment process is introduced without delay in order to clearly show how children are progressing in the learning
- improve the way the curriculum and assessment processes are monitored, in order to ensure they are consistently effective in all areas

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