

Little Apples of Bramley

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	507965
Inspection date	05 June 2007
Inspector	Melissa Cox
Setting Address	Bramley Village Hall, The Street, Bramley, Tadley, Hampshire, RG26 5BP
Telephone number	07799 257386
E-mail	
Registered person	Little Apples of Bramley
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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?

Little Apples of Bramley playgroup registered in 1970. It runs from Bramley Village hall and serves the local community. Both large and small halls are used and the group has access to a small enclosed play area. The group is open each weekday during term time, from 9:15 to 12:15. Lunch club runs from 12:15 to 12:45 with the exception of a Wednesday.

The setting is registered to provide care for a maximum of 42 children aged two to five years at any one time. There are currently 61 children on roll. Of these 45 receive nursery education funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and or disabilities.

The setting employs 12 staff. Of these, 10 staff hold the National Vocational Qualification level 3 or Nursery Nursing Examination Board certificate and several staff are working towards a degree qualification in Childhood Studies.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because they are cared for in a clean and hygienic environment. Their health is well promoted as the playgroup staff adhere to strict hygiene routines. Children have an understanding about washing and drying their hands after using the toilet and before snack time. They ensure that they help themselves to tissues and are mindful to put their hand over their mouth when coughing. All regulatory accident and medication books are in place and shared with parents when necessary which further ensures children's good health.

Children are beginning to learn about healthy eating. They are offered a good selection of snacks during the week, that include several fruit choices, wholemeal bread and crackers. Special helpers prepare the snack everyday and children are becoming adept at buttering bread or cutting up fruit. Water is made available to children throughout the session which ensures that they are well hydrated and comfortable. Children further develop their independence as they pour their own drinks and are learning about healthy foods during discussions with staff and peers. Their healthy growth and development is fostered, as staff show a good understanding of children's individual dietary requirements and fully include any children with additional dietary requirements.

Children have good opportunities for physical activities that contribute to a healthy lifestyle as they take part in indoor activities as well as outdoor play. Children access the outdoor area in small groups. They develop their large muscle skills and body control as they ride wheeled toys with ease, take part in obstacle courses, and use balancing and climbing apparatus. Children demonstrate spatial awareness as they manoeuvre bikes and cars skilfully to prevent collisions and to find clear open spaces to run, hop and jump. In addition children develop their awareness of space and move creatively as they enthusiastically join in with group activities such as circle games and music and movement sessions.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children develop their independence as they move freely and safely around the room because activities are set out attractively and organised effectively. Staff to child ratios are high and they are well deployed to ensure all areas of the provision are well supervised. Staff position themselves well at arrival and departure times to ensure children's safety and ensure that children do not leave with unknown adults.

Children use a good range of toys and equipment that promote their developmental needs well. Resources are mostly well organised to create an accessible and stimulating setting for children. However on some occasions children lack the opportunity to sit down when completing arts and craft activities which limits their time at these activities. Children benefit because the resources and play materials are cleaned and checked regularly for safety and hygiene. Detailed risk assessments are in place, covering most aspects of the provision, with action taken on all identified hazards to eliminate or reduce the dangers to children. Measures such as socket covers and dangerous substances which are inaccessible to children, help protect children from potential harm. Children learn how to protect themselves in the event of a fire because they take part in regular fire practises. Children have very good attitudes towards keeping themselves

and others safe. For example they are very aware not to throw sand in case it gets in children's eyes and not to run too fast outside in case they bump into someone.

Children are well protected because staff have a good understanding of their roles in child protection matters. Their well-being is safeguarded by staff's knowledge of local child protection procedures and their thorough understanding of their responsibilities for the welfare of the children in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children arrive happy and eager to learn. Staff are experienced and enjoy the company of the children in their care. They spend time talking to and playing with them. The nursery makes effective use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan and provide a range of stimulating and appropriate activities for children under three years. The children's understanding of language is promoted well by staff through constant conversation, questions and individual attention. Staff sit with children to talk about their toys and books and prompt them to name objects and shapes. Consequently, children are developing their communication skills and are able to express their needs.

There is a varied range of resources to promote play across all areas of the curriculum. Children choose to play individually or in groups. Great enjoyment comes from role play and acting out activities such as dressing up as dinosaurs and going on adventures around the hall. They are happy and settled because they have very good relationships with staff who support them well. Children under the age of three follow the same curriculum as older children funded for nursery education, and assessments of their development are made using the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Activities are provided which are appropriate to the ages and abilities of all the children.

Children confidently initiate conversations and talk about events outside the setting. They have a wide range of interesting experiences and activities during a typical week. They acquire new knowledge and skills constantly through first hand experiences they are offered. For example, they learn about dinosaurs while they enjoy and share stories, songs and rhymes. Staff listen to and value what children say and have clear expectations of what they can achieve. Staff use every opportunity to extend children's learning and thinking.

Nursery Education:

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and provide fun challenges for all the children. They know why they are doing the activities and what they expect the children to learn from them. They use very effective planning, which contains all necessary details to enable the whole staff team to work together towards the learning objectives for that week. Observations and assessments for children are used effectively and enable staff to plan for individual learning for all children. All the staff are involved in planning and recording assessments of children's progress. Each child has specific targets, which staff discuss regularly, then activities are planned to extend their learning in those areas. Planning is thorough, activities varied and learning outcomes are clearly identified. Staff know what resources are needed for each session and will often change the layout of the premises to provide an improved learning environment.

The staff are caring, patient and supportive towards the children. They use a variety of methods throughout the session, which includes group time, child-led choices and adult-led activities. Staff know the children well and demonstrate a very high level of commitment to their work. They also effectively use story telling, outdoor play and role play to broaden children's experiences. Staff use effective methods to develop children's memory and learning skills such as asking them questions to make them think. Staff are particularly skilled at managing behaviour, with a strong emphasis on encouraging good behaviour and ensuring that children understand why something is wrong. Children show an awareness of their own needs and that of others, and understand that their actions have consequences. For example, if they run around they will fall and hurt themselves and avoiding each other when riding wheeled toys.

Children are interested, excited and motivated to learn. They concentrate well and persevere with tasks showing growing levels of confidence and self-esteem. For example, children spend long periods of time making shapes from play dough and filling and pouring water into containers. Children chat happily amongst themselves and discuss many aspects such as what foods they like, their families and what they did last week. Children have opportunities of feeling special as they take turns in preparing snack for their peers.

Children are well motivated and eager to learn. Children make good progress as a result of the wide range of interesting and stimulating activities. Children are provided with excellent first hand learning experiences provided by the staff. They talk and negotiate with each other as they organise their play. For instance, a group of children plan a picnic in the garden and worry if it is going to rain. They listen enthusiastically to stories and have many opportunities to look at books independently. They are beginning to recognise their names and more able children trace these correctly in well formed letters. Younger children find this more difficult as they lack the opportunity to see their name in print at art activities. Staff read stories expressively, involve the children and expand their imagination. They sit and listen to stories about a cardboard spaceship and the children contribute readily to the story by predicting what happens next. Later, children re-enact the story by using a cardboard box and binoculars, as they travel to the moon for a picnic. Children have many opportunities to develop pre-writing skills and mark-making through a good range of activities. These include using a wide range of writing materials at the arts and craft table, making lists in the role play area and chalking using the outside boards.

Children count to 10 very well using correct number names, with daily opportunities used to reinforce this. Children use numbers in all topics, for example, counting how many children in their group and how many cups they need at snack time. They are introduced to simple addition and subtraction appropriately through number rhymes and they use language such as more, less, big and little frequently in routines and activities. They have many opportunities to sort, match and compare objects in a variety of contexts. For example, they play matching card games, sort out different play figures, compare sizes of towers they build. They learn about volume and how containers hold different amounts of water and why some items float or sink.

Children have stimulating first hand experiences which helps them make sense of the world. Children confidently use the group's computer to develop their co-ordination and skills. There are additional programmable toys to support and develop their understanding of everyday technology. Children can recall events that have happened in the recent past and talk freely about their homes and families. They are learning to respect each other's culture through the celebration of many festivals, when they participate in activities and try out associated foods.

The children have many opportunities to use their imagination as they take part in role play based on first hand experiences. For example, they pretend to be dinosaurs when playing in the garden. They imagine flying into space in a spaceship or having picnics at the beach. The children have many opportunities of experimenting with differing textures. These include water, sand, play dough, soil, and craft materials. The children are beginning to talk freely and tell staff about their ideas. For example, they talk about making cakes from play dough, putting their babies to bed and doing the ironing. All children enthusiastically enjoy singing songs and participate in action rhymes and circle games.

Children have access to a secure outdoor area where they develop an awareness of space and others around them. Children show good control and co-ordination as they develop their climbing, pedalling and balancing skills. For example, they pedal bicycles and use balancing apparatus skilfully. Children use a wide range of small equipment to develop their hand to eye co-ordination through regular use of tools and equipment such as scissors, threading beads, plastic knives and cutters, glue sticks and pencils. Children use a variety of different materials and choose methods of joining which include glue and sticky tape to make collage pictures and model dinosaurs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have their individual needs met well as the setting is proactive in its approach to those with additional needs. The special needs co-ordinator discusses each child with their parents to ensure that individual requirements are fully met. The setting liaises closely with external agencies who are also working with the children, all with parental consent. All children are made welcome and take an active part in the life of the playgroup. They feel a sense of belonging as they move freely between activities, are familiar with routines and have space for their belongings. Children form relationships with staff and their peers and they settle quickly because staff are sensitive to their needs.

Children become aware of the wider society as they have access to a good range of toys and resources which promote positive images of diversity. Toys and resources that promote equality of opportunity are integrated within their play environment, for example, books, play figures, puzzles and dolls represent different races and cultures. They celebrate a range of festivals from various faiths throughout the year.

Behaviour is good and children are well-mannered. For example, children respond quickly by saying 'sorry' when they bump into each other and ask each other nicely to share the play resources. Children respond well to familiar triggers such as 'tidy up time' or to go and sit on the carpet at group time. Staff act as good role models to the children. They treat children with respect and encourage children to listen to each other in group situations. They are encouraged to share, take turns, play nicely and they are learning the difference between right and wrong. Children co-operate with each other in their play. For example, they share the play dough to make models and pretend to act out real life situations in the role play area. Staff use praise well as comments such as 'thank you', 'that's lovely', or 'well done' are used regularly which increases their self-esteem and confidence. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Valuable written information is provided for parents to cover both care and education. For example, they receive a prospectus which covers all policies and procedures. They also receive written information regarding how the Foundation

Stage is implemented within the setting which enables them to understand how their child is learning. They are regularly informed of current topics and planning and a daily notice board is completed which outlines activities the children have engaged in. Parents comment very positively about the playgroup and feel well supported by the approachable staff who create a friendly and sociable atmosphere. There is an effective partnership with parents and staff operate an 'open door' policy and welcome parents into the setting. Parents are also encouraged to be involved within the playgroup as they are encouraged to sign up to a parent's rota, help fund raise and bring things from home relating to a specific topic.

Children benefit because detailed information about children's routines, interests and their starting points are sought to help staff plan for the individual child. Parents are informed of their child's progress through regular discussions and parent meetings. Parents are aware of their child's key worker and are confident in liaising and discussing aspects with them. They are invited to discuss their child's progress in detail and have access to their children's assessment records.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the setting's good organisation. The playleader and chair of the committee work together effectively, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. All share a clear vision for the playgroup's future. Staff work as a vibrant, cohesive team who focus on their role and responsibilities to achieve the principles of the pre-school. The staff are very well-organised and have due regard for the well-being of the children in their care.

Robust systems are in place for vetting new staff and they are all aware that until the process is complete they cannot be left alone with children. The staff are experienced and have a strong commitment to attend regular on-going training. Comprehensive policies and procedures protect children and are effectively implemented to promote all the outcomes for children. The playleader is proactive in ensuring that the practice of all staff contributes positively to children's good health, safety and enjoyment. Children's play and learning experiences are enhanced because all staff are encouraged to develop their existing knowledge and understanding of child care related issues.

Children are happy, relaxed and cared for in a friendly environment. Activities are varied and familiar routines provide children with security and consistency. The wide range of experiences supports children's learning and encourages their independence and freedom of choice. The group maintain a higher ratio of adults in the setting than required to ensure that children receive an effective level of interaction and supervision. All legally required documentation is in excellent order and reviewed regularly. Necessary paperwork such as registers and accident book are quickly and accurately filled in.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. They have an established, stable staff group who work very well together. The manager is proactive in her approach and encourages all staff to play a full role in the setting. They hold regular staff meetings and reflect on their practice so that they are aware of their own strengths and weaknesses. They evaluate the activities provided for the children each week and keep evidence to show how children make progress in their learning. All children are supported well to achieve their potential by staff knowing their starting points and working with parents and carers to support this progress. Playgroup staff have a strong knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and are very capable in planning a programme of activities to enhance the children's learning. The playleader

provides exceptional support for staff and team work is apparent. Strengths of the provision are shared as good practice.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last care inspection, the playgroup were asked to improve on fire safety precautions by ensuring notices were in place, increase opportunities for children to be able to select toys and resources and to provide parents with more information on their child's progress. Considerable improvement has been made by the group and the committee to meet these recommendations. The group have addressed all areas of fire safety and fire safety notices are now in place. There is a good range of accessible resources available for the children to self select and this has increased children's independence aiding them in making their own choices. Parents receive a wealth of information from the group about their child's progress and are now fully included in their child's learning. As a result the children benefit from a well organised group which provides extensively for their needs.

The previous nursery education inspection highlighted that the playgroup needs to increase opportunities to allow children to read familiar words and allow them access to read books for pleasure, for children to do simple calculations and improve the evaluation and observation of activities to assist in planning. The group has successfully addressed these issues. Staff provide opportunities for children to use calculation and problem solving in their everyday activities. They count during registration, snack time and general routines and staff reinforce language throughout the session. Children are avid readers and take part in the selection of their reading material by self selecting their own choice of books. They have an increased awareness that print carries meaning and are given more opportunities to write words and simple sentences. Staff have addressed planning needs and through constant evaluation of activities ensure that this is skilfully linked to planning the next steps in children's learning. As a result, the points have been successfully implemented in the group and the children now benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum based on what children can do and covering all areas fully.

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):

- ensure that children have the opportunity to sit down during art and craft 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):

- increase the opportunities for children to see their name in print during art and craft activities

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