

Whitwood House

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY218871
Inspection date	10 May 2007
Inspector	Christine Snowdon
Setting Address	148b High Street, Boston Spa, Wetherby, West Yorkshire, LS23 6BW
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Registered person	Jane Louise Hussey
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

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

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

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

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

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

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

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

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

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

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Brook Babes at Whitwood House Day Nursery has been registered since 2002. It operates from a large converted house in the village of Boston Spa, West Yorkshire. The setting serves Boston Spa and other local villages. The registered person is also the owner of Brook Babes Nursery in the nearby village of Bramham. Care is provided in four rooms on two levels of the building, along with toilet facilities and baby sleep room. There are two fully enclosed areas for outdoor play.

The nursery is registered to provide care for 35 children from birth to eight years of age and there are currently 64 children on roll. Of these 22 are in receipt of nursery education funding. The setting opens five days a week, all year round, apart from Bank Holidays. Full day care is from 07.45 until 18.00 and the sessions operate from 09.00 until 12.00 and from 12.30 until 15.00. The nursery is currently supporting children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The nursery employs 11 staff who work directly with the children. The majority of them hold relevant childcare qualifications. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development

and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP). The nursery is currently in the process of completing the Leeds Quality Assurance scheme.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

All children in the nursery are gaining a clear understanding of the importance of good hygiene practices. Older children independently visit the toilet themselves and deal with their own personal routines. Staff ensure younger children and babies are encouraged and supported. For example, individual face flannels are used to clean their hands and faces after meals. However, the arrangements at morning snack time within the baby room is not good practice. Staff ensure that children are cared for in a clean and hygienic environment by following the comprehensive hygiene procedures, which include nappy changing and the cleaning down of surfaces and equipment. These practices along with the nursery's written sickness policy effectively reduce the risk of cross- contamination.

Children benefit from the healthy and nutritious diet they receive. All food is prepared and cooked using fresh foods and vegetables. Mealtimes are very sociable occasions and children develop their independence through pouring their own drinks and cutting up fruit at snack time. Children access fresh drinking water throughout the day and staff offer drinks regularly. This ensures children do not become thirsty. Staff work in close partnership with the parents to ensure children's health and individual dietary needs are met effectively.

Children enjoy a good range of physical activities that contribute well to their healthy lifestyle. Babies develop good coordination skills as they crawl around and use the furniture to pull themselves up onto their feet. They particularly enjoy climbing up and through the wooden tunnel, then chuckle as staff encourage them and play 'peek-a-boo' through the other end. Older children climb, jump and balance using a wide range of apparatus. They eagerly take part in the various group games when they run, kick balls and jump in and out of hoops in the outdoor area. Children show good hand-eye coordination. They hold and use scissors, pencils and paintbrushes correctly, pour their own drinks and cut up fruit with skill and care.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an exceptionally safe and secure environment. The effective systems in place ensure that children can play freely and safely supported by vigilant staff. For example, key pad access into the nursery ensures no one enters without authorisation. The outdoor area is particularly child orientated and children can take appropriate risks and develop their skills on the equipment due to the safe surfaces beneath. Children learn to keep themselves safe by taking part in the regular fire drills and using tools, such as knives and scissors safely. Sleeping babies are monitored closely and checked on every 15 minutes. Written risk assessments are in place and carried out regularly along with daily checks to minimise hazards. Resources are all of very good quality and meet the safety standards well. These are effectively and safely stored to provide children of all ages with maximum choice. As a result, children make independent choices and instigate their own play and learning.

Children's welfare is effectively promoted. Children are closely supervised at all times by qualified and experienced staff who have a sound knowledge and understanding of child protection

procedures. The nursery has rigorous policies and procedures in place to ensure all adults working with children are safe and suitable to do so. There are clear procedures in place which ensure safe collection of all children. This ensures that children are only released into the care of known adults in line with parents' wishes.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and settled in the child orientated and homely environment. They show a strong sense of belonging and are motivated and interested throughout their stay. Young babies benefit from the positive interaction of the staff and the excellent range of activities, including creative and messy play, sand, pasta and water play. They laugh and chuckle and make themselves understood using simple gestures and sounds. Staff's sound knowledge and effective use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework enhances and promotes the younger children's development and learning. Older children decide what theme they would like in the role play area. The choice of a fairy castle results in staff and children dressing up in various costumes and jewellery. Nets are draped over to create an enchanting castle and a dragon sits on the top of the doorway. Children work together decorating the chocolate cake using various colours of icing and cone shapes to represent the castles towers. They then enjoy eating it after their lunch. There are effective routines in place in most areas which meet the children's needs very well. However, the current routine of clearing away resources at snack time in the pre-school room limits children's opportunities for sustained and purposeful play.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. A balanced curriculum and accessible resources ensure children have a positive range of experiences. This helps support their learning in all areas. Staff are developing a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and plan an enjoyable and varied programme of learning which links well to the stepping stones. Staff carry out observations on children's learning and use this information to complete their attainment records. However, there is no recording of individual children's identified next steps in learning. This limits the effectiveness of all staff being able to support or challenge children. The staff are enthusiastic and engage well with the children throughout the session. They take time to introduce new activities and this motivates and maximises children's play and enjoyment. Staff ask open ended questions and encourage children to think.

Children are confident and motivated learners. They are eager to take part in their chosen activities and enjoy the socialisation with their friends. They concentrate well and at times become engrossed in the new play opportunities. For example, one child spends 40 minutes in the role play area, digging in the compost, wrapping up flowers and organising her customers in the florist shop. They then use the note pad to write out the customers orders. Children make marks in most areas of learning including outdoors. However, the more able children are not sufficiently encouraged to practise writing their own names on their art work. Most children are able to recognise their own name cards at snack time, others know to compare the letters on their cups to find their matching name. The effective labelling in the setting promotes children's understanding of the written word. They listen well during group time and eagerly join in with the familiar songs and stories.

Children use numbers and mathematical language during their everyday play activities. They measure and say who's flower is the biggest, or smallest. When weighing out baking ingredients they say they need more for the recipe. They count increasingly well when playing 'what time

is it Mr Wolf'. They count how many sides the square has and hold up four fingers and then three for the triangle. One child then says 'I have 10 fingers' and holds up both hands. There are some occasions when children make the comparison to the written number. For example, they sing 'five little ducks' and the child is able to select the corresponding number. However, there are missed opportunities to consolidate this aspect of understanding.

Children are developing very good design and creative skills. They use their imagination and language effectively to organise their thoughts and explain what they are doing. During a planned activity children talk about the flowers, how they smell and feel before drawing them. Some children decide to make a collage flower instead. They think which shapes they need and select a circle piece and some long rectangles from the resources. Then they skilfully cut small snips around the edges of the circle to create the petals, using sticky tape to fix the stem into place. They are proud of their achievements and other children decide to make one too. They gain a good understanding of nature and living things through such activities along with observing at first hand animals who visit the setting. These have included a horse and a baby lamb.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a wide and varied range of experiences that promote their understanding of their local environment and the wider world. They go for walks around their local community and have visitors who link into their nursery topic. They celebrate cultures and customs other than their own, such as Chinese New Year and Diwali. Staff ensure that resources are used effectively to promote children's understanding of similarities and differences. Gender free play is positively encouraged and they all enjoy dressing up as fairies and wearing earrings and other items of jewellery.

All children are welcome, valued and respected by staff. They all have freedom of choice and good opportunities to develop their confidence and self-esteem. A great deal of work and commitment ensures that children with learning difficulties and disabilities are effectively supported in their inclusive setting. Children's behaviour is very good due to the staff's consistent approach and effective use of praise and encouragement. They have strong and trusting relationships with the staff and are developing friendships with their peers. As a result they play well together, take turns and share equipment. As a result children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Older children are able to self-regulate and are aware of the established rules and boundaries within the setting. For example, they know that only four children at a time are allowed in the role play area.

Partnerships with parents and carers is good and relationships are very positive. There are strong bonds with the parents which contribute significantly to the children's well-being within the nursery. Parents receive quality information and daily feedback on what their children have done throughout the day. For example, babies have daily diaries and there are wipe boards in all areas with an overview of activities, the days menu and other relevant information. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning through open evenings, discussions and sharing information. They independently access their child's development and attainment folder and staff are always happy to answer any questions or queries.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a very clean, welcoming and child-orientated environment. The resources are organised effectively and imaginatively to create defined areas of learning for older children. This along with the free-flow access to the outdoor area encourages personal independence and choice. The creative use of furniture, drapes and cushions creates a homely and welcoming atmosphere.

Children are well cared for by a very committed management and staff team. They are qualified, experienced and eager to extend their knowledge through a programme of appropriate training. There is an effective key worker system in place that ensures children feel secure and their individual needs are met. All documentation is very well organised and reviewed regularly, this ensures all policies and procedures are up to date and used effectively to support their practice. Very good systems are in place to evaluate their own practice. For example, the management produce questionnaires for staff and parents and take part in the local authorities quality assurance scheme.

The leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory. Staff work well as a team and are all involved in the planning. They carry out spontaneous and planned assessments to evaluate the learning outcomes and inform future planning. Regular staff meetings and in-house training take place to develop staff's knowledge and promote consistency in their approach. The management carry out staff appraisals and effectively support and encourage staff. As a result, all staff are committed to improving their knowledge and skills. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last day care inspection the nursery was asked to ensure that supervisors in the setting were suitably qualified. The management has ensured that there is a continuing training and development plan in place. As a result, all supervisors hold a Level 3 or higher qualification. This effectively supports children in their care and learning.

The nursery was also asked to improve safety with regards to access to the nursery and ensure parents endorsed accident and medication records. Staff now ensure that all records are signed by the parents and these are checked by management. There is excellent security systems in place to ensure no one enters the premises unsupervised. This along with the setting risk assessment ensures children are cared for in a very safe and secure environment.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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):

- improve the routine so that children in the pre school area have more opportunities for sustained and purposeful play (this also applies to nursery education)
- improve the hygiene practice in relation to the babies morning snack.

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 current system so that assessments are used to aid planning for children's individual next steps in learning
- increase opportunities for children to make links with written number when counting and practise writing their name for example, on their art work.

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