

Berwick Road Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY246428
Inspection date	10 May 2007
Inspector	Suzette Butcher

Setting Address	Berwick Road, Little Sutton, South Wirral, CH66 4PN
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Telephone number	0151 339 2700
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Registered person	Helen Cartwright
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Type of inspection	Integrated
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Type of care	Full day care
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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?

Berwick Road Day Nursery is privately owned and was re-registered, after a change in ownership, in 2003. It is situated in Little Sutton, Cheshire. The nursery is open from 07.30 to 18.00 each weekday throughout the year. Children share access to fully enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 100 children on roll who attend for a variety of sessions. Of these, 31 children are funded for early years education. Children attend from a wide catchment area. There are 19 members of staff employed who all hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children at the setting are developing a good understanding of how to stay healthy. Freshly prepared, nutritious food is available each day and children enjoy a variety of well planned menus. They talk about their preferences, about where food comes from and why it is good

for you. Food tasting sessions further develop children's awareness. Babies have their individual needs met by blending food to the correct consistency for their taste and stage of development. Children's individual dietary needs are recorded and met at all times. The cook takes an active role within the nursery where she relates warmly to staff, parents and children. She regularly consults children about their likes and dislikes and reviews her menus according to their preferences. Parents comment that their children's diet has improved during their time at the nursery. A variety of fresh fruit is offered at snack time and children remember to say please and thank you when they are given a selection of sandwiches. Milk is available at lunch time and younger children are offered drinks of water on a regular basis. Older children ask for a drink when they are thirsty but they are not encouraged to help themselves to readily available fresh drinking water at any time of the day.

Children benefit from all staff holding first aid qualifications which enable them to deal with minor accidents competently and suitable first aid kits are available. The hygiene routines regarding nappy changing are good and so reduce the risk of the spread of illness. The environment is generally clean and staff ensure that floors are cleaned after meals and bedding is washed regularly. Areas are maintained to an adequate temperature throughout the nursery. Staff promote good hygiene routines with children across the age ranges, such as washing hands before eating or cleaning their face with a clean wet flannel after lunch. Older children are beginning to accept responsibility for their personal care as they put on their own coats or use the adjacent toilets. They understand that they are washing away germs that may make you ill when they follow good routines and know to find a tissue to wipe their nose.

Babies' individual routines and parental preferences are followed in daily routines to promote good continuity of care. They share warm relations with staff when they snuggle up on an adult's knee to drink their milk or learn to use a spoon at lunch time. Toddlers are able to rest or sleep on mats in a safe, cosy area and older children sit together happily for a quiet time after lunch. Babies and toddlers enjoy free play opportunities to explore their physical environment as they gain confidence and learn to move with more control. They experiment with movement in the safe soft play areas with discreet support from staff. The outdoor play area provides many more interesting opportunities that promote children's health as they enjoy fresh air and physical exercise. Children have fun learning to use their bodies in different ways as they climb higher on the wooden frame, balance on the wobbly pole or jump off onto the soft surface. They learn to position themselves in space as they pedal a bike around a course or negotiate obstacles as they pull their friend along on a trailer.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in different age groups by warm and sensitive staff who are generally aware of their individual needs. Staff have a sound understanding of how to recognise and reduce potential hazards and risks within the environment, for example, when they confirm children's safety before opening doors. An effective system is in place for staff to report identified problems and hazards to management and appropriate action is taken. However, robust risk assessment procedures are not fully in place to clearly identify potential hazards and dangers to ensure children's safety at all times. The system does not include agreed actions and timescales to minimise risks. Consideration has been given to the fire safety procedure which is regularly practised to promote children's safety in the case of an emergency. Management ensure that current building and improvement projects do not impact negatively on children's care and well-being. Staff to child ratios are suitably met and children are adequately supervised. The premises are secure and systems are in place to record the arrival

and departure of visitors, which protects children in the setting. Clear procedures are in place to protect children on outings.

Older children learn about what is dangerous and how to keep themselves safe in topics and practical activities. They practise crossing the road in role play games or learn about the importance of traffic lights. Issues about 'Stranger Danger' are sensitively discussed to help children to stay safe. Staff are aware of child protection issues and information with contact details of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board is readily available. Suitable procedures are implemented to promote children's well-being.

A selection of toys and equipment are available to provide suitable opportunities for children to play indoors and outdoors. However, there is a limited range of high quality resources and, consequently, a number of favourite resources, such as dressing-up clothes or construction sets, are rotated around the groups. This restricts children's choice and has a negative impact on the quality of their learning experiences. Some resources are stored at a low level in labelled wooden units around each play room. This provides opportunities for children to make their own decisions and choices although they are not actively encouraged to access resources independently. Equipment is generally in a satisfactory condition and checked for safety on a regular basis.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy themselves in an environment where they relate warmly to key staff members, which significantly contributes to their self-confidence. They show interest in the activities provided, most of which are developmentally appropriate. Children's work is valued and displayed, but not always at an appropriate height for the children to share their interest. Staff have attended training and demonstrate a sound understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Subsequently, they have introduced many aspects of the framework to provide wider play and learning opportunities for young children. For example, toddlers learn to use all their senses as they experiment with different tactile consistencies, such as cold baked beans or wet spaghetti. They develop a stronger sense of self when they play in the familiar sensory area and look at themselves and others in the carefully positioned mirrors. Babies have fun investigating treasure baskets full of natural objects and interesting everyday items. However, exciting sensory activities are only introduced infrequently and not regarded as an important, integral aspect of young children's learning.

Satisfactory systems for planning, observing and assessing children's learning are in place although these systems have not been fully implemented in all the appropriate age groups. Observations are recorded regularly but not often enough to highlight all the significant steps in progress for individual children, and especially for young babies. This restricts opportunities to clearly identify the next steps in learning for each child. Consequently, planning is based on activities and not on the needs of the individual children. Many activities are organised spontaneously on a daily basis when staff decide what to make available for each group. For example, toddlers enjoy free play sessions where they have fun dressing up, looking at books or playing in the low level sand tray. Choice is limited, however, and children are not actively encouraged to make their own decisions or select materials from accessible resources. This inhibits their self-motivation and independent learning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a sound understanding and awareness of the early learning goals and the Foundation Stage curriculum. Children make steady progress within the Foundation Stage although staff do not fully understand how to organise and implement the curriculum to enhance children's learning. Imaginative medium and short term planning is in place and children are sometimes involved in organising future planning through group discussion. This provides some opportunities to explore and include children's interests and preferences. Planning is based on appropriate topics, such as Growth, Senses or All about me and includes stimulating relevant activities to develop children's play and learning. Record keeping is satisfactory and is based on observations of what the children do and evaluations of focus activities. Staff complete an appropriate profile to record progress over time for each child. However, the next steps in learning for individual children are not clearly identified and not considered to inform future planning. Consequently, planning is activity led and does not promote clear objectives for individual children.

Topics include rich and stimulating opportunities for children to investigate and learn through hands-on experiences. For example, children have fun making comparisons and exploring new sensory challenges when they are invited to smell items, such as vanilla, ginger, coconut or lemon. They enjoy tactile activities with different consistencies, such as wet spaghetti or painting with sponges, and use descriptive words, such as 'wiggly worms' or 'soggy and soft'. Children's imagination is developed in exciting role play opportunities when the home corner becomes a vets or a post office. They learn more about the wider world and their natural environment as they plant cress seeds, watch them grow and look forward to tasting cress in sandwiches. Organised visits from firemen or local rangers provide a memorable focus for themed activities. Children have fun experimenting with colours and enjoy creating patterns and shapes in the outdoor environment, where they are offered more choice in free play activities. They proudly display a colourful rainbow that they have created from coloured chalks or consider how colours have blended together on their hands and faces. They initiate imaginative games together and develop pretend play sequences. Children's access to resources indoors is restricted and, consequently, choice is limited. Most activities, such as computer skills or painting an object, are adult led. Children spend a lot of time sitting in a large group, listening to a story or waiting for the next instruction from staff. They sometimes display signs of boredom as they wait for activities to be prepared or tidied away. Child initiated and independent activities are not actively encouraged and, consequently, chances to consolidate children's learning and experiences are lost. Some activities also lack purpose and limit children's creativity. For example, children carefully cut out pictures from a catalogue but are not offered the opportunity to create a collage or book with the pictures. Other children attempt to write over a short sentence with little understanding of the meaning of the letter sounds or words.

Language and communication skills are developed and children are confident communicators, who actively engage in conversations with staff and each other. Informal learning opportunities are promoted at snack and meal times when children talk about their interests and their likes and dislikes. Children confidently approach adults, ask questions and involve them in their imaginative play. They are encouraged by supportive adults who show interest in what they have to say and ask appropriate questions to extend their experiences and learning. Children learn to link sounds to letters and many are able to read their names and attempt to write them on their pictures. Displays, posters and an accessible box of books promote reading skills and children enjoy sharing stories. Mathematical understanding is developed through everyday activities and practical experiences. For example, children enjoy counting their friends as they line up and help to calculate 'one more' when another child arrives. Children count toys, play number games and colour shapes and enjoy lively games outdoors where they follow an instruction to all run to a designated number or shape.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled in the welcoming setting where everyone relates well with each other. The relaxed and amiable relationships amongst the staff and with the children's families is reflected in the friendly relationships amongst the children. Sharing, turn taking and cooperative play is promoted throughout the nursery. Children are encouraged to express their preferences, and are sometimes actively involved in making decisions. Minor disagreements are dealt with in a way that is appropriate to each child's age and stage of development. For example, younger children are gently redirected when they squabble over the same toy. Older children learn to understand and respect house rules as they follow clear boundaries, such as respecting the rule that no more than four children may play in the sand at once.

Equality of opportunity is supported as children are invited to share the same toys and activities. Opportunities to learn about diversity, such as celebrating Chinese New Year, are available but the limited number of suitable resources and appropriate activities limits children's understanding and awareness of diversity in the wider world. The inclusive ethos and caring staff ensures that children with learning difficulties or disabilities are supported adequately. Staff are aware of the additional needs of the children for whom they are responsible. They develop good relationships with parents which enables them to meet the needs of the children appropriately. Staff attend relevant courses to support children. For example, they attend a course on basic Makaton and total communication to support children with speech and language difficulties. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents state that they are happy with the quality of care provided for their children. They comment that they know who to talk to if they have any concerns and find staff very friendly and approachable. The setting's policies and procedures are available on request and notices or newsletters keep parents informed about significant events. Information is shared informally at hand over times and a daily diary is maintained for younger children with basic information on diet, nappy changes and sleep. This promotes effective continuity of care. Some parents write significant details about their child's home life in the diary which creates stronger links between home and nursery. An open evening is held annually to provide an opportunity for staff to share information with parents about their child's progress. Parents comment that they would appreciate more information about the Foundation Stage and the 'Birth to three matters' framework and more comprehensive reports on their child's development. They would also like more opportunities to share information and discuss their child's progress with staff to enable them to contribute more fully to their child's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. Appropriate employment procedures are in place to ensure that all staff are suitably vetted and that children are protected. Staff meetings are held regularly and annual appraisal meetings create opportunities for management and staff to identify individual needs and discuss issues within the setting. The ongoing suitability of staff is monitored adequately by management. The setting's main areas for improvement are identified by management and improvement programmes implemented. For example, a building programme is currently underway to improve the interior nursery environment. Nevertheless, improvement is not consistently organised because the setting's strengths and weaknesses are not clearly reviewed, identified or prioritised towards the continual

improvement of the quality of care for children. The educational programme is also monitored informally as management observe and discuss issues with staff during their daily routines. Room planning is sometimes monitored by management and focus activities are evaluated by staff to assess their effectiveness. Staff have responded positively to regular advice and support from the local Sure Start early years teacher and, consequently, a satisfactory framework for planning and recording is in place for different age groups. Management attend cluster groups within their area where they share ideas with other providers. However, the procedures to monitor the overall quality of the early education provision and evaluate its impact on children's progress are not fully established. This has a negative impact on the quality of teaching and children's learning throughout the setting.

Child to adult ratios are maintained and an effective key worker system provides consistency and continuity for children and families. Many members of the staff team have worked together in this nursery for a number of years and know the families and children well. Staff are well qualified and continue to attend appropriate training to increase their knowledge and enhance their skills. Appropriate documentation is in place and stored securely. Staff sign that they have read and understood the setting's policy documents. Information about important changes in legislation, such as the complaints procedure, is readily available for parents. However, the setting's policies and procedures are not reviewed and amended on a regular basis to ensure that all the information is up to date.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the providers agreed to develop the key worker system and senior staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. Both issues have been addressed to further safeguard children and improve the quality of care provided.

At the last nursery education inspection, the providers agreed to increase opportunities for children to develop independence in dressing skills. Children's personal belongings are now stored in low level drawers and coats are hung on low level pegs to increase children's personal independence. The providers also agreed to increase opportunities for children's mathematical language, problem solving, practical experiences and outdoor play activities to be developed. The curriculum has been reviewed to extend all these areas which has improved the overall quality of nursery education.

Complaints since the last inspection

Ofsted received concerns relating to National Standard 4 - Physical Environment, National Standard 5 - Equipment, National Standard 6 - Safety, National Standard 7 - Health and National Standard 12 - Working in partnership with parents and carers. An Ofsted early years childcare inspector visited the provision on 15 June 2006. Actions were raised and satisfactorily met by the registered provider. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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 that children have access to fresh drinking water at all times
- further develop risk assessment procedures to clearly identify actions and timescales to minimise potential hazards
- increase resources for play and learning to meet the needs of children across the age ranges
- increase opportunities for sensory play activities in line with 'Birth to three matters' framework
- actively promote children's independent learning in all areas of their development (also applies to nursery education)
- increase resources and opportunities to promote diversity
- review policies and procedures on a regular basis to reflect all changes.

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):

- clearly identify next steps in learning for individual children to inform future planning and share with parents (also applies to care)
- increase opportunities to share information with parents about their child's progress to enable them to contribute more fully to their child's learning (also applies to care)
- improve procedures to monitor and evaluate the setting's strengths, weaknesses and the quality of teaching and learning (also applies to care).

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