

Little Badgers Child Care

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY345618
Inspection date	20 August 2007
Inspector	Noreen Elizabeth Appleby
Setting Address	Shaftoe Trust Controlled First School, Haydon Bridge, HEXHAM, Northumberland, NE47 6BN
Telephone number	01434 684446
E-mail	gayle_hodgson@onetel.com
Registered person	Gayle Hodgson
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Badgers Child Care is run by a private provider. It opened in 2007 and operates from premises, within the grounds of Shaftoe Trust Controlled First School, in Haydon Bridge. The group serves the needs of children from the local community and surrounding areas. A maximum of 46 children may attend the setting at any one time. The day care facility is open each week day from 07.30 until 18.30, for 51 weeks of the year. The out of school club operates during school term time, from 07.30 to 09.00 and from 15.00 to 18.30. During school holiday periods it operates, as required, from 07.30 to 18.30.

There are currently 42 children aged from nine months to under eight years on roll, as well as 12 children aged over eight years. The group presently supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs 10 staff to work with the children. Of these, the manager and seven staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are three staff currently working towards a relevant Level 3 qualification. The team are assisted by one regular volunteer.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean environment, which contributes towards their good health. Premises are well maintained and effective cleaning rotas ensure the day-to-day cleanliness of premises and equipment. Children are learning the importance of good personal hygiene routines, for example, as they wash their hands after toileting or before meals and snacks. Thorough nappy changing routines, such as using disposable aprons and gloves, minimise the risk of cross-contamination. Formal medication and sickness policies are implemented well, in the setting. There are good arrangements for excluding sick or infectious children and for attending to the needs of children who become ill. The registered provider ensures there is a qualified first aider on duty at all times so children's accidents are competently managed and recorded. There are good arrangements in place to ensure children's medication needs are appropriately administered and recorded.

Children have good opportunities to enjoy physical play activities, which help them to develop new skills and contribute towards keeping them healthy. Babies and young children are becoming more mobile, as they learn to crawl or toddle. They enjoy exploring their play space and are learning to move around confidently. Pre-school children are learning to coordinate their movements, for example, as they learn to play hopscotch, or take part in sports day. Older children, who attend the out of school club, enjoy outdoor activities such as playing chase or rounders. All children enjoy local walks in the nearby countryside, which enable them to get plenty of fresh air. Children are also able to rest or sleep in accordance with their individual needs. Babies and under fives rest or sleep in their playrooms, whilst older children enjoy quiet times, such as relaxing on the settee, reading or using quiet table-top activities.

Catering arrangements ensure children's dietary needs are met well. Staff ensure babies have regular drinks to keep them hydrated throughout the day. Water coolers are available, so older children can serve themselves. A rolling menu plan has been devised to ensure children enjoy a broad range of well balanced meals and snacks. Children are learning about making healthy choices, for example, as they select fruits for snack or as they eat various vegetables at lunch time. Older children, who attend the out of school club, generally bring packed lunches. They are learning the importance of suitable food storage, as they use cool-bags or ensure perishable foodstuffs are appropriately refrigerated. They also enjoy occasional cooking activities, including making healthy pizzas or fresh fruit salad. Children sit together for meals and snacks. Younger children are learning to feed themselves. All children are learning good table manners and social skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Premises are spacious and well maintained. Staff generally monitor room temperatures, although present arrangements do not always ensure play areas are comfortably warm, especially with regards to non-mobile babies. The manager has therefore agreed to monitor temperatures more closely, to ensure children's comfort and care. All rooms benefit from bright interesting displays, informative notice boards and well organised activities, which are carefully set out prior to children's arrival. This provides an attractive and inviting environment for children, parents and carers. Children enjoy a broad range of good quality resources, which are well organised and stored accessibly, at child height. Therefore, all areas of children's development

is fostered and children's confidence and independence is improving, as they learn to make individual choices.

Staff closely monitor safety issues within the setting. Comprehensive risk assessments are carried out and good daily routines ensure hazards are successfully minimised. Good security arrangements, such as external and internal key pad entry systems, ensure visitors are closely monitored and prevent children from leaving the setting, unsupervised. Staff also use suitable strategies for teaching children to keep themselves safe. For example, they prompt children to keep walkways clear so other children do not trip over toys. Children are also learning suitable road safety strategies when they go for walks. In addition, regular fire drills ensure staff and children have a good understanding of the emergency evacuation procedure.

Children's well-being is given careful consideration in matters of child protection. A comprehensive policy statement is in place and staff demonstrate a good understanding of issues. They have effective plans in place to ensure concerns are competently managed, in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children's care arrangements are well met because staff know each child's individual requirements and ensure all children are well supported. Individual play areas are effectively set out to provide an attractive, inviting, accessible play and learning environment. Regular daily routines help children to know what is expected of them. Staff use positive support strategies, which helps children to play purposefully and to work cooperatively with one another. Key staff have a sound awareness of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, or the 'Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage of learning.' They generally plan activities around a theme, ensuring they are suitable for children's developmental stages. However, present systems are not effectively used to closely monitor children's progress and consistently plan the next steps in children's learning. Therefore, staff are continuing to improve planning and assessment systems, in line with children's relevant curricula, to ensure children are always sufficiently challenged and extended. Nevertheless, children enjoy a broad range of play and learning opportunities and they are generally making good progress across all areas of their development.

Babies and children under three years of age enjoy exploring their individual play areas, which are well set out to provide a warm, interesting and stimulating environment. For example, they are learning to communicate by using body language and a variety of vocal sounds and they respond well to adult interaction. They are becoming more mobile and they use their senses to explore a good variety of toys and resources. They particularly enjoy tactile experiences, such as playing with the musical instruments and they smile enthusiastically as they beat or shake them to make a variety of sounds. Children's social skills are improving, as they begin to play with each other or take part in large group activities, such as singing nursery rhymes or listening to stories. They enjoy using stacking rings, shape sorters and pop-up toys, which enhance their cognitive development.

Pre-school children move around more confidently and self-select activities that interest them. They are learning to recognise and use number names, for example, as they learn to play hopscotch. Most enjoy art activities, such as drawing, painting and collage. They enjoy exploring media and materials. For example, they watch with interest as they mix red and white paint colours together, to form pink. Some are developing good concentration as they persevere with their chosen tasks for a considerable time. They are currently enjoying a 'Sports' theme,

which they use to develop their imagination as they serve in the sports shop. They have talked about physical activities they enjoy and drawn pictures of themselves, for example, as they play football or attend ballet class. They are beginning to make marks and form a variety of recognisable letters, for example, as they attempt to write their names or copy prose, which describes their pictures.

Children who attend the out of school club enjoy a good variety of art and craft activities, such as stencilling, painting and collage. These develop children's imagination and creativity. For example, the children talk enthusiastically about a 'Pirates' theme they recently enjoyed and they are very proud of the pirate ship wall display, treasure maps and telescopes they made. They also created a three dimensional treasure island, using paper mâché. As part of a 'Beach' theme, they explored various natural and man-made materials and made pictures of under water creatures. Most children like to try new skills, such as origami, which they developed as part of a Chinese theme. Some choose to play board games. They play cooperatively with one another, taking turns and enjoying the social interaction. Others enjoy using construction sets to create buildings, vehicles and robots. Some prefer to relax on a comfortable settee, chatting with one another, or playing hand-held computer games.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Good partnerships have developed with parents and carers. Information is effectively shared with them, for example, using the group prospectus, policies and procedures, formal contracts and agreements, newsletters and informative displays. Parents, carers and children also have good opportunities to contribute to the group as they complete questionnaires, through which they can express their views and suggestions. Open days and informal verbal discussion also keep parents and carers up to date with children's care issues and progress.

Children benefit from activities that are gender-free, as they readily access the full range of toys, equipment and learning opportunities. Resources and play areas are labelled clearly in three languages, to ensure all children are well supported and fully included. Children enjoy informative activities that help them to learn about other cultures, religions and the wider world. For example, they had food tasting sessions as part of the Chinese New Year celebrations. They used origami to make Japanese fish and they studied Japanese gardens. They are currently designing and making African 'Good luck hands.' Children are developing a good sense of community, for example, through local walks in the village. They take part in occasional fund raising activities and charity events, which support people who are less fortunate than themselves. As a result, children are learning to make connections between their own lives and those of others, in the wider world.

Staff use positive behaviour management techniques that are well suited to children's level of understanding and maturity. Therefore, children are learning to manage their behaviour well. Many are able to share, take turns and have respect and consideration for others. They are learning good manners and social skills. Children also benefit from receiving purposeful praise and encouragement, which enhances their confidence and self esteem.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are well supported because management use rigorous recruitment, vetting and induction procedures to ensure that staff are well qualified and experienced. Children's care and welfare are well met by competent staff, who demonstrate enthusiasm and commitment to their roles. They plan and provide a good range of play and learning opportunities, which the children enjoy. They also make good use of training, as a means of improving their skills and developing their childcare practice.

Children's personal records are well used to record information relevant to their individual care and development. Documentation systems have been drafted and are effectively maintained in line with the requirements of the National Standards. Comprehensive policies and procedures are well communicated and implemented, thereby successfully underpinning the work of the setting.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

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

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.

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):

- monitor temperatures throughout all childcare rooms to ensure children's comfort and care
- continue to develop planning and assessment systems to closely monitor children's progress and plan effectively the next steps in their learning.

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