

Beechwood Farm Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY344107
Inspection date	23 May 2007
Inspector	Janice Linsdell
Setting Address	Beechwood Farm, Dutton Lane, Cuddington, NORTHWICH, Cheshire, CW8 2TN
Telephone number	01606 884072
E-mail	
Registered person	Sarah And Richard Sproston
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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Beechwood Farm Day Nursery was registered in 2006. The nursery is privately owned and operates from a detached property situated on a working farm in the Cuddington area of Cheshire. Children are cared for within four rooms located on two floors. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.00 to 18.30 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery is registered to provide care for a maximum of 55 children at any one time. There are currently 49 children aged from birth to under five years on roll, of whom, two receive funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports a small number of children with disabilities.

The nursery employs 12 staff including the manager. Of these, nine hold appropriate early years qualifications and the remaining staff members are currently training towards a recognised qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is very well promoted because staff consistently follow hygienic practices to maintain a healthy environment. For example, they keep play areas very clean, disinfect equipment regularly and wear aprons to serve food. Children wash their hands as part of the daily routine and use individual face cloths to clean their hands and faces after lunch. Nappy changing procedures are hygienic and babies dummies are stored in individual pots which are clearly labelled. This helps to reduce the spread of germs and protect children from illness. All staff are trained in first aid and food hygiene, which further benefits children's health and well-being.

The nursery employs a qualified chef to prepare a wide variety of home-cooked, nutritious and well balanced meals for the children to enjoy. Menus are displayed for parents information and reflect that children receive a good choice of healthy foods. Staff help children to learn social skills at lunchtime and older children are encouraged to serve themselves, which promotes their independence. Children have access to fresh drinking water at all times as they help themselves to individual beakers and bottles.

Children have the opportunity to play outside at least twice a day, which means they have regular access to fresh air and exercise. They take part in a wide range of physical activities to encourage their fitness, strength and skills. For example, they competently use the wheeled toys to develop their coordination skills and show strength as they take turns to pull each other on the cart. They enjoy group games using the large parachute and have plenty of space to run, skip and climb using the large play equipment. Children have access to suitable outdoor clothing to enable them to play outside in all weathers, for example, as they enjoy walks in the snow or squelching in the mud.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are secure and offer some excellent facilities for the children. Playrooms are bright, spacious and extremely well resourced with an extensive range of equipment and play materials, all of which are clean, safe and very well maintained. Children also have use of additional rooms to enhance their play and learning opportunities, such as the sensory room and the messy play room. This means that children are not restricted to any one area and they can enjoy different experiences throughout the day.

Overall, there are some very effective measures in place to keep children safe and minimise any hazards. For example, surveillance cameras monitor the front entrance and outside play area, exits are secure and all rooms are connected via telephone. Children are closely supervised by the high number of adults on duty and staff carry out regular head counts to ensure children are accounted for at all times. There is a designated staff member who takes responsibility for health and safety matters, and detailed risk assessments are regularly updated so that any hazards are quickly identified and addressed. However, open windows on the first floor can pose a risk to children's safety.

Children develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves because staff frequently talk to them about hazards and dangers. For example, staff remind children to hold onto the

hand rail when using the stairs, and to keep their fingers away from the fence when they feed the pigs. Children's welfare is well safeguarded because staff understand their role in ensuring children's safety and protection from harm. Relevant information is available to assist staff in dealing with any concerns that may arise.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the nursery and the care and attention they receive from staff is excellent. There is a high number of adults on duty who are very caring and responsive to children's needs. They genuinely appreciate children's efforts and take pride in their individual achievements. They show much sensitivity and understanding to the needs of new children settling into nursery life and offer plenty of reassurance and support to them and their parents.

The nursery is situated on a working farm, which enables children to enjoy a wealth of first hand experiences and learning opportunities. For example, children go for walks around the farm and learn about the different animals. They help to grow vegetables and herbs in the designated gardens and also have access to their own 'pets corner' in the outside play area, which houses pigs, chickens and guinea pigs.

Children's rooms are extremely well equipped with an excellent range of high quality resources and play materials to support children's play and enjoyment. Children can also relax in the sensory room and explore their creative skills in the messy play room. They eagerly participate in all activities on offer and really enjoy experiences, such as making their own play dough, building models out of clay and playing outdoors. Babies show delight as they play with the water bottles and explore interesting items in the treasure baskets.

Staff carefully plan an impressive range of activities so that children can participate using all their senses. For example, they enjoy squashing baked beans with their bare feet, smelling different spices and exploring the texture of jelly, fabrics, paints and shredded cardboard.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff working with funded children are qualified in early years and show a secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. The pre-school room is well organised to promote all areas of learning and provide a variety of positive learning opportunities for children. Staff plan activities carefully to help children make good progress in their learning. They carry out regular observations of children's play and use the information gathered to plan the next steps in their learning. Assessment records are completed regularly to record children's achievements, although these are not specifically linked to the areas of learning so that children's progress through the stepping stones can be clearly demonstrated.

Children are developing a positive attitude to learning and make lots of choices in their play. They are learning how to share and cooperate with their peers, for example, as they play with the dolls house. Their self-care skills are developing very well as they make their own sandwiches, fasten zips on coats and put their boots on the correct feet. Children practise their writing skills and become familiar with letters through activities, such as 'letter of the week'. The good use of print and labelling around the room helps children to recognise numbers, letters and familiar words. Children are beginning to link letters and sounds and can suggest alternative words that

begin with the same letter. Staff ask lots of questions and engage children in conservation, which helps them to develop their language skills.

Counting is promoted in everyday activities and children demonstrate their counting skills as they climb the stairs. They can recognise numbers as they eagerly match the correct number of fruit to the number cards. They are familiar with basic shapes and use mathematical language to describe the size of objects, such as tall or massive. Children develop their understanding of technology as they access the computer. They take part in experiments, use magnifying glasses to examine sprouts and access various construction kits, to build their own models. Children learn about caring for animals and really enjoy the weekly 'horse care and education' sessions, where they help to groom the horse.

Children have plenty of opportunities to develop their coordination skills. They competently climb the stairs each day to access the pre-school room and use the outdoor area frequently to promote their physical development. They begin to recognise changes to their bodies as they comment 'I'm worn out' after taking part in active play. They show skill as they use small tools, such as scissors and pencils. Children take part in interesting creative activities, such as tie-dyeing and there are many examples of children's individual artwork displayed. Children use their imagination well to develop their own play and explore using a variety of media, such as sand, water, porridge and paints.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff meet the individual needs of children very well and involve them in making choices and decisions for themselves. They work well with parents to promote the welfare and development of children with disabilities, and they are currently learning sign language to assist with communication. Staff incorporate information available regarding various cultural festivals into the planning of activities to help children develop an awareness of the wider world. For example, children sample different ethnic foods, practise eating with chopsticks and have access to some good quality play materials that promote positive images of diversity.

Children's behaviour is good and they are learning to be confident and independent. Staff use praise effectively to encourage positive behaviour and help children to learn the difference between right and wrong. Children assist with small tasks, such as tidying away resources, which helps to promote their understanding of responsibility. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff consistently share verbal and written information with parents about the children's day. They keep parents well informed, for example, via the notice boards, newsletters and the well presented policy document. Parents of funded children are provided with details about topics, activities and how they can become involved in children's learning at home, but they receive minimal information about the Foundation Stage curriculum. Parents evenings are planned so that parents can discuss children's progress and view their observation files. Parents speak highly about the staff and the many positive experiences the nursery has to offer.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The nursery is well organised and staff are deployed effectively to meet the needs of the children. Evidence is available to confirm all staff have completed relevant checks to ensure their suitability to work with children. Staffing ratios exceed minimum requirements and all staff are qualified or working towards a recognised qualification. This means that children receive a high level of care, support and attention throughout the day. Staff show a commitment to the children and the good team work in place ensures children are well cared for and the nursery runs efficiently.

All documentation to promote children's care and welfare is readily accessible, well organised and generally well maintained. There are effective policies and procedures in place, which are regularly reviewed, updated and made available to parents in the entrance hall.

Leadership and management is good. The manager is experienced, proactive and shows a commitment to achieving high standards in the nursery. She works closely with staff delivering the nursery education programme to monitor children's progress and has recently carried out formal observations in all rooms to assess staff practice. Effective systems are implemented to support and develop the staff team. For example, ongoing training is encouraged, staff appraisals are carried out, and all staff have contributed to the evaluation of the setting using the self evaluation form. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of 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 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):

- improve children's safety by making the upstairs windows safe.

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 assessment records so they clearly show how children are making progress through the stepping stones
- provide parents with information about the Foundation Stage curriculum.

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