

Busy as Bees

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY338542
Inspection date	30 April 2007
Inspector	Alison Romanczuk
Setting Address	St. Saviours Church Hall, 69 Brockley Rise, LONDON, SE23 1JN
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Registered person	Margaret Ritchie
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?

Busy as Bees, which opened in 2006, was previously registered as Mrs Treble Clef's Nursery. A change in the registered provider has resulted in the new owner now also taking on the role of the manager. The setting operates from St. Saviours Church Hall in Brockley, in the London borough of Lewisham. It opens five mornings per week during school term times from 9.00 - 12.30. Children attend a variety of sessions. The preschool is registered for 20 children of whom 12 may be aged under three years old. There are currently 40 children on roll of whom 10 children receive funding for nursery education. There are four staff employed to work with the children. The manager and one other member of staff have appropriate childcare qualifications. The preschool has use of a large and a small hall, toilets and a kitchen. One day per week a toddler group runs in the large hall and the number of children who can attend the preschool on that day is reduced. The setting receives support from the Lewisham Early Years.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are kept healthy at the preschool because staff provide good role models for the children to follow. In this way they learn good habits from staff such as washing their hands, helping to tidy up and accessing tissues when they need them, for example. Children are well cared for when they are unwell and staff are on hand to offer cuddles and reassurance to the children attending. Children's health needs are discussed at admission and appropriate health and safety and medication policies and guidelines secure their wellbeing. Staff ensure all dietary requirements are met and as a result children are well nourished in this sessional group, enjoying a range of healthy snacks such as raisins, apples and juice. They benefit from consistent access to water. Children progress well physically as they ride bikes throughout the provision, have access to regular fresh air and are able to move about the space confidently during the session.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's safety is maintained because they attend a secure preschool where all visitors are recorded and there is adequate space for them to move around. They benefit from attending a bright and welcoming environment where their work is displayed and equipment is in good supply and in good condition. Children are well supervised and for the most part policies and procedures in place ensure their safety. Risk assessments, although in place are not robust enough and this results in some hazards, particularly concerning changing areas which impact on children's safety. Children are protected from fire hazards because the group ensures fire prevention materials are in place and the group holds regular, recorded fire drills. This helps to familiarise the children with this emergency situation. Child protection procedures are in place and staff have a clear understanding of monitoring and recording incidents to safeguard children in their care. Good links with the Local Authority have been established to further support this aim.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy being at the playgroup and settle well because staff are attentive to their needs and offer lots of close contact and reassurance from the start. Staff use their knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework well to chart the children's progress. Children are able to communicate their needs and start to build friendships with the other children, particularly in role play scenarios where the children dress up in giant feet and Wellington boots with glee. They benefit from the wealth of stimulating resources and activities available and choose tasks with confidence and a growing sense of independence. For example they quickly become involved in creative activities where they paint shoes, mix play dough and use glue and collage for their creations. They demonstrate confidence when building towers with foam blocks, riding their bikes around the activities and readily access books which they bring to staff to read.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good and children progress well through the stepping stones despite the fact that some staff have had little training in this area. Staff take their lead from the manager who plans the curriculum and regularly observe and evaluate what the children

are doing under her guidance. Children respond well to staff's useful questioning and are able to talk about their artwork, make believe play and to count objects around the room. Children's learning is supported well overall by the wealth of resources available which support different abilities and interests. They particularly benefit from the variety of creative activities which allow them to mix and match materials, for example in the home corner and when making dry sand wet with the water play. They enjoy and benefit from mixing ingredients such as paint, flour and water and during the inspection an activity where the children painted the trees outside with giant paintbrushes and water was met with much excitement. At times, however, the sheer volume of activities available prevents children from following through on tasks because they are eager to explore the next activity of resource.

Despite this, children demonstrate a growing independence and confidence in their environment. They show kindness to those younger than them who may be settling in, for example by offering cuddles and showing them to the book corner or activities. The children generally concentrate well and develop good levels of independence by following the example of others. Children initiate conversations with other children and staff and are learning to use pre-writing skills to develop literacy, for example when writing logs in the doctors surgery and recording telephone conversations on notepads in the home corner. Their fondness for books, often shared with staff, supports their understanding of the written word.

Children show dexterity when using a range of tools such as pencils and puzzle pieces and are able to develop their large physical skills when climbing and manoeuvring vehicles around the provision. They independently incorporate counting during their play. Child initiated hand print charts reflect their heights and number lines feature around the room. Skills in problem solving are helped along through regular experimentation with sand and water materials. The children gain a good understanding of living things as they carefully plant their spring flowers and observe their pet goldfish and giant snails with a sense of awe and wonderment. Displays of children's early literacy and creative work feature prominently around the room and encourage children to achieve and have pride in their work.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from attending a group where their individual cultural and linguistic needs are well met and those who may have special educational needs or disabilities are fully included. Resources reflect a range of ways of living and activities such as those celebrating a recent Iranian festival help the children to share their experiences with others. The effective partnership staff have fostered with parents helps staff get to know the children. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered and they settle very well as a result. Children behave well at the group because staff are calm and friendly and offer lots of praise and encouragement for the children's good work. Furthermore, the children are busy and interested in the activities on offer and staff's encouragement for them to share and to take turns works well.

The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is good and a regular exchange of information ensures parents know how their child is progressing in this area. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning, for example, when visiting the club and information around the building ensures they are fully informed of what the children are doing.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by staff who have trained in first aid and who are appropriately vetted, qualified and experienced in caring for children. All required documentation is in place to ensure children's safety and welfare whilst at the group although risk assessments do not always pick up on everyday hazards. Staff work well as a team overall and give priority to providing a child centred environment with lots of individual choice so that children move about the group with confidence and a sense of freedom. Children have adequate times to play and rest and to benefit from daily fresh air and good nourishment.

Leadership and management is good overall and systems in place for monitoring and evaluating the provision work well in identifying strengths and weaknesses at the provision. The manager has a clear commitment to ensuring children's progress towards the Foundation Stage and supervises staff well in daily activities. Due to current staff changes, however, only the manager has been trained in this area and as a result some staff are not fully aware of their objectives in achieving children's full potential. 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.

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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):

- ensure more robust risk assessments are in place and understood by all staff

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):

- streamline the activities provided to enable children to follow through in activities and further support learning aims

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