



Blackbirds Fun for Kids

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	113378
Inspection date	27 June 2005
Inspector	Christine Clint
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Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Sessional 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

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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?

Blackbirds Fun for Kids is a privately owned facility which opened in 1997, offering sessional care, after school and holiday child care. The pre-school is one of two sessional provisions owned by the same provider in the locality. The setting is situated within the Methodist church hall accommodation, in the area of Felpham, Bognor Regis, West Sussex. The premises are shared, however the group have sole use of the rooms whilst sessions are running. The children attending mainly use one

large hall, although an additional room for small group work and a spacious hall for physical activities is sometimes used. There is a small enclosed area for outside activities and the group regularly use the adjacent play park and the large open playing fields. Children attend from the nearby and wider community.

A maximum of 26 children may attend the provision at any one time. There are currently 80 children on roll from age 2 years to 8 years, this includes 49 children aged 3 and 4 years who are in funded educational places. The setting currently supports children with additional needs.

The pre-school opens Monday to Friday 09:15 - 11:45 and Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 12:30-15:00 term time only. The after school club operates Monday to Friday 15:00-18:00 term time only and a holiday play scheme is offered during some school holidays 09:00-18:00.

There are currently 4 qualified staff who work across the provision and 4 staff who are unqualified. There are currently 3 regular volunteers.

The setting receives support from the local Early Years Partnership and liaises with the primary schools in the area.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn to follow simple routines for maintaining health, these are sufficiently included because staff remind children to wash their hands before and after snack time and all children are monitored during personal hygiene routines. Children's medical needs are adequately recorded and all procedures for accidents are clearly and confidentially followed. Children benefit from a healthy environment because staff follow sensible routines for hygiene, they clean the premises well between sessions and re-organise all equipment for different children attending.

Children are encouraged to participate in physical activities every day, they have regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise during outside play and staff are well deployed to supervise them when they swing, climb and slide on the apparatus in the play park next door. Children also develop physical skills indoors because they have access to equipment, for example stilts in the role play area. Some children manage these well and adapt the equipment to suit their imaginary play.

Children learn about protecting their bodies from the hot sun because staff offer realistic explanation and they ensure that all children wear hats when playing outside. Children independently choose their snack time, they pour drinks and help themselves to prepared fruit. They are encouraged to socialise with staff members and each other at the snack table.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are consistently safe and secure in the setting because staff are vigilant. Staff follow effective routines to ensure that entry to the premises is monitored and they show diligence and awareness when they have responsibility for a small group. Children are competently supervised when using the nearby play park and the public park area outside. They are protected because staff are able to assess and identify risks promptly. They remove broken glass from the outside painting area and ensure this is covered with plastic so that children can continue their activities. Children are happy when they enter the provision because they are welcomed enthusiastically by staff who show interest in them and their families.

Children move freely between activities because there is ample indoor space and play equipment is well organised to provide a variety of interesting activities. The resources and equipment are fully suitable and well maintained. Staff ensure that equipment is appropriately positioned to enable children to make camps in the role play area or walk on stilts when they are wearing dressing up clothes.

Children are protected because the provider and staff are very aware of the daily procedures in place and of the organised procedures for special events and emergencies. Older children know the routines for being collected from school on foot, they have responsibility for signing themselves in to the provision and they are aware of informing staff when they want to play outside, so that they are accompanied. Children's well being is maintained because the provider and staff show a good understanding of their responsibility for following the procedures for child protection.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have opportunities to develop emotionally, physically and socially because staff are dedicated and responsible for managing each activity. Staff are well deployed, especially when carrying out small focus group activities in the pre-school and when following children's chosen activities in the after school club.

Children happily select resources independently for most of the pre-school session. They move freely between activities and show a keen interest in coming together for stories and singing. They respond with enthusiasm at group time because some staff interest them by asking relevant questions; children are learning to follow organised routines for speaking one at a time when they are all together. They understand the need for rules and generally respond well.

Children gain self esteem and learn to have an awareness of each other's feelings through the daily sharing of the 'important person' status. They build positive relationships with staff because staff listen to children and respond to what they say. This encourages children's emerging self confidence, they are able to speak to others about what they know and want, they use gestures and simple statements.

They respond well in small groups and listen to instructions. Children have many opportunities to practice early reading and writing skills. They self-register when they enter the pre-school and have regular access to books and writing materials. Children are able to recognise numbers and letters because these are included in every day activities and routines.

Children attending the after school care are excited by the wide choice of activities and play sociably with the tactile materials, they take turns to use the computer or choose outside play in the play park. They are happy and relaxed in the provision and relate well to each other and staff.

Staff observe children and show an understanding of their individual care needs. They make satisfactory use of their time and resources to support children's development. However, not all activities are fully extended or monitored and some lack challenge and stimulation for older, more able children, for example, when imaginary play becomes too noisy and disruptive and has little purpose.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are happy and settled, they are sufficiently confident and assured with staff to work in groups or play independently. Children are making steady progress towards the early learning goals because activities are planned to cover all areas of the curriculum. Teaching has some deficiencies because not all staff have enough knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage of Learning to identify the stepping stones and to enable them to offer purpose or to fully extend children's play. Staff observe and record children's progress but there is less evidence to show the recorded progress of younger funded children attending.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children readily accept the pre-school rules and the established boundaries. They respond positively to staff because staff offer continuity and sufficient praise to encourage good behaviour. Children mainly listen to staff when they are managed in small or large groups because they are used to the regular routines. They are able to learn new routines, for example learning to raise their hands when they want to speak at group time. All children keenly recognise the music which signals group time, they are eager to join each other on the mat. School aged children show polite respect for staff, they enjoy their time in the provision and say thank you at the end of the day.

Children's individual needs are met because staff are attentive and listen to children, they have an open attitude to including equality. Children with additional needs are steadily monitored because staff liaise with parents and other agencies, they offer appropriate plans for individual children's play.

The quality of the partnership with parents is good because the provision values and openly accepts parents. Families are enthusiastically welcomed by staff and parents

are informed of activities which are linked with themes and topics, to enable them to include similar home activities. Parents are encouraged to help children recognise their own names when they arrive. They have recently been included in review sessions to give information on their children's development and these have been appreciated by parents who strongly support the pre-school.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered because staff encourage them to share and consider each other. Children are learning to be patient through taking turns to be the important person of the day and to value each other's feelings.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Staff deployment and responsibility is sound, the provision offers a high ratio of staff to children and staff show an understanding of following regular routines for children's daily care needs and for their after school care needs. Overall the setting meets the needs of the range of children attending.

There are systems in place to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children, however there is a lack of organisation with regard to providing the documentation and to following procedures for informing Ofsted of staff changes.

The pre-school currently has a minimum level of qualified staff working in the provision, however some new staff show a willingness to gain qualifications. Qualified staff show a wide level of expertise and regular training to update specific areas of knowledge. There are suitable systems in place to annually appraise all staff.

The pre-school has adopted some changes within the last year to the systems of planning for activities, to meet the curriculum for funded education and these are regularly shared with parents. Parents appreciate the new systems introduced for children's annual reviews. The setting has made some changes to ensure that good practice issues are implemented and through self evaluation the provider recognises the need to increase the level of organisation, therefore the quality of the leadership and management is satisfactory.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last Children Act inspection recommended that the provider should improve the procedures for recruitment, appointment and induction of new staff; Improve the structure of the session and the grouping of all children to ensure that they are sufficiently challenged and involved in their play; Improve resources to ensure that they are suitable for the ages of children attending the pre-school and the out of school care; Improve documentation and include arrangements for children who are not collected from the group; Include times on and off the premises and contact details on records of all visitors; Include arrangements for reviewing policies and procedures and relate these to the out of school care and make them available.

The procedure for the recruitment, appointment and induction of new staff is ongoing and requires further developing. There is evidence available to show that systems are now in place for staff recruitment and new staff have a good understanding of health and safety policies.

Children at the pre-school have ample resources and choice during their free play, they are also grouped together at specific times for stories, singing and information. There are planned, small group, focus activities during the session and children are chosen to participate, but not all children are fully challenged during their time in the setting. After school children enjoy many of the resources that are available to the younger children, they also have free choice of activities and can play outside or use the computer.

Procedures for uncollected children are now in place and all visitors to the provision are recorded with sufficient details. Some policies and procedures have now been reviewed and the after school provision has a separate port folio for parents.

The key issues raised for the previous nursery education inspection required the provider to increase staff knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones to enable improvements across many areas of learning; To improve the planning for activities and the assessment of children's development, to enable staff to evaluate and provide sufficient challenge particularly to four year old children.

The key issues also requested that parents should be informed and have opportunities to contribute to their child's achievements.

An action plan is available to address all key issues and these have been monitored since the last inspection.

Some staff have a good understanding of the stepping stones and use daily routines and incidental opportunities to extend children's learning, however new and less qualified staff are not so aware of involving children and extending their learning.

The plans for activities show how children will learn and there are some planned focus activities linked with children's individual learning needs, but not all children are stimulated and challenged.

Parents can give information on their child's development at admission and they are now regularly informed at organised review times. Records are kept of parents' comments and they are also informed of activity themes and topics to link with children's development.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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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):

- continue to develop and organise all documentation and to inform Ofsted of changes within the provision.

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):

- continue to improve the level of qualified staff to increase staff knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones to enable all staff to offer learning opportunities through all activities and regular routines
- develop activities to involve and extend older, more able children, to provide stimulation, challenge and opportunities for continued learning and ensure that this is reflected in the assessments of all children's development

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