

Beltinge Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	127013
Inspection date	29 June 2007
Inspector	Cilla Rachel Mullane
Setting Address	Reculver Primary School, Hillborough, Herne Bay, Kent, CT6 6TA
Telephone number	01227 366311 or 367972
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Registered person	Beltinge Day Nursery
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?

Beltinge Day Nursery opened in 1992. It operates from a building in the grounds of Reculver Primary School. The nursery is open plan, and comprises of ten different areas for children. There are staff facilities and toilets for the children, a kitchen and an outside area. The nursery serves the local area and surrounding towns.

There are currently 71 children on roll. This includes 67 funded three and four-year-olds.

Children attend a variety of sessions each week. The nursery staff are experienced in working with children who have learning difficulties and disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days a week term time only. The nursery opens from 9.00 to 15.00.

There are 14 staff working with the children, including the manager, an administrator and a speech therapy assistant. Most of the staff who work with the children hold early years qualifications, and all attend short courses. Five staff are currently undertaking NVQ Level 3,

and two are undertaking NVQ Level 4. The nursery receives support from an early years advisory teacher.

Staff work in partnership with outside agencies.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a hygienic environment. Toys and equipment are kept clean, because there is a clear rota for washing, and a record kept, for example, duplo is put in the dishwasher on a regular basis. Children would be well cared for in an emergency, as all the staff regularly update their first aid qualifications. Accident and medication records are kept, and parents are kept informed, so children are protected. However, these records are sometimes poorly organised, and are not always confidential.

Children are able to experience a wide variety of food at snack times, including healthy food such as fruit and vegetables daily. Currently half the group sits down at one time for snacks, which limits choice and independence, but there are plans to improve this system, so that children can act more independently, and there can be more discussions regarding healthy choices as children chat with staff and prepare their own food. Children have constant access to a water dispenser, and confidently help themselves. Furthermore, they are reminded to drink after exercise and when hot, so they are learning the importance of keeping their bodies hydrated.

Children play outside daily, and so get plenty of fresh air. Some indoor activities are taken outside, such as music and sand. As the outside play area is small, there is no apparatus for children to practise gross motor skills, but staff plan activities such as an obstacle course, and erect the climbing frame fairly frequently, but not daily. Therefore there are not daily opportunities for children to practise their large motor skills such as climbing and balancing. Activities which help children develop their fine motor skills are included in the planning, such as table-top construction.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The nursery provides a well-organised, welcoming and stimulating environment for children. The space is divided into small areas which are set out with toys and equipment which relate to specific areas of learning, where children can play and learn in small groups. There are colourful labelled displays of children's work, showing them that it is valuable, and children love looking at the low displays of photographs. For example, they discuss photographs of the visit from the police with their van, eagerly discussing which of their friends is 'driving' and what noise the van made.

Children are kept safe during their time at the nursery. A member of staff has the responsibility for overseeing health and safety issues within the setting, and completed checklists demonstrate effective procedures are in place to keep the children and the premises safe and hygienic. For example, checks on the fencing and the toilets are carried out daily. Staff are very careful to hand children over to known adults, checking identification. Risk assessments are carried out prior to outings, helping to keep children safe. Fire drills are carried out at regular intervals,

and on different days, but different patterns of attendance means that some children have long intervals in between practices, which has the potential to compromise their safety.

Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and procedures, and are clear that the needs of the children are paramount. They would keep records and monitor concerns, and discuss worries with parents when appropriate.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are cared for by practitioners who are consistently kind and patient, sensitive to their feelings, and able to meet their emotional needs. As a result, children are secure, happy and confident. Staff genuinely appreciate the children's contributions and achievements, they are interested in what they do and say, which makes the children feel loved and valued. Children are keen to take part, are settled, ready to learn, and enjoy their play.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

The daily routine provides children with a balanced timetable, with activities linked to all areas of learning. Furthermore, there are designated areas where toys and equipment reflect these six areas. For example, children play number and letter games, they are creative in the role play and messy areas, they increase their knowledge and understanding of the world when using Information Technology and looking at nature. Therefore staff provide an environment and routine which are conducive to children's learning. Children are encouraged to think and reason because staff are skilled at asking open-ended questions, and are good at extending children's conversations and vocabulary. Children have opportunities to re-visit activities, so they are able to practise and consolidate skills. The good range of activities and staffs' teaching skills are helping children learn through play and make progress towards the early learning goals. Staff's good knowledge of individual children aids this process. However, the use of observations to plan for children's next steps is limited.

As a result of good teaching, children are making steady progress towards the early learning goals.

Personal, social and emotional development is a strength within the nursery. Children are encouraged and enabled to act independently, for example, caring for themselves in the toilets, and changing shoes and coats to play outside. They are making friends and cooperating together; two boys played in the sand together, one singing loudly, and the other jiggling in time. Children are making good progress in the area of communication and literacy; they have frequent opportunities to recognise their names, such as at snack times. They recognise the first sound of words when playing sound games, such as K is for kite. They remember favourite rhymes enthusiastically, all shouting out 'isn't it funny how a bear likes honey'.

Children's mathematical development is progressing; games such as balancing animals on an ark help them learn concepts such as lighter and heavier, and they count accurately during counting games. Children are gaining knowledge and understanding of the world through activities such as growing sunflowers, which staff support by looking at related books, such as a book about plants. A child was really excited about the first runner bean from the children's garden. Children have frequent access to the computers, one specially designed for children,

so they are gaining basic information technology skills. They are starting to feel part of a community, as they are involved in the Herne Bay in bloom competition. Children are developing creative skills, concentrating on painting a spider and naming a picture 'curly whirly'. The interesting role play area helps children to use their imaginations, as staff provide realistic props to support their play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

A key worker system is in place, and staff generally spend time each day working with their small group of children, so they get to know these children well as individuals. Children are gaining a sense of community when they visit the church, go for local walks, and visit the local shop. Posters, activities, and some toys and equipment show children diversity in society; for example, children celebrate festivals from other countries, and take part in activities such as drawing their mirror images, so that they are encouraged to think about and respect differences and cultures.

The nursery cares for several children who have learning difficulties and disabilities. A practitioner comes in regularly to support the speech and language therapist, and works with individual children on their speech and language programmes. These children are making good progress. Staff liaise effectively with other agencies, such as the Mary Sheridan Centre, when working with children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These children benefit from having individual education plans, as staff use these to help them progress.

Children are encouraged to behave well, and to consider the feelings of others. They respond very positively to stickers as rewards: a child beamed with delight as he told a member of staff that he had received a sticker for helping to clear up. Staff take every opportunity to praise the children for their contributions and achievements, building self esteem, and showing them that they are valued. When staff deal with unwanted behaviour, they are sensitive to children's feelings, and help the children to acknowledge their feelings and those of others. Therefore children are learning to think of others.

Partnership with parents is good.

Staff develop friendly and informal relationships with parents, and thank you cards reflect their appreciation of the care offered by the nursery. Parents receive good quality information about the Foundation Stage, with details about the six areas of learning, in their information pack. Furthermore, before their child starts attending the nursery, parents are invited to an open evening to learn more about the running of the nursery and the curriculum. They are able to continue their children's learning at home, because plans of activities are displayed in the entrance of the nursery.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. For example, children are sometimes encouraged to sit and quietly reflect, such as during a yoga session when they used their imaginations to picture a happy place.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The nursery meets the needs of the children for whom it provides care and education.

The staff group are well-qualified, with most staff qualified to at least NVQ Level 2, so children are cared for by knowledgeable practitioners. In addition, they attend short courses such as first aid and child protection, thus keeping their knowledge up to date. The staff : child ratio is high, so children receive a good level of support.

The pace and routine of the sessions is generally effective in meeting the needs of the children, and when children are enjoying an activity, for example, playing in the sand, they can continue if they wish. An exception to this is the sessions which include the whole group, when some children become disinterested. Within the routine there are opportunities for small group work, when key workers plan activities to meet the needs of their key children. There are also weekly 'social' and 'physical' groups: Children who need extra help with skills such as speaking confidently or physical coordination are targeted and helped to progress. Staff have evaluated the success of snack time, and plan to introduce a café-style system in order to enable children to be more independent, and have more responsibility and choice.

Most documentation required to support the running of the nursery is kept to a good standard, with the exception of accident and medication records, which are sometimes disorganised. The attendance record and visitors' book show who is on the premises at any one time. The registration certificate is displayed to inform parents of the setting's conditions of registration. The manager is aware of current requirements for recording complaints, and has prepared paperwork accordingly.

The quality of leadership and management is good.

The nursery is managed by a supportive committee, who are clear of their role in supporting the manager in the day to day running of the setting. This means that the manager is able to concentrate on supervising the staff to help them meet the children's needs effectively. Staff work well as a team, because they are encouraged to share responsibility for the planning, and are able to comment on and improve nursery practice through the use of staff surveys. The manager know the staff well because she spends a great deal of time within the nursery, and thus is able to make use of their individual talents and identify training needs. She has clear and realistic view regarding the setting's strengths and weaknesses, and an action plan shows progress towards improvements. For example, a staff training day is planned to streamline the planning of activities, and snack-time is to be improved. There is positive contact with the adjacent primary school; children become familiar with the premises and reception staff before they make the transition to school.

Staffs' good practice, and the written plans of activities show that staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the six areas of learning and the learning intentions of activities. Supervisory staff check the plans to ensure that all areas of learning are given sufficient weight. During key worker and other small group sessions, staff are able to adapt activities in order to differentiate according to children's abilities and interests, and meet individual children's needs. However, a training session is planned to help staff to use observations more effectively to identify children's intended next steps and incorporate them in the planning.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was recommended that the care and education of the children be improved by developing systems to encourage self-selection. The nursery is well-equipped, with plenty of toys and equipment at low level for children to choose. It was recommended that more use be made of the outside area, and that outdoor activities be included in the

planning. The outside area is well equipped and welcoming, and children play outside daily, taking indoor activities outside when possible. Challenging physical play is not a daily feature of the routine, and this remains a recommendation. Finally, it was recommended that the formal contribution of parents to their child's learning be enhanced; parents discuss their children's progress at open evenings and are informed of the daily activity plans.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 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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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):

- organize the medication and accident records so that entries are confidential and contain sufficient detail
- provide children with regular opportunities to take part in challenging physical activities (also applies to nursery education)
- improve the daily routine so that children spend minimal time in large groups, and so that choice and independence are better promoted at snack times.

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):

- develop the use of observations of children to inform the planning of activities, based on children's interests, what they already know, and what they need to learn next.

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