



Three Bears Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	153471
Inspection date	28 June 2005
Inspector	Pamela Woodhouse
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Registered person	Three Bears 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 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?

Three Bears Nursery opened in 1995 and relocated to new premises in January 2004. It operates from a large purpose built building adjacent to Bovington First School. The premises provide a playroom for the under three year olds, a sleep/sensory room toilet and nappy changing facilities. They also have a garden exclusively for their use. Children aged over three have access to a playroom and toilet facilities. They also have access to their own large outdoor play area. The

nursery serves the surrounding local areas, and many children come from the nearby army camp.

There are currently 139 children on roll. This includes 15 funded three-year-olds and 7 funded-four-year olds. The group accommodates children with special needs.

The setting operates from 8.00 to 18.00, for 48 weeks of the year and children attend for a variety of sessions. This includes a breakfast, after-school and holiday club for children aged up to 12 years.

There is a team of 17 staff in addition to the manager, plus additional bank staff. Nine of the staff hold an early years qualification, and another four are currently working towards a childcare qualification. The manager who supports the staff in the running of the nursery is also qualified.

The group receives support from several other agencies such as Dorset Sure Start, Dorset Community Action and Army Welfare. They are also members of the National Day Nurseries Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted through good practice and everyday routines. Staff are good role models and follow stringent hygiene procedures which minimises children's risk to infection, for example, when preparing food and drinks and during routines such as nappy changing. Children learn about personal hygiene such as washing hands before meals and how to take care of themselves, for example, wearing sun hats and cream to protect themselves from the sun. The premises and equipment are clean and well maintained, providing a clean environment for the children.

Children have a varied menu which contributes to healthy eating and have regular access to drinks throughout the day. The pre-school and school age children are able to freely access these from a water cooler and grow vegetables such as peas and beans which stimulates their interest in healthy foods.

Children benefit from the extensive outdoor play areas which give them good opportunities for physical play. The separate areas for under and over three year olds means that the younger children can play safely whilst learning new skills such as pushing wheeled toys, and the over threes benefit from more adventurous pursuits like riding bicycles and climbing. Children have good opportunities to develop their hand/eye co-ordination skills through a range of activities and resources.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe environment. There are very good security measures in place to protect children from unauthorised visitors and a staff health and safety representative makes sure that all staff are kept up to date with current legislation and nursery procedures. Children are familiar with fire drill procedures and confidently describe what they need to do to evacuate the building. However, there are occasions, particularly later in the day, when the older children are not supervised so closely. This means that children are potentially at risk as staff do not always know when, for example, a minor accident has occurred or a child has managed to access an out of bounds area.

The premises are very well maintained, providing a bright, stimulating and cheerful environment for the children. Many examples of their art and creative work are displayed which gives them a sense of ownership and pride in what they do. Play rooms are organised to provide separate areas for the under and over three year olds and there is a separate area for the younger children to be able to sleep undisturbed. Babies are further protected by having their own enclosed area to protect them from toys containing small parts and by being held whilst bottle fed to minimise the risk of choking.

The thorough child protection procedures and rolling programme of staff training ensures that staff know how to protect children from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are settled and happy, quickly settling down to their activities with enthusiasm and a readiness to learn. They confidently leave parents and carers and have positive relationships with staff and with their peers. Their growing independence is encouraged by the accessibility of toys and resources from which children select what they want to do. However, resources and activities do not always challenge the school age children. Staff are introducing Birth to Three Matters with the under-three-year-old children and provide good opportunities for this age group to develop a sense of adventure as they tentatively try out new experiences. However, the toddlers often have to wait too long whilst they are being served with their meals or the story is not understood by a mixed age group. This results in them becoming bored and disruptive.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Children are challenged by a range of stimulating and enjoyable activities but teaching is often inconsistent. Consequently this leads to occasions when children's learning is not extended, for example, encouraging the development of children's writing skills. Children's assessments are not carried out on a regular basis which means that they do not effectively inform the next steps in their learning. However, staff are attentive and question children on some occasions, this helps them to confirm what children have learnt.

Overall children are making satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. They communicate very well and are able to express their feelings and make their needs

known. However, there are limited opportunities for children to write for a purpose, for example, writing their own names on their drawings and they do not regularly learn about sounds. Children can count confidently to ten and are beginning to understand simple mathematical concepts such as addition and subtraction. They learn about the wider world through some very interesting, imaginative and enjoyable topics. Currently children are learning about the habitats of wild animals and how plants and seeds grow. They have regular opportunities to develop their creativity and use their imagination well, however, they do not always make good use of the role play area. Children enjoy experimenting with different painting techniques, materials and media such as making collages.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an inclusive and caring environment by committed staff who liaise regularly with parents to ensure that children's individual needs are being met. For example, a daily home link diary is shared with parents of the under-three-year-olds detailing their individual daily routines such as sleep, meals and a brief outline of what they have played with. Children learn of the wider world and caring about others through positive role modelling, practical activities such as cooking, celebrating festivals and a range of resources which promote diversity.

The needs of children with special needs are very well met. Staff liaise closely with parents and a number of other professionals who are involved in the children's care. They link in with any specific activities required to progress the children and adapt resources to provide challenges which are appropriate to the individual child.

Children have a very good and trusting relationship with staff. This contributes to their positive attitude and good behaviour. The under-three-year-olds play alongside each other, and good supervision means that staff can pre-empt and deflect any potential negative behaviour. However, they become disruptive when having to wait for everybody to be ready before they can for example, have their story. The older children help to set the 'golden rules' of behaviour which contributes to their sense of ownership and to some extent self govern, for example, reminding peers that they shouldn't run indoors.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. They receive comprehensive information about the setting and are kept informed via newsletters and the information board about any forthcoming events. They are invited to provide items for the interest table, however, are not actively involved in extending activities such as recognising sounds and number at home. Consequently the contribution parents and carers could make towards their children's learning is not exploited. They are able to discuss their children's progress on an informal basis but there is no system in place to discuss this regularly with the children's key worker.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by a qualified and committed staff team who have sound knowledge of children's development. There is a high adult: child ratio, however, staff are not always deployed effectively, particularly during the out-of-school sessions, which results in some children not being supervised sufficiently. Space, resources and required documentation are very well organised and there is a comprehensive range of suitable policies in place. Staff have a good understanding of these and the procedures they are required to follow.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. There is a strong and supportive management team who are in turn well supported by the trustees. They have very clear management systems in place and most staff have delegated area of responsibility, for example, behaviour management, safety and curriculum planning. Activity plans are evaluated but some staff do not have a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage which means that these are not used effectively. However, the management team have a very clear vision for what they want to achieve in the future and have put in place a new management structure to progress the nursery education provision.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides care.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the Provider agreed to improve the outside play area and put systems in place to record and monitor pre-school children's individual progress.

The Provider has addressed these issues by:

conducting a risk assessment of the outside play area. The area has been divided into two distinct play spaces which means that the under-three-year olds now have their own space which is quite separate from the over three-year-olds space. New fencing and gates have been erected, to enclose the whole of the outside play space. The new management team are currently working towards reorganising the system to record and monitor children's progress to improve it's effectiveness.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection three concerns have been raised with Ofsted.

In October 2004 a concern was raised under standard 11 relating to behaviour management. Ofsted asked the Provider to investigate and from the report received, judged that the National Standards are being met and the Provider remains registered.

In January 2005 a concern was raised under standard 1: relating to suitable staff, standard 2: relating to staff deployment, standard 3: relating to care of the children

and standard 7: relating to hygiene.

Ofsted made an unannounced visit on 27th January 2005 and an announced visit on 1st February 2005. Actions were raised which required the provider to ensure adult: child ratios are maintained, review all policies and procedures and develop an action plan to show how the nursery will be structured and managed.

The provider fully co-operated with Ofsted, keeping it informed about progress made. Ofsted judged that the National Standards are being met and the provider remains registered.

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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):

- make sure that staff are deployed effectively to ensure that there is proper supervision particularly when children are playing outdoors
- ensure that activities and resources are appropriate to the developmental needs and interests of the children, in particular the toddlers and those of school age

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):

- ensure that staff develop a more secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage of learning

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk