

Forest Bears Pre-School PG

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	110134
Inspection date	12 September 2007
Inspector	Louise, Caroline Bonney
Setting Address	Pinehill Road, Bordon, Hampshire, GU35 0BS
Telephone number	01420 488978
E-mail	ian.garforth@btopenworld.com
Registered person	Forest Bears Pre-School Play Group
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?

Forest Bears Pre-School opened in 1987 and is a Registered Charity run by a voluntary committee of parents. It operates from three playrooms in the Forest Community Centre in the village of Bordon, Hampshire. Children access a secure area for outdoor play. The pre-school serves the local area and surrounding villages.

There are currently 35 children from two to five years on roll. This includes 21 children receiving funded nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions or all day. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 until 15:00 on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and from 09:00 until 11:30 on Friday. Children staying all day bring their own packed lunches.

There are six staff working with the children. Of these, three hold an early years qualification at Level 3 and three are currently completing Level 3 training. The setting receives support from a teacher mentor through the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in premises that are clean and hygienic. They learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well-planned routines. They know, for example, that they need to wash their hands before snack and lunch time. They put their rubbish in the bin and wash up their dirty plates and cups carefully before drying them on the tea towel. Children very much enjoy the café style snack time, when they pour their own milk or water and select from a variety of fresh fruit and toast. At lunch time children eat savoury foods first, with encouragement. Children develop enthusiasm for food during cookery activities, such as making fruit kebabs or food sculptures. Children freely access the water dispensers when they are thirsty. This ensures children develop good awareness of how to eat and drink healthily.

Children have daily opportunities for energetic play. Children run as they push buggies at speed and play with balls outside. They participate in adult-led activities when they move in different ways, play circle games and do action rhymes. This supports the children's good health.

Children have their medical needs met well. Staff liaise with parents so that they can support children's medical conditions appropriately. They administer medication when necessary and share all records with parents. They seek parental consents for requesting emergency treatment and staff maintain their first aid training. This supports children's medical needs well.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in rooms within the community centre that are brightly decorated and well maintained. They share toilet facilities with centre users, but staff always escort them to ensure their safety. Children have safe and easy access to a good range of resources from low storage trolleys, with some activities are set out on low tables prior to their arrival. This provides a welcoming environment for the children.

Children learn how to use equipment safely. They receive staff support as they begin to use scissors or spread their toast with plastic knives. Children participate in themed activities that promote an awareness of safety, such as road safety or stranger danger. They enjoy visits from local fire and police officers. Children practise the fire drill, which ensures the speedy evacuation of the premises in an emergency. This helps children develop awareness of how to stay safe.

Children receive protection through staff having clear understanding of the possible signs of abuse or neglect. Staff know the procedure to follow should they have any concerns and share their policy with parents. Staff rigorously impose the collection agreements they have with parents, whereby only known adults may collect children. This safeguards the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Younger children separate from parents and carers with sensitive staff support and staff encourage parents to attend introductory sessions to help children adjust. Many settle quickly and play happily with the good variety of resources available. Staff find out about children's abilities and favourite activities when they first join. This helps inform planning. Children enjoy

water play as they pour from beakers, squeeze and roll playdough, watch the African snail eat cucumber or run in the garden pushing buggies and playing with balls. Children gain in confidence as staff praise them and talk to them about familiar things, such as their family. Staff use Birth to three matters, which helps them take account of younger children's needs as they plan suitable activities.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have all attended training for the Foundation Stage curriculum and together plan a wide range of activities. Children participate in interesting activities which reflect the early learning goals in all Areas of Learning. Staff set up the rooms in clear activity areas with resource trolleys to support each area. This means at the science table children freely select resources, such as natural materials, magnifying glasses, magnets and calculators. This enables them to flexibly initiate their own play and learning. Staff observe the children during their activities and assess their progress towards the early learning goals. They identify children's next steps in learning and use these to inform future planning. Children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive effective support. Staff liaise closely with external agencies, such as educational psychologists, special needs advisors and schools, to ensure the provision of suitable activities and to assist children's transition to school.

Children quickly settle to their activities on arrival as they access a good range of interesting resources that they find stimulating. They enjoy the balance of free play and adult-led activities which provide variety to their day. Children use the garden daily and staff sometimes set it up to cover all areas of the curriculum. However, this is for limited periods only and there is no free-flow of activities from inside to outside. Children show good levels of independence as they take resource boxes out of trolleys, put on their aprons and hang them up after use and help to prepare their snacks and wash up afterwards.

Children play well together and develop friendships. They encourage others to join in with their play as they help pass resources. They show awareness of what is right and wrong as they remind each other to share and take turns. Children develop communication skills and imagination as they plan their role-play in small groups with good staff support. They use hoops as cars, loading them with dolls before going on various outings which reflect their home experiences. They confidently talk to staff as they share news about holidays and family. Staff model new language which children repeat, such as when learning to side-step during outdoor games. However, staff do not always sufficiently help children to extend their ideas and thinking through sustained conversations during other activities, such as construction or craft.

Children very much enjoy looking at books. They enthusiastically join in at story time as they repeat familiar phrases. They have good opportunities for mark making as they paint, draw pictures and make lists. Children learn about numbers as they count during activities and sing subtraction rhymes. They measure their sunflowers at home and transfer the measurements onto a graph at pre-school, comparing their sizes. Children experiment with size, shape and volume. They use construction kits to carefully build enclosures big enough to hold their farm animals, pour water into various sized containers, or fit as many balls as possible inside a hoop.

Children have good opportunities to explore different materials. They spread glue and paint and play with dough and clay. They closely examine natural resources, such as cork and stones, using magnifying glasses. They are fascinated as they play with various magnets. Children dig and plant bulbs and seeds and learn about the conditions they need to grow in. They develop a sense of time as they watch them flower and harvest and eat their carrots. Children learn

about their wider community and different cultures through planned activities. They dip apples in honey for Hanukah, visit the home for the elderly regularly and go to the shops and the library. This helps children recognise and value similarities and differences in society. Children become confident using information technology. They take photographs and quickly learn how to review them with the digital camera and use the computer for educational games. Children have daily opportunities to play outside. They learn new skills as they move in different ways during adult-led activities. Children create a circuit in the garden as they push buggies at speed. They learn how to throw and catch with balls of all shapes and sizes with staff support. However, there are no opportunities for children to climb and balance on larger apparatus. Children push sticklebricks together firmly, hold pencils, manipulate dough and cut round shapes with scissors. This helps them develop good dexterity.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Partnership with parents and/or carers is good. Parents receive excellent information about the provision through brochures and newsletters. Staff display additional information at the entrance, such as named photographs of staff, planning and leaflets from other organisations. Staff work closely with parents to support the children's individual care needs through providing introductory sessions and the completion of registration and child profile forms. Parents receive written information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and support projects at home, such as growing and measuring sunflowers with the children. Staff invite parents to attend termly consultation meetings when they share their children's achievement records. Parents inform staff of their children's achievements at home through the home-link diary. This helps staff and parents support the children's learning well. Parents also support the group by fundraising for equipment and sitting on the parent-committee.

Children feel welcome in the provision as staff greet them on arrival. At registration time they know where to sit as their named photograph is in their place. They see their work on display on the walls and look at themselves and their friends in the group's scrap-book kept on display with the books. Staff know many of the children well and talk to them about their friends and families. This helps the children develop a sense of belonging.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support. Staff liaise closely with parents and therapists and introduce activities to promote their development. They liaise with all the relevant agencies as children approach school age. This helps to ensure a smooth transition.

Children behave well. Staff are clear and consistent and children understand the rules. They share well, occasionally reminding each other or receiving adult support to do so. Children show care and concern for each other. They look up from their activities when a child spills water, saying reassuringly 'it's just an accident'. They help others without being asked by passing them playdough and tools when they join their table. Staff praise children when they do something well. This supports the development of appropriate behaviour. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management is good. The committee delegate most tasks to the manager while maintaining close contact. Together the staff and committee identify and support areas for

development, with additional advice sought and acted upon from a teacher mentor. They are currently developing the provision of a portable computer station and fundraising for the resurfacing of the outdoor play area. The manager develops a committed team of staff who work closely together and attend monthly planning meetings. Staff show commitment to their professional development by attending training for Level 3 qualifications. The manager and her deputy monitor the provision of the Foundation Stage curriculum closely to ensure children progress in all areas of development. She has successfully introduced peer-on-peer observations to help staff share best practice. She maintains links with external organisations and attends local cluster group meetings. This helps her continually evaluate the provision and benefits the children's care and learning well.

Staff organise the provision effectively and develop routines that support the children's care and learning. They review policies and procedures and effectively implement them. Staff maintain documentation well and up-date information termly, such as that held on registration forms. This supports the children's welfare.

The manager carries out recruitment procedures which help to ensure new employees are suitable, such as interviews and inductions. New employees are often already known, so written references are not sought and staff are not formally asked to notify their employer of changes to their suitability. This does not rigorously protect the children's welfare.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous care inspection the provider was recommended to use snack time to extend children's learning and independence and to improve documentation. Staff have successfully introduced a café style snack time. Children now independently decide when to have their snack, pour their own drinks and spread their toast. They throw away any rubbish in the bin and wash up their plates and cups. This provides excellent opportunities for them to develop independence.

The manager has up-dated policies and documentation. The child protection policy now includes a clear procedure to follow should an allegation be made against a member of staff. This safeguards the children. Staff ensure the procedure for recording medicines administered to children is followed and ensure children use soap when washing their hands. This protects the children's health.

At the education inspection the provider was recommended to increase opportunities for children to use height and measure. Staff now ensure plans include more opportunities such as growing and measuring sunflowers.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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 there are rigorous procedures in place for checking that staff are suitable to work with children.

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):

- extend children's use of language for thinking through discussion during child-initiated activities
- allow children to move spontaneously between indoor and outdoor areas
- provide opportunities for children to climb and balance on large apparatus.

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