

Buffer Bear At The Great Western Hospital

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY255698
Inspection date	07 September 2007
Inspector	Doreen Forsyth
Setting Address	Marlborough Road, Swindon, SN3 6BB
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Registered person	Buffer Bear Ltd
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?

Buffer Bear Nursery at the Great Western Hospital was registered in January 2003. It operates from a single storey, purpose built building on the site of the Great Western Hospital in Swindon, Wiltshire. The nursery serves the staff of the Primary Care and the National Health Care Trusts and the general public.

The nursery is registered to care for up to 68 children under the age of five, currently there are 91 children aged from six months to four years on roll. This includes 25 children who are in receipt of government funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery is open weekdays from 06.45 until 19.00, all the year round, except for bank holidays.

Currently there are 23 full or part-time members of staff working with the children; of these 15 have early years qualifications at level 2 or 3, and two are currently on relevant early years training programmes. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

At Buffer Bears children are very well protected from infection and are well taken care of if they become ill or have an accident because the practitioners follow good health and hygiene routines, policies and procedures. For example, they follow very good procedures when they need to administer medications to children, record accidents or when changing nappies. The facilities for nappy changing on the whole are good, but in one room children's nappies are changed on a mat on the toilet floor. Most staff have current first aid training. Staff have a clear understanding of how to keep children healthy. They help children to learn good hygiene routines, such as washing their hands before eating and after using the toilet, even the youngest children are encouraged to wash their hands at lunch time. All the necessary documentation such as parental permissions, accident and medications records, that are required to promote children's health and well being, are well kept.

Children are very well nourished. The setting provides all the children's meals, snack and drinks, except for babies formula milk which parents provide and is warmed as necessary by the baby room staff. All the meals are prepared by the nursery cook, very good procedures are in place to ensure all special dietary requirements are noted and well observed. Children enjoy the well balanced meals. Meals are a relaxed time with staff and children sitting to eat together. Children are encouraged to serve their own food, and to help themselves to more as the wish. At snack times the children enjoy dried or fresh fruit, again they confidently serve their own snacks and drinks. Fresh drinking water is always available to the children throughout all the playrooms.

Children rest and sleep according to their individual needs and sleep patterns. All children have their own bedding, which is washed regularly and changed when necessary. There are sufficient cots for the babies, they sleep in a partitioned area of the playroom, where staff can easily check them and ensure they are kept safe.

Children have regular opportunities to play outside and take part in physical activities. They play in the enclosed garden whenever the weather is suitable. There are appropriate toys for outside play, such as bikes and other wheeled toys, a play house, balancing equipment, balls, and a small climbing frame. There are limited resources to provide any physical challenge to the older and more able children. If the children cannot play outside, staff organise suitable indoor physical activities, such as music and movement sessions or parachute games. The toddlers use suitable climbing resources in their playroom, whenever possible staff take babies and toddlers out on local walks.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an extremely welcoming, child-centred and suitable environment. The playrooms are well maintained and are kept inviting and welcoming, children's art work, posters and information for parents are all attractively displayed. The nursery is kept very secure, staff are very vigilant and are skilled at ensuring children's security and safety. They continually risk assess the setting and the children's activities, for example, whenever children play outside a member of staff from that room checks outside, and records with the senior staff that the garden is safe and the gates locked. Parents are reminded to ensure that the entrance doors are kept locked and any unfamiliar adults challenged. The setting has appointed a health and

safety officer who, with all the staff, rigorously ensures any hazards are promptly identified and minimised.

Children enjoy using the large range of very good toys, equipment and resources provided. The toys and resources are well stored, clearly and appropriately labelled and easily available to the children. Most children can freely choose what they wish to play with from the suitable, age-appropriate toys. In the 'big bears' room the resources used help promote the children's progress in the Foundation Stage of learning.

Children are very well safeguarded because all staff understand their roles and responsibilities in child protection and are able to put the appropriate procedures into place if necessary. Some staff have attended safeguarding children training, all staff have in-house 'Buffer Bears' child protection information. Parents are informed of the nursery's responsibilities regarding child protection in their information packs.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at the nursery, they learn from the good range of activities that the staff plan and provide for the children in their appropriate age groups. Babies and toddlers enjoy many activities that help to develop their senses, including using paint, sand, water, exploring treasure baskets and listening to music. Staff in the different rooms plan activities or make good use of spontaneous events to ensure all children have fun. The practitioners are interested in what the children do and say, they provide comfort, talk to them and build warm, friendly relationships. In the baby, 'koalas' and 'Paddington' rooms, the children's key workers use the Birth to three matters framework to plan, assess and record each child's progress on an individual basis. This monitoring framework then leads into the Foundation Stage of learning for the three and four year olds in the 'big bears' room. All the children have opportunities to play outside, babies can crawl and move safely in their well planned playroom. Children are able to develop their imaginations in role play, they enjoy listening to stories and singing songs and rhymes.

Nursery Education.

The children are interested in what they do and what happens at their nursery, they ask questions and expect appropriate answers. They are very confident and interact very well with each other and the staff. They concentrate well on their chosen activities, such as building with construction resources or playing with play dough. They are learning to care for each other and for living things. For example, they enjoy setting the lunch tables for the others, or helping to clean out the hamster cage; they water the plants that they are growing in the garden.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Most staff that work with the 'big bears' have a suitable knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals and the way children learn. The rooms used are organised into learning stations or areas to ensure that all of the areas of learning are promoted. Staff provide a suitably broad and balanced curriculum. The practitioners plan to meet the needs of all children, there is a Special Needs Co-ordinator(Senco) in place to ensure that all children are helped to learn and progress including those that speak English as an additional language or that have learning difficulties or disabilities. Most of the daily activities are planned from the information gleaned from the assessments that the staff make on all the children's progress, but the planning does not show clearly what practitioners want individual children to learn. The assessment records kept show that children are progressing

appropriately, however, because staff do not carry out any initial assessments when children first start onto the stepping stones towards the early learning goals, it is difficult for them to plan to build on what children already know.

The children in 'big bears' room become very independent; they are able to take care of their own toileting needs, choose what they are going to play with, and where they would like to play. They serve their own meals, drinks and snacks and help to clear up afterwards. They are good at sharing and taking turns. They know how to sit and listen to others at large group times. They enjoy stories and books and have access to a very large range of suitable books in the comfortable book corner. They enjoy writing and mark making at the writing table and in their role play, children are helped to write and are encouraged to label their own work. They are beginning to link some sounds to letters.

Children count and use mathematical language in their play and activities. For example, when using the sand tray they compare size and shape, they solve simple problems when building with construction toys or junk modelling. They help count the number of plates they need at lunch time and count the children coming in from outside play. Children learn well about living things, their environment and the world around them. They enjoy looking at and talking about the photos the room leader took when she visited Thailand, they helped to grow peas and beans in the garden which they tasted, they are very pleased when they can take the pre-school hamster home at weekends to look after. Children are very skilled on the computer and use it confidently in different activities planned to support their learning.

Children enjoy a range of creative activities; they enjoy painting at an easel, using different craft and malleable materials such as collage, sand, water and play dough. They take part in role play and begin to use their imaginations. Children have access to a well resourced home corner. Children have opportunities to develop their large muscle skills when they play outside, take part in music and movement or play parachute games; when they learn to control the bikes in the garden they develop spatial awareness. Children's small muscle control is helped to develop using tools such as pencils and paint brushes, spades in the sand, cutters in the play dough or scissors when junk modelling.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are highly valued and welcomed into the nursery, including those that may have a disability, learning difficulties or any that speak English as an additional language. Staff, including the Senco endeavour to ensure all children's individual needs are met, they seek outside expertise and support if necessary. The nursery successfully uses the key worker system to ensure children build a strong bond with a designated adult in the setting who attends to their personal needs such as nappy changing and feeding whenever possible, and who records their progress and makes links with parents. Children benefit from activities and resources the nursery uses that help them to value diversity. They regularly celebrate and explore different special events and festivals such as American Independence day, Hanukah, Diwali and Valentines day, in the babies room they always celebrate the children's first birthday. Children use toys such as dolls, small world figures and books that portray people from different backgrounds. Many of the posters and displays throughout the setting are used to celebrate diversity.

Children behave very well in the nursery with the staff acting as good role models. The setting has suitable policies and procedures in place which are shared with parents to help encourage

appropriate behaviour. Children's achievements and good behaviour is praised and valued. Children's social, moral, spiritual, and cultural development is fostered.

Staff work very closely with parents to ensure children's individual needs are met. Parents receive a very informative pack about the nursery, and have good access to the nursery policies and procedures. There are regular newsletters and twice yearly open evenings; there are also some social events such as a recent BBQ. Staff complete daily information sheets for the younger children, and all staff ensure they spend time with parents at the end of the session exchanging news and telling them about the children's day. The setting has suitable complaints procedures in place that complies with current legislation.

The partnership with parents in regard to nursery education is good. Parents receive good information about the Foundation Stage and the early learning goals from displays and the information pack. They can always see any records kept on the children's progress and informally discuss their progress. At parent's evening they receive written information about their children's progress. Children can borrow books from the nursery to share at home with their parents. However, parents only usually share what they know about their children's learning at parent's evenings or during informal discussion and do not contribute to the children's assessment records.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting has very good induction, vetting and employment procedures in place ensuring that all adults that are employed at the nursery are suitable to work with young children. Any adults that have not undergone a rigorous vetting procedure do not have unsupervised access to the children. Most of the staff are experienced and have relevant qualifications in early years care and education; staff are encouraged to attend on-going training to develop their skills and understanding of child development.

Adult/child ratios are well maintained ensuring children receive good support and attention, all staff have a high regard for the wellbeing of all the children. All of the policies, procedures documentation and records required to help support the children's health, safety enjoyment and wellbeing are in place and well kept, including a good record of staff, children and visitor's attendance. The provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management of the nursery is good. The senior staff have a clear vision for the nursery and are keen to explore ways of how the setting could be improved. They value staff training and development and use in house training to improve the skills of the staff. They constantly monitor and evaluate the provision offered, all staff are encouraged to appraise and evaluate their performance and the children's progress. The setting plans to use an outside accreditation scheme to help them monitor the provision of nursery education. It is important to the nursery staff that they are promoting an environment where every child matters.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the nursery was set two recommendations; one concerned developing the role of the Special Needs Co-ordinator (Senco), the other was to ensure enough staff were working with the children especially at lunch times. The nursery employs special relief staff to ensure children are well supported at lunch periods and that the correct ratios are always

maintained. There is a suitable Senco in place in the setting, who's role is to assist staff in ensuring all children's individual learning needs are met as much as possible.

At the nursery education inspection the nursery was set key issues regarding children's use of number and planning and observations. At this inspection children were seen to use number and mathematical concepts confidently in their play and daily activities. Staff observe the children's progress very well in the 'big bears' room, a recommendation set at this inspection requires staff to ensure planning shows learning intentions for individual children.

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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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):

- explore ways of providing children with more challenge in activities aimed at promoting their physical development
- improve the facilities for nappy changing in the 'Paddington' playroom.

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 the short term planning clearly shows learning intentions for individual children
- ensure that when children first start out onto the stepping stones towards the early learning goals, that with parents, children are assessed to find out where they are in their learning so that practitioners can build on what children already know.

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