

Bank House Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	316735
Inspection date	17 September 2007
Inspector	Jannet Mary Richards
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Registered person	F & J Rivers Quality Childcare 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 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?

Bank House Private Day Nursery has been registered since 1992. The nursery is situated in a large renovated and extended house in the Radcliffe area of Bury. There are many local amenities nearby, including the town centre within a short walking distance from the nursery. A public car park is also situated within close proximity to the premises.

There are five playrooms in all. The children are divided into babies, tweenies, toddlers and pre-school children. There is also an out of school facility on the premises for primary school children. There is a secure outdoor play area to the rear of the property.

The nursery opens each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00 with the exception of bank holidays. Full and part-time places are offered to meet the differing needs of families. There are currently 61 children in total on roll. Of these, 11 are in receipt of nursery education funding. A total of 14 staff work with the children, of these 13 staff have appropriate childcare qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well. The staff follow effective procedures to reduce the risk of the spread of infection and keep the environment clean and hygienic for children. They sterilise children's dummies, clean tables with an appropriate cleaner before snacks and meals, for example, and use individual bedding for each child at sleep time. During daily routines the children are developing a good awareness of their own health needs. They wash their hands before meals and snacks, for example, picture prompts in the bathroom act as a reminder to them. After lunch they brush their teeth and runny noses are kept clean.

The children are provided with a very healthy diet. They enjoy cooked meals, such as pasta and corned beef hash, made on the premises. Snacks are very healthy, including raw vegetables, fruit and cheese. Children's preferences are accommodated very well. Each mealtime a choice is offered for children who may not like the main meal. The staff discuss the children's dietary needs thoroughly with parents, to ensure that they are well informed and able to accommodate individual dietary needs and preferences. Children's development is fostered appropriately at mealtimes. Babies use spoons and learn to feed themselves independently, supported well by the staff. Older children in the after school club are able to select and make their own sandwiches. The children have access to drinks at all times, ensuring that they can quench their thirst whenever they wish.

Children's medical needs are met very well. The staff consult with parents and medical professionals. They receive specialist medical training in order to meet the needs of children in their care effectively. They observe children and attend to medical needs with care and attention. Administration of medication is recorded well and supports the care provided.

Children have access to the outdoor area every day, providing them with opportunities for fresh air and exercise. They develop their physical skills well during planned activities, such as balancing bean bags on their head, throwing and catching, or negotiating a path around cones. Babies benefit from outdoor play and are taken out regularly in prams, for walks in the local area.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children and parents are made to feel very welcome in the nursery as the friendly staff greet them warmly as they arrive. The children benefit from having a good amount of space to move around as they play and a secure outdoor area. The nursery has plenty of natural light, particularly in the baby room, where babies can see outside from the patio doors. The children can play with a suitable range of toys and books, many of these are in storage units at child height, providing them with choices about their play. There are creative displays, photographs of the children at play and children's own work displayed in each of the play rooms. Most of these are above child height, however, which limits the benefits to the children. The staff working with the babies ensure that they have plenty of cuddles during the day, although the lack of comfortable domestic furniture limits the opportunities for close contact when bottle feeding babies, for example.

A good emphasis on safety procedures enables children to be cared for in a safe environment. Risk assessments and hazard checks are carried out to ensure that the play rooms are safe. In addition, the staff supervise the children well at all times and have a good awareness of health and safety issues and procedures, in order to keep the children safe. Children's welfare is safeguarded as there are appropriate child protection procedures in place, which the staff understand in order to safeguard the welfare of any children they may care for.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle very well in the nursery and are happy to attend. Before they start they visit with their parents as often as necessary for them to settle. They are encouraged to bring their own blankets, toys and comforters from home, which helps them to feel secure and settled. In addition the staff get to know them well, developing positive relationships, so that the children are happy and content. The staff interact generally well with the children. For example, babies enjoy singing with their familiar adult who talks to them and babbles with them, encouraging their interactions and language development. The staff talk to older toddlers about the colours of toys and they count them together to encourage their learning.

The children enjoy a suitable range of activities to promote their development. In particular there are some very interesting and age-appropriate focussed activities planned for the children under three years. They explore the texture of straw and glue as they create harvest pictures, for example. They can explore materials, such as corn flour mix, shaving foam, sand and paint. The staff allow them to investigate the textures and use all of their senses to explore and learn. The staff generally know the children's abilities and are able to promote their development during play. However, the assessment and planning tools used throughout the nursery do not link together sufficiently, to ensure that children's development is well planned for and promoted. In addition, most of the planning for younger children is not yet linked to the components of the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

Older children enjoy attending the after school club. They enjoy a suitable range of activities and can choose what they do. They request to play with the water play, for example, the staff are happy to provide this. Children are happy, relaxed and confident. They are able to contribute their ideas for the rules for acceptable behaviour in the club, for example. This encourages the children to take some responsibility for the club and their actions.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The staff plan a wide range of interesting activities, which help the children to make sound progress towards the early learning goals in each of the six areas of learning.

The children are settled and confident in the nursery environment. They are learning to co-operate together in group games, such as parachute games, and concentrate well at activities which they choose themselves. They are becoming independent, helping to put their toys away, though this is not encouraged further. Children are accompanied to the bathroom, for example, even though many have the skills to take themselves independently. The children listen to stories each day and have access to some books to develop their interest in books and print. They can use mark making materials, such as paints, pencils and paper every day, which enables them to develop their early writing skills. In addition they enjoy some planned activities to help them understand that we write for a purpose, such as writing recipes. They have fewer

opportunities to see and recognise their names and look at print in the nursery environment, however.

During planned, focussed activities the children are developing a sound awareness of early mathematics. They count and recognise some numbers, for example. They find out that they have one too many children during an action song, learning that one more than five makes six. They have fewer opportunities to consolidate this learning during free play as they have little access to everyday objects, such as telephones and calculators to use in their play.

The children go out often where they learn about the world around them. They collect natural objects, such as leaves and stones to examine and explore. They notice changes when they plant seeds and observe their growth, when they bake, and mix powder into paint. They are able to use technology in the form of a computer. They know the programmes and manipulate the mouse with confidence. As they play the children develop their fine motor skills well. They use tools, such as pencils, scissors and pencil sharpeners with confidence and skill. The children have access to a wide range of media and materials to express their creative thoughts and feelings. They enjoy singing often, exploring musical instruments, and playing with a small range of role play items to develop their imagination and creativity.

The staff are able to support the children generally well in their play for most of the time. In particular during the planned, focussed activities, when they ask the children questions to encourage their thinking and learning. At times, however, they are unable to support the children effectively during play as they are engaged in other duties, such as escorting children to the bathroom. This limits the learning opportunities and challenges for the children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children behave generally well in the nursery. They learn to share their toys and take turns. Challenging behaviour is managed appropriately by staff who have a sound understanding of behaviour management. The older children learn to value differences, when they celebrate different cultural festivals and play with some toys which have positive images of race, culture, gender and disability. This approach fosters children's spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. The younger children have less access to resources with positive images, however, which limits their opportunities to become aware of differences.

The staff develop good working relationships with parents and carers. Parents clearly feel welcome and speak highly of the nursery and staff. They are provided with information about what the children have been doing each day through daily diary sheets, ensuring they are well informed. The staff and parents discuss children's individual needs and work well together to meet these, ensuring consistent care routines for the children. The partnership with parents of children in receipt of nursery education funding is satisfactory. Parents are provided with newsletters informing them of the learning activities offered for the children each month. They can also access information about the curriculum guidance which is available within the nursery. This ensures that parents are appropriately informed about the children's educational opportunities.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The organisation of the nursery, staff and resources is effective and ensures that children are safe, happy and enjoy attending the nursery. Many of the staff team have worked at the nursery for a long period of time, offering continuity for parents and children. They work well together, using effective systems of communication, such as daily diaries and staff meetings, to ensure that the nursery day runs smoothly. They attend some training to continue to develop their childcare knowledge, to the benefit of the children. The documentation which supports the care of the children is appropriately recorded and maintained.

The leadership and management of the nursery education are satisfactory. The managers support the staff team appropriately with the planning and delivery of activities. They work with the local authority advisory teacher in order to evaluate and develop the provision, to the benefit of the children's learning.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the time of the last inspection the provider was asked to address six issues. Overall, good progress has been made on most of the issues raised. Healthy menus have been introduced which have a positive impact on children's health. In each of the group rooms children are now able to access a suitable range of books, which encourages their enjoyment of stories and early literacy skills. The staff have developed the systems for supporting children with specific needs in order that they are offered appropriate support to meet their needs at an early stage. They have also begun to involve parents in the assessment of their children's progress, though this is still very informal at the time of the inspection. These developments have led to improvements in the care offered to the children.

The introduction of a writing table and a paint easel has led to more opportunities for children to make marks in a variety of ways; to cut, join, connect and practice their emerging writing skills. During focussed activities the children have more opportunities to count, recognise numbers and write for a purpose. Finally, the setting has introduced a system of monitoring and evaluating the nursery education provision by evaluating focussed activities. They are continuing to develop these systems, to include the continuous play provision which is always available to the children. These developments have led to some improvements in the learning opportunities for the children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Ofsted received concerns regarding National Standards 1, 2, 3 and 11. These related to suitable persons, organisation, care, learning and play and behaviour. An Ofsted inspector visited the provision on 15th July 2004 and 23rd August 2004. Actions were raised and have been satisfactorily met by the registered provider. Ofsted is satisfied that the provider remains qualified for registration.

The investigation came about as a result of a BBC television programme, Nurseries Undercover: The Real Story, on 12 August 2004. The nursery referred their concerns about the allegations made by the programme to the Office of Communications (Ofcom). Ofcom upheld six aspects of the complaints made by the nursery and five members of staff.

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):

- develop the assessment procedures to reflect up to date records of children's progress, which can be used more effectively to plan the next steps in their development and learning. For younger children take account of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and for older children the 'Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage' (also applies to nursery education)
- continue to develop the nursery environment for the children under three years; consider the use of domestic furniture and increased access to pictures, tactile objects, and toys and books with positive images of race, gender, culture and disability.

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):

- review the organisation of staff and resources, to further develop children's independence and allow staff more time to interact with the children and promote their learning
- develop the environment for children to see and recognise their own names, numbers and letters, in order to further develop their mathematical understanding and early literacy skills.

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