

Beechwood Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	403577
Inspection date	04 March 2008
Inspector	Jane Shaw
Setting Address	Shady Lane, Bromley Cross, Bolton, Lancashire, BL7 9AF
Telephone number	01204 303 168
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Registered person	Plas Tirion 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

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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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Beechwood Nursery is owned by Plas Tirion Limited and is organised on a day to day basis by the nursery manager. The provision first opened in 1985 and operates from converted premises set in it's own grounds within the Bromley Cross district of Bolton, Lancashire.

Children are grouped according to age and are cared for within Baby Care, Toddlers, Preppies and Pre-school designated areas. There is access to appropriate toilet and hand washing facilities and an enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 60 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery operates Monday to Friday from 07.30 to 18.00 for 50 weeks of the year. Children attend from a wide catchment area in and around the Bolton suburbs.

There are currently 73 children from birth to five years on roll. Of these, 24 are in receipt of early education funding. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 19 members of staff, 18 of which work directly with the children. Of these staff, 14, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. A further seven staff are undertaking appropriate or additional training.

As the nursery is in receipt of funding for early education, they have access to advisory staff from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is satisfactorily promoted as a result of the routines and procedures in place. Children are aware of the need to wash their hands before and after certain activities, such as after using the toilet or before meals. Many children are able to undertake this task independently, with only gentle reminders from staff for the younger children. Much younger children require support from staff. Planned themes and activities enable the children to think about healthy eating and healthy body awareness. The children are developing an understanding of the need to keep their teeth healthy as they brush their teeth after lunch and enjoy visits to the nursery by the dental hygienist. Appropriate procedures are implemented and followed by staff during nappy changing, for example, the wearing of gloves and aprons to promote children's health and to prevent the spread of any germs or cross infection. However, the location of nappy changing within group rooms compromises children's privacy and health. Visitors to the baby room are required to remove outdoor footwear ensuring babies health when crawling on the floor.

An appropriate sick child policy, which is shared with parents and carers, ensures they are aware of how the nursery promotes the health of all children attending by trying to create an infection free environment. Staff are alert to children who might be feeling unwell, make necessary arrangements with parents and carers, and give sensitive and gentle care to children whilst waiting for them to be collected.

Appropriate hygiene routines and procedures are employed by care staff and the housekeeper when preparing meals and snacks, ensuring children are kept healthy and free from infection at all times. Several staff hold food hygiene qualifications ensuring the preparation of food is carried out in a safe manner and as a result promoting children's health. The regular monitoring of appliances, food storage and the checking of food temperatures ensures children's good health. Appropriate systems are in place for the recording of accident and medication, however, a small number of entries in medication records have not been signed by parents and carers.

Children's healthy eating is very well promoted. They enjoy a range of healthy snacks and meals throughout their day. Meals are freshly cooked each day and offer the children a balanced and nutritious diet which includes plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables. For example, during the inspection children enjoyed a variety of fruits at snack time, a hot picnic with toasted sandwiches, vegetable sticks and homemade dips, yoghurt and honey. The cook and nursery manager discuss menus on a regular basis, trying new recipes and reintroducing old favourites. Parents and carers are kept up to date with menu changes and plans are in place to take photographs of the variety of dishes available for parents, carers and children to view. Parents and carers give staff information on allergies and preferences.

Children enjoy snack and mealtimes which are made into social occasions with staff sitting with children encouraging and supporting where necessary. All children have access to regular drinks throughout the day. Staff ensure babies are offered regular drinks, toddlers, preppies and pre-school children independently access drinks through the provision of beakers and jugs of water, feeder cups and bottles. Jugs are regularly replenished and cups replaced with clean ones.

Children's physical development is promoted through the provision of appropriate opportunities both in and outdoors. Children have opportunities to play outdoors weather permitting, where they use balls, tricycles, climbing equipment and practise running skills. Children also have opportunities to practise large physical skills indoors when the weather does not permit outdoor play. Children also enjoy the occasional walks within the locality.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for within areas that are organised according to their age, however, progression through group rooms depends upon their ability as well as their age. Group rooms are appropriately furnished and equipped. Children also have access to a 'wet room', which is used for messy play activities. The use of this area gives children the opportunity to have a change in their environment away from their own group room. Rooms are prepared on a daily basis prior to the children's arrival ensuring they have play opportunities as soon as they arrive, however, group rooms also enable children to make independent choices about their activities and play. Children access a variety of activities and opportunities on a daily basis both in and outdoors, which are supported by a range of resources and equipment. Staff make use of indoor space to provide physical play when outdoor play is not possible.

The environment is welcoming and inviting for children their parents and carers through the displaying of children's work, commercial friezes and pictures, other child centred information and some soft lighting and drapes. The environment is also welcoming because of the friendly, supportive and approachable staff team.

Children access a good range of age appropriate toys and equipment. Resources are regularly rotated and are used to support activities and children's enjoyment. Children have opportunities to develop their skills of independence as they self select toys and equipment from that which is set out for them. Children also have the opportunity to make choices about their activities during free play sessions. Toys and equipment is checked regularly for safety and hygiene to ensure children's health and safety at all times.

Children's safety is satisfactorily promoted because staff have an understanding of the need to ensure this aspect of their care. Children are cared for within a safe and secure environment because staff follow clear policies and procedures and use safety equipment, such as safety gates and socket covers, however, the low level storage of liquid free hand wash and spray sanitizers used after nappy changing compromises children's safety. Regular risk assessments and health and safety checks are completed by an external company and nursery staff to ensure the building and procedures address health and safety issues. Staff also complete regular checks of resources, equipment and areas used by the children ensuring they are safe at all times. The regular conducting of fire drills ensures staff responses are effective in ensuring children's safety in the event of this occurring.

Children's welfare is satisfactorily promoted. Staff are clear about the signs and symptoms of abuse, are alert to these, and have access to written information and contact details for the Local Safeguarding Board. Child protection, lost and uncollected child policies are in place, and are available for staff, parents and carers. However, some staff are unclear regarding the procedures to be followed in relation to child protection concerns and uncollected child procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children are learning and developing through a range of planned activities and opportunities which help to promote their learning, overall development and enjoyment. The staff team are aware of both the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage, and use these to plan activities and opportunities for children.

Children are happy, settled and enjoy their time at the nursery. A good ratio of adults on duty ensures children are well supported, staff are caring and interact positively with the children. They encourage children to be confident and independent, warm relationships between staff and children are clearly evident. This helps children to feel valued, well supported and develop a sense of belonging. Staff discuss babies routines with parents and carers prior to their child starting enabling staff to plan for each individual child. For example, staff discuss with parents and carers how their baby likes to sleep and be fed.

Staff greet children warmly as they arrive enabling them to settle quickly and participate in the activities on offer. Children are becoming competent learners through appropriate staff communication and interaction. Staff are spontaneous, they support children encouraging the development of their confidence and enjoyment. The manager monitors activities and staff performance across the nursery

Staff plan a variety of activities and play opportunities, which provide children with valuable and enjoyable learning experiences. They are working well to implement the 'Birth to three matters' framework to enhance the care of babies and young children. For example, they regularly observe and record children's achievements and plan activities to promote their development. Planned daily routines provide children with opportunities to engage in free play, structured activities, outdoor play, singing and stories.

All children enjoy planned activities, which are supported by a range of resources covering a variety of play experiences, for example, very young children are involved in a variety of sensory experiences, such as water play, gloop, jelly and pasta play, and painting on a large scale. Toddlers enjoy a range of play experiences such as baking, craft, construction, physical and imaginary play. A wall display in preppies room shows they have used a variety of materials to develop their understanding of colour and create a colourful display of their work. Children have access to age appropriate activities which cover a range of play experiences both in and outdoors, for example, children join together in a parachute game outdoors after lunch. Children are beginning to make choices about their play as they help themselves to a range of age appropriate resources and equipment. For example, pre-school children make decisions about their play during free play sessions and babies select toys and equipment placed close to them on the floor.

Children enjoy opportunities to experiment with resources, for example, during craft activities they enjoy using a variety of materials and resources to create individual pieces of art work.

For example, using feathers, leaves, and different implements for printing. Staff engage in conversations with the children and are actively involved in supporting and encouraging their play and learning.

Children are cared for within age appropriate rooms which are furnished and resourced appropriately. Some resources are rotated around the group rooms to sustain children's interest. The use of a separate 'wet' room provides children with the opportunity to have a break from their own group room and also to be involved in a variety of messy play activities.

Pre-school children enjoy a good range of interesting activities and play experiences, which are planned in line with the Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff who work with pre-school children have a good understanding of the curriculum and how children learn.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff use the Foundation Stage curriculum to plan a range of interesting activities across all six areas of learning. Written planning shows what children are expected to learn and the purpose of activities.

Children arrive happy and settled, showing an eagerness and excitement to involve themselves in the activities offered. Children's confidence and self-esteem is developing well as a result of the positive praise they receive from staff for their efforts, attempts and achievements. Children are becoming independent as they make choices about their activities during afternoon sessions which are free play times, deal with personal tasks, and as they put on and take off outdoor and dressing up clothes. Children are developing good relationships with one another, which is observed as a group of girls play happily together within the role play area. Children are excited as they are involved in a music session and during outdoor play with the parachute. Children's behaviour is good, they are polite and well mannered, they share and take turns. They sit quietly as they wait for others to be given a musical instrument during a music activity and as they listen to stories read by staff.

Children are becoming skilful communicators and confidently talk about themselves and their families, they talk about places they have visited and things they have done, for example, going swimming with parents and carers. Sentences are well constructed, their vocabulary is good and words are used in context. Children's language for thinking and communication is developing through activities that encourage the children to think and predict, for example, they are asked to consider which musical instrument might be louder or quieter when played. Children's pencil skills are developing well, all children are able to make marks and most children are able to form letters and write their own names. Children and staff make books together after certain activities, for example, they have made a book about water play. Children have their own books that they can write in with staff assistance, drawing pictures to illustrate their work. Children's displayed pictures and paintings have text added to them which is done by the children themselves. Children understand how books work, reading independently and to one another.

Children are beginning to develop an understanding of number and number operations through planned and spontaneous activities. For example, children have to match number signs, place the correct number of pegs on the numbered container, and arrange numbered objects in the correct order. Plans show children are involved in activities that develop their understanding of shape, for example, during music and movement finding the correct shaped mat to stand on. Children have been involved in measuring as they look at how tall they are, and make observations and recordings of how much their seeds have grown.

The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world involves the children in a range of interesting and appropriate activities. For example, children's early science is promoted through activities and access to a variety of resources, such as creating a 'volcano' and watching what happens over time to white flowers when colour is added to their water. Children are developing a good understanding of the wider world through varied themes of work, for example, during Chinese New Year celebrations, children enjoy using chopsticks to eat Chinese food. A variety of appropriate resources supports children's understanding of technology, for example, children access a computer and show competent skills when using the keyboard and mouse. Children have access to and competently use a variety of construction equipment and other materials to build three dimensional models.

Children's physical development is provided for as staff plan a range of appropriate activities to promote both their large and small physical skills. Children understand the need for exercise and healthy eating in promoting a healthy lifestyle, knowing which foods are healthy and good for them. This knowledge is supplemented by healthy foods throughout their day at nursery. Children are developing good manipulative skills and hand-eye coordination as they build train tracks, complete jigsaws and use building blocks to build three dimensional models. Children enjoy outdoor activities that promote their physical health and skill development. Children have opportunities develop their skills whilst climbing and travel under and over, further development of children's balancing skills is planned.

Children use a range of textures and techniques to create individual pieces of art and craft work, for example, displays show children have used collage and printing. They are involved in a variety of sensory and tactile experiences, such as shaving foam, gloop and other natural materials. Children enjoy musical activities knowing the correct names of the instruments. They are able to tap out the beats to match the number of syllables in their name and excitedly play a variety of instruments loudly and quietly, and enjoy making their own musical shakers. Their imagination is developing as they play within the role play area and express ideas to one another as they are involved in creating their own stories.

Activities are planned and involve the children in a range of interesting and stimulating activities across all areas of learning. Staff working within the pre-school are experienced, have a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and how children learn. The pre-school room leader is also experienced but has only very recently taken over the role of planning for the foundation stage.

Long term plans give an overview of activities, with medium term planning covering a specific theme. From these, daily plans are devised which look at the objective of activities, play links and assessment opportunities. Staff discuss activities, but do not formally evaluate planning and activities to enable them to plan the next steps for individual children's learning and differentiation activities. Staff plan for more structured learning opportunities during the morning and free play during afternoon sessions, where children have the opportunity to make independent choices about their activities. Children are becoming skilful at making good choices about their own play.

All staff make regular observations of children's achievements both spontaneously and at focused activities. These observations are used by key workers to complete developmental records. Staff understand the need to ensure that observations of children's achievements are checked more than once to ensure accuracy. Staff also use photographic evidence to support observations and records of achievements. These records are not formally shared with parents

and carers, however, they are aware that they are available upon request. These records are then sent directly to the child's school upon leaving the nursery.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are included in all the activities provided. Staff gather information about the children's individual needs and requirements enabling them to plan appropriate care for each child. Children are developing an understanding and awareness of their own environment and that of the wider world, for example, pre-school children celebrate festivals from around the world, and all children access resources that promote their understanding of diversity and disability during their everyday play.

Staff are aware of the children's individual needs and requirements and are clear about how they access resources and support for children with English as an additional language and children with learning difficulties and disabilities. The manager is proactive in sourcing support for children with individual needs, and staff work well with children on a daily basis.

During the inspection, children's behaviour was good. Staff provide children with lots of positive praise and encouragement for their efforts, attempts and achievements, which has a positive impact on their self confidence and self-esteem. Children are polite, are learning to share, take turns, and co-operate with one another. Staff have undertaken training in behaviour management and an appropriate written behaviour management policy is in place, however, some staff are unclear regarding aspects of this policy. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Good relationships and communication between staff, parents and carers supports children's placements well. Parents and carers are kept up to date with their child's development, achievements and general well-being through informal verbal discussions upon arrival and collection, written daily sheets for babies and toddlers, and information boards outside group rooms. Information regarding planned activities, what children have been involved in on a daily basis and meals is available each day. The manager seeks parental comments via a written questionnaire. All parents and carers speak positively and complimentary about the service offered, and the care their children receive. Developmental records are also available for parents and carers of all children upon request. Parents and carers have access to information about the setting and what it has to offer and policies and procedures through an information booklet and displays in the entrance area.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for appropriately and enjoy their time at the nursery. There are some good systems in place to ensure the provision is managed efficiently, for example, the key worker system works well in practice to promote children's individual development. A high ratio of the staff are qualified in early years, some staff are working towards a recognised qualification, with the manager and deputy undertaking additional training. Good opportunities are made available for all staff to undertake training to enhance their existing skills and knowledge, for example, training in baby massage for staff working with this age range. The manager has regular meetings with room leaders and the development of full staff meetings is planned. Training needs are identified through staff meetings and annual appraisals.

Effective procedures are in place for the recruitment and vetting of staff to ensure their suitability to work with children. All staff with the exception of two are cleared, however, uncleared staff are supervised at all times. Staffing ratios positively support children's care, learning and play. The manager generally acts in a supernumerary capacity and the setting employ a housekeeper to plan and prepare all meals, therefore nursery staff spend their time directly supporting children and ensuring their needs are addressed.

All legally required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and is well maintained, however, staff attendance is consistently recorded. The nursery obtain parental consent for several aspects of their child's care and enjoyment, ensuring their safety. However, consent for the seeking of emergency medical treatment is not in place.

Leadership and management of the pre-school is good. Senior management within the nursery are very much 'hands on' within the setting. The manager generally acts in a supernumerary capacity enabling her to monitor the nursery as a whole, spending time in each of the group rooms throughout the day, observing and assessing staff performance, discussing planning along with children's development and achievements. The manager is committed to the ongoing development and improvement of the educational provision and provision as a whole and has an action plan in place to achieve these aims.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, a number of issues were identified as areas for improvement which related to: safety issues; documentation; and information for parents and carers.

All of these issues have been appropriately addressed. The stairs to the upper floor, which is not used by the nursery, have been made safe by using a gate to restrict access. This ensures children's safety and that this area is inaccessible to them.

The nursery was asked to ensure that accident and medication records contained appropriate information and were kept in a confidential manner. Both of these records are now kept in an appropriate manner, for example, accident records contain information relating to the specific location of injuries. Both systems ensure children's confidentiality is retained as they are individual records.

The parents' information booklet has been revised, ensuring they have access to up to date information regarding the setting and what it has to offer them and their children along with information regarding policies and procedures.

Following the last nursery education inspection, two key issues were raised. The registered provider was asked to: make greater use of practical activities and daily routines to develop the 4 year-old children's skills in problem solving and calculation, and to introduce a rigorous system to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning.

Both key issues have been appropriately addressed. Children have many opportunities to develop their understanding of mathematics through both planned and everyday activities. Staff make use of spontaneous opportunities to develop these skills, for example, when making their own musical instruments, children count the number of scoops of rice or lentils they put in their shakers.

Following the last inspection the nursery manager introduced a staff appraisal system for all staff. This includes asking staff to evaluate their own practice along with observations made by the manager. The manager tends to act in a supernumerary capacity and is able to make evaluations and observations of staff performance, planning and activities.

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 complaint record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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 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):

- reconsider the current arrangements for nappy changing and ensure that all medication records are signed by parents and carers
- develop staff awareness of safeguarding procedures and the setting's uncollected child policy. Ensure dangerous substances are not accessible to children
- obtain parental consent for the seeking of emergency medical treatment and ensure that attendance registers are accurate at all 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):

- monitor and evaluate planning and activities, and use these observations to plan for differentiation and the next steps for individual children's learning
- make children's developmental records more accessible and available for parents and carers.

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