

Busy Bees Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	206126
Inspection date	26 September 2007
Inspector	Sheena Gibson
Setting Address	Scout Hall, Off Woodlands Road, Allestree, Derby, Derbyshire, DE22 2HE
Telephone number	01332 510202
E-mail	
Registered person	Jane Bailey and Sharon Batchelor
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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Busy Bees Playgroup opened in 1999. It operates from the Annexe to the Scout Headquarters, in the Scout Hall Allestree Derby. A maximum of 24 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open from 09:15 until 15:15 during term time only. All children share access to a secure outdoor area.

There are currently 58 children from two years to under eight years on roll. Of these, 26 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide area and travel from surrounding villages. The playgroup does not currently support any children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The group employs 10 staff of whom four hold appropriate level three qualifications; the manager is currently working towards a level four qualification and the owner is currently undertaking a foundation degree in Children and Young Peoples Services. Two staff are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is well promoted by staff who follow the setting's health and hygiene procedures. For example, specific tablecloths are used for mealtimes and toys are regularly cleaned. Children learn the importance of good hygiene through daily routines and discussions with staff. They take some responsibility for their own personal hygiene as they wipe their hands before eating and independently use tissues to blow their noses. Children are well supported if they have an accident. Staff are knowledgeable of first aid practice and the procedures for recording and reporting accidents. There are clear and effective procedures for the administering of medication to ensure children's health needs are met. A clear policy to exclude children who are ill minimises the risk of cross-infection.

Children enjoy regular opportunities to be active and have physical exercise, which effectively promotes the development of their physical skills. The garden area is well kept and there is a shaded area where they can sit on sunny days. They use small pieces of equipment to enhance their skills, such as bats, ball, hoops, bean bags and often extend their indoor play outdoors. They go for walks around the local area, which increases their levels of fitness and contributes effectively to their health.

Children are offered a range of healthy snacks whilst at the setting. Their parents provide a lunch box and so they have food and drink in line with their specific dietary requirements; parents are encouraged by the setting to provide a healthy lunch. Children take part in activities that contribute to their understanding of healthy eating. For example, they enjoy a food tasting activity when they taste foods that are good and bad for them.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into a bright and friendly setting. The room is appealing to them and as a result they are keen to enter the setting. Their craft work is displayed, which helps them to feel valued and acknowledged. The space is well-organised to promote a sense of security. For example, staff set out activities for when children first arrive and so they are keen to begin to play. Children access suitable furniture and equipment, which enables them to enjoy playing, eat comfortably and sit quietly. Children confidently self-select from a wide range of activities and play materials. They, for example, choose their own craft materials and enjoy rooting through the toy drawers, supporting their decision making and independence.

Children are cared for in a secure and safe indoor environment where a range of written procedures and good practice effectively minimise risks and hazards. Risk assessments are very detailed; daily checks effectively support these. Effective fire evacuation procedures are in place; evacuation points are displayed and so also known to parents and visitors. Children learn about taking responsibility for their own safety, through carrying out fire evacuation drills. They also learn about safety within planned and unplanned play and learning activities. For example, staff remind children to sit carefully on the chairs and generally discuss safe play. Staff have a suitable awareness of the child protection procedures to be followed in the event of any concerns regarding child abuse, therefore effectively safeguarding children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children come into the setting with ease and keenness. They are developing independence and confidence, as they access resources for themselves. They use their initiative and take responsibility for their own play, enjoying making up stories and games. Positive relationships with staff contribute effectively to children's well-being. They clearly have a warm relationship and are confident to approach if, for example, they want to go to the toilet or to do something different. Staff are compassionate towards children and spend time settling in new children to help them to feel secure. Younger children are successfully developing some new skills with support from staff. For example, when practising scissor skills staff discretely hold the paper so that children can try independent cutting. However, staff are less confident in their understanding of the planning and provision for children under three in relation to 'Birth to three matters'. Therefore children's potential is not always maximised. Children enjoy themselves at the setting and show this freely when singing spontaneously, laughing and giggling when doing an activity.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a suitable understanding of the nursery education and therefore children make satisfactory progress. Brief detail, when children start at the setting, offers useful information regarding their starting point; observations provide valuable indicators regarding children's development and form part of the on-going assessment. However, assessment does not clearly show children's progress, their next steps, or how it is used to inform planning. Planning indicates how all six areas are covered over a period of time. However, planning is not effective. For example, there is no indication of how activities are extended to ensure that children receive sufficient challenge. Consequently sometimes, older and more capable children are not challenged effectively.

Staff use satisfactory methods in their delivery of the nursery education. For example, they ask some open questions and demonstrate activities. Time and resources are suitably used. There is a balance of free choice and planned activities, which offers children some structure within an independent learning environment. Children have a positive attitude to learning and are excited when, for example, using the computer. They are confident and have positive levels of self-esteem. They work well together and older children are often seen helping the younger ones. They are developing effective self-care skills. For example, they put on their own coat, wipe their nose and pour their own drinks. Children enjoy speaking and some older and more able children are confident communicators. They talk with staff about familiar things such as their animals and use language imaginatively when in the role play area. They are beginning to link sounds and letters, encouraged when completing an alphabet jigsaw. They have some opportunities to make marks. For example, they concentrate when making 'lists' of items in the toys drawers. They enjoy looking at books and listening to stories, particularly when staff read them dramatically and they join in at relevant points.

Children hear and say number when, for example, counting how many children are present. They are beginning to learn about shape, their topic when they work towards recognising some common shapes. More able children capably make a symmetrical pattern using the computer. They use language relating to size and position when, for example, building a wall around their play farm. Children suitably learn about and explore changes. They watch their seeds grow into flowers and discuss why sand has to be wet to make a sandcastle. They have some opportunities to design and build using, for example, various construction materials. Some children use their

imagination well to build a tent or space ship. They have some opportunities to learn about past and present when talking about what their parents did when they were small.

Children have an awareness of space and negotiate well around stationary objects such as furniture. They are able to balance on one leg, stretch curl and march, when listening to 'Sticky Kids'. They use different tools, for example, scissors, which contributes to the development of their physical development. Children enjoy painting and enjoy some exploring of colour when mixing two different colours. They use their imagination when, for example, pretending to be the animals in the farm, making the animals better in the 'veterinary hospital' and wrapping up their 'baby' because it is cold outside. They listen to musical sounds and enjoy singing along to rhymes and songs, with and without instruments.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual care needs are met well to ensure they are fully included in the life of the setting. Staff are mainly from the local area and know the children and families well, supporting children in feeling secure. The care plan, completed at the point of registration, offers valuable information to staff, which enables children's care to be appropriate and consistent. Children are encouraged to be fully involved with all activities. For example, they all enjoy playing with the dolls in the home corner or the train set. Children become aware of wider society through a broad range of activities, toys and games that represent positive images of other people. They also take part in the celebration of different religious and cultural festivals; visitors come to the setting who, for example, speak another language or wear different traditional dress. The setting works collaboratively with parents and other agencies to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Children behave very well. They are aware of the expectations for behaviour and are respectful towards staff and each other. The atmosphere within the setting and attitudes of the staff create a positive environment in which children's self-esteem is successfully fostered. Children receive consistent and appropriate care because the setting works closely with parents. Regular exchanges of information mean that parents and staff share children's daily experiences, effectively supporting their well-being. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory. Parents receive some verbal information about the provision of the nursery education. Parents are involved in brief initial assessments of their children; staff share regular verbal exchanges of information with parents regarding the children's abilities, confirmed by a written report. However, parents do not receive support or information about how they are able to effectively support their child's learning at home.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from being cared for by staff who are appropriately qualified and experienced. Staff are proactive in developing their skills through on-going training, which positively impacts upon children's care. The systems in place for staff recruitment are adequate and include some steps to support children's safety such as checks through the Criminal Records Bureau. However, recruitment procedures are not robust and there are no systems in place for establishing the on-going suitability of staff. This potentially impacts upon children's welfare. Many of the staff

team are well established. This provides security for children and parents, as families are often familiar to the setting and are able to feel very comfortable approaching staff. The adult to child ratio positively supports children's care. Key worker groups have been established for continuity of care and enable children to feel comfortable. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The owner and manager of the setting are motivated and enthusiastic, with a clear, positive vision for the setting. They receive support from the local authority support teacher and take heed of advice given. Some monitoring and self-evaluation takes place, showing commitment to improve practice. However, this is not always effective and therefore weaknesses in practice are not always successfully identified.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting was given recommendations around: developing documentation in the operational plan to ensure it reflects current standards and legislation; ensuring that there are operational procedures for safe conduct on outings, with regard to children's medical needs. These have been well addressed. The provision has developed a comprehensive operational plan which reflects the current standards and regulations; suitable systems are in place to ensure children's health and safety when on outings.

At the last nursery education inspection a key issue was raised regarding: continuing to develop planning and recording methods to ensure all activities maximise potential learning within all aspects of the curriculum. Some positive steps have been taken to develop and improve systems for recording and planning. However, this is not fully effective and is therefore a recommendation at this inspection.

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.

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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 further the planning and provision of activities and play opportunities for children under three years, considering 'Birth to three matters'
- develop further the procedures for ensuring the suitability of staff with regard to recruitment and on going suitability checks.

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):

- continue to develop the systems for planning and assessment to ensure that the assessment of children's abilities is used to inform planning and that all staff are confident in how to effectively implement the planning, ensuring that all children are sufficiently challenged
- develop further the systems for sharing information with parents about the nursery education, what they know about their child and how they can effectively support their child's learning at home
- improve the systems in place for the monitoring and evaluation of the nursery education.

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