

Building Blocks Christian Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY275126
Inspection date	17 July 2007
Inspector	Kelly Eyre
Setting Address	15-17 Belvoir Drive, Barton Seagrave, Kettering, Northamptonshire, NN15 6QZ
Telephone number	01536 721221
E-mail	
Registered person	Christian Day Nurseries 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?

Building Blocks Christian Day Nursery is run by a private company. It opened in its current premises in 2003 and operates from one main room in a converted building. It is situated in Barton Seagrave, on the outskirts of Kettering, Northamptonshire. A maximum of 40 children may attend the nursery at any one time. It is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 all year round, except for bank holidays. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 93 children aged from birth to under eight years on roll. Of these, 42 children receive funding for early education. The nursery serves the local community and nearby towns and villages. It currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 11 members of staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted because there are effective daily hygiene practices in place which prevent the spread of infection, for example, staff wear appropriate protective clothing when changing nappies and children wash their hands before snack and meal times. Children's health in an emergency situation is appropriately promoted because two members of staff have a first aid qualification and further staff members are due to attend training. All records and policies are in place to further support children's health, for example, there are clear procedures for the administration of medication and guidance regarding the exclusion of children who are unwell.

Children's special requirements with regard to health and diet are clearly documented and observed. Their growth and development are well promoted because they are offered healthy and nutritious snacks and meals. These are prepared daily on the premises and contain a well-balanced range of fresh ingredients and all food types. Children learn valuable social skills as they sit together for meals and snacks. Their independence is promoted as they help themselves to drinks throughout the session.

Children's health is promoted because they enjoy a wide variety of physical activities. They develop control of their bodies and improve their physical skills and co-ordination as they participate in structured activities such as music and dance sessions and action rhymes. They regularly access the outdoor play area where they use equipment and resources such as ride-on toys, slides, balls, skittles and climbing apparatus. They are offered opportunities to develop finer physical skills and movements, for example, a young child manipulates puzzle pieces whilst another fits together a train track. Younger children's development is promoted as staff have a good understanding of child development. They are therefore able to provide appropriate activities and equipment to support children's overall development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment. Resources are well-organised and easily accessible and there are colourful posters and displays of children's work, helping them to feel welcome and valued. Their daily safety is prioritised and staff have a sound understanding of this area. A risk assessment has been completed which covers all areas of the building, further promoting children's daily safety. Children are developing their understanding about taking responsibility and keeping themselves safe. They are given clear explanations by staff so that they understand the importance of safety practices such as why it is important not to run inside.

Children's safety and comfort is further promoted by the provision of equipment which is appropriate for the age group using it, for example, there are high chairs for babies and a range of low tables and chairs for older children. They are able to select toys and activities independently from a wide range of play resources which are well-organised and easily accessible. Children's welfare is effectively promoted because staff have attended additional training and there is appropriate paperwork and information to enable them to identify, report and follow up any concerns. However, children's welfare is affected because the policy does not contain detailed information and there is no clear procedure to follow in the event of allegations being made against staff members or volunteers.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children separate well from their carers as they come into the setting and are happy, secure and settled. Their daily experiences at the nursery are enhanced by staff who are kind and caring. Children feel welcome and valued because staff are enthusiastic and show children that they genuinely enjoy their company, joining in with their play and conversations and taking time to get to know each individual child. This creates a positive, caring environment where children receive consistent care and appropriate support. They are confident and have high self-esteem because they are given praise and encouragement from staff, for example, a staff member praises children for correctly counting to twenty, which encourages children to add extra items to the collection and count further.

Babies and young children settle well and have secure relationships with staff. Good staff deployment ensures that although children have key workers, staff work in all areas of the setting and so know each child's requirements and routines. Staff work closely with parents to make sure that they are aware of all routines, keeping to these as much as possible, for example, babies sleep according to their need and in accordance with parents' wishes. Staff are vigilant and continuously assess the children and their play, ensuring that they are always offered a wide range of appropriate and stimulating activities. For example, a staff member notices that two children are not purposefully occupied and suggests that they 'hang up the washing'. She fetches the additional resources and the children thoroughly enjoy this activity, manipulating the clothes and pegs and then going on to include this in an imaginary game. Babies and young children consistently receive appropriate individual attention, helping them to feel secure and promoting their development. For example, staff members encourage babies to look at their reflection in the mirror and to join in with the songs and action rhymes.

The thoughtful planning of activities and the careful organisation of the room mean that children have a secure base area but also have many opportunities to interact with children from other age groups. This facilitates their emotional, social and intellectual development. For example, children under two thoroughly enjoy the daily 'Letter' session for older children, participating safely in this from their own base area where they are well-supported by staff. They eagerly anticipate the music and join in enthusiastically with the songs and action rhymes. Staff gently reinforce their learning during their play and activities. For example, young children making an imaginary cup of coffee for a staff member talks about the milk they are pretending to add, realises that this word begins with the key letter they have just covered and is encouraged to think of other words beginning with the letter 'M'.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress in all areas of learning and their overall development is promoted because staff have a clear knowledge of the Foundation Stage enabling them to provide appropriate activities. Their experience and knowledge of individual children enables them to adapt activities to suit individual children's needs. However, activity planning is not always related to the areas of learning and does not consistently show sufficient details regarding resources, group sizes and extension or adaptation of activities. This means that children's individual needs could be overlooked and children may also have to wait while staff prepare activities. Children make balanced progress in all areas because staff use clear methods for assessing them, making use of the information gained from this to inform future planning. All assessments are carefully cross-referenced to the Foundation Stage and children's progress through this is monitored.

Children gain confidence in playing, participating and exploring because they are offered a wide range of familiar activities. These include imaginative play, reading, construction and a variety of crafts. They are encouraged to think and explore further through the creative use of resources and space. Their knowledge is then further extended as they participate in a range of themed topics, offering them opportunities to look more closely at subjects such as 'Summer', where they investigate summer sounds and fruits, talk about holidays and make associated collages and artwork.

The setting provides children with the opportunities they need to develop the attitudes and dispositions that will enable them to achieve in their later learning. Their confidence and self-esteem are reinforced, giving them the confidence to explore and question. They are motivated to learn through participating in exciting and interesting activities. For example, they use an incubator to incubate chickens' eggs, watch for these to hatch, note the changes as the chicks develop, use reference books to access information and make their own books detailing the chicks' progress and the conditions they need to thrive. Children interact well with others and are confident in using language to organise and explain their thoughts and activities. For example, children playing with the train set explain how the train will fall off the tracks if it goes too fast around the corners. They enjoy opportunities to extend their vocabulary, for example, a small group of children explore different fruit and think of creative words to describe the textures, using words such as 'prickly, spiky, smooth, and cold'. Children use writing as a means of recording and communication, writing shopping lists during role play, putting their names on completed work and writing sentences about pictures they have drawn.

Children are beginning to use numbers in a meaningful context and understand that numbers represent sets of objects. They are able to sort objects according to size and colour, correctly counting the number in each of these groups. They confidently use mathematical and positional language in their daily play and understand the meaning of this vocabulary. For example, a child states 'I'm behind you now, you go first and I can go second'. Children have opportunities to observe, explore and question in a wide range of activities that form the foundation of their later learning in subjects such as history, geography and science. They use equipment such as magnifying glasses and torches to explore detail, keeping their own records of this. They are becoming confident in the use of information and communication technology equipment, for example, using hand-held computers, an interactive music mat and making use of microphones and tape recorders to record themselves.

Children enjoy a wide range of physical activities that help them develop their confidence and skills, for example, they enjoy using the outdoor play area where they climb, balance, crawl and throw balls through cones. They are developing a positive attitude and understanding of healthy eating through regular discussions and the provision of healthy meals and snacks on a daily basis. Children enjoy numerous opportunities to explore colour, texture, shape and form. An example of this is a small group activity where children explore various fruits and then use these to make prints, exploring the shapes and colours created. They enjoy joining in with songs, rhymes and dances and show an emerging awareness of rhythm and beat as they play instruments in time to the music. They enjoy opportunities to explore music and learn how sounds can be changed, for example playing quietly and loudly and comparing the different sounds of instruments played indoors and outdoors.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are developing a positive self-image because they are respected as individuals and their contributions are valued. This is further enhanced because staff praise their efforts and achievements, promoting children's confidence and self-esteem. They are encouraged to express their views and also to value the views and opinions of others. For example, three children playing with a train set discuss their holidays, carefully listening to each other and contributing to the discussion. Children who have learning difficulties or disabilities have their individual requirements recognised and consistently met. Staff have attended additional training and are able to work consistently and sensitively with children and parents. Children have appropriate individual plans which are reviewed on a regular basis, ensuring the balanced promotion of their development. The good levels of staff support and interaction ensure that children are able to participate meaningfully in all activities and daily routines. Their communication is promoted as staff and children use Makaton sign language on a daily basis.

Children are gaining a good awareness of other cultures and ways of life through discussions and daily access to a range of resources which promote positive images. Their understanding is further enhanced as the setting makes good use of parental involvement to provide information and activities associated with other cultures and lifestyles. Children's awareness of their closer community is enhanced through the use of local facilities such as shops, parks and walks. Children's behaviour is good throughout the sessions and they competently organise turn-taking and sharing. Children are gaining a good understanding about taking responsibility for their own actions because staff give them clear explanations, enabling them to understand their behaviour and make decisions about this. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are given practical information about the group's policies and practice, ensuring that they are aware of daily procedures and expectations. Staff make good use of newsletters and notice boards to ensure that parents receive up-to-date information about activities and events. This area is further supported by the provision of information sessions where parents are given information regarding specific areas of learning, such as the use of Makaton sign language, enabling them to continue this at home. They are kept well informed of their children's progress and activities through comprehensive daily discussions with staff, parents' evenings and access to their child's assessment files.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall, children's needs are met. Their activities and play opportunities are enhanced by the good organisation of space within the setting. There are designated base areas for different age groups, and additional play areas where children are able to play together. This ensures that children are able to play safely and independently and are offered a wide range of play opportunities. The good daily deployment of staff means that staff skills are used to enhance children's play and also that staff know each of the children and are aware of their needs and daily routines.

Children benefit from the care provided by qualified, well-supervised staff who attend further training in order to keep up-to-date with legislation and practice and therefore provide appropriate care for each child. Children's ongoing welfare and safety are promoted because

there are robust procedures in place for checking that all staff are suitable to work with children. This is further supported by a clear procedure regarding the recruitment and employment of staff and the placement of students. A clear staff induction process, regular supervision and daily monitoring of the setting ensure that policies and procedures are understood by all and are implemented consistently throughout the setting. All paperwork and records are organised so that they are easily accessible but are stored confidentially, ensuring that children's needs are documented and staff can work appropriately to promote their welfare and safety.

Leadership and management is good. Children make good progress and their overall development and welfare are promoted because the manager and senior staff have a thorough understanding of their roles and responsibilities. All policies and procedures are in place and are reviewed and revised to ensure that regulations are consistently met. Staff are well-supported, both on a daily basis and in achieving further qualifications. There is a positive attitude to obtaining feedback and using this to further improve the quality of care offered. The manager acts as good role model, demonstrating her genuine enthusiasm and enjoyment of her daily work with children and of creating and maintaining a day care setting. This creates a positive environment, in which children are highly valued, treated sensitively and are able to play and learn confidently.

Improvements since the last inspection

At their last inspection, the setting was asked to develop staff's knowledge of child protection issues. Further training has been attended and staff now have a greater understanding of this area, improving children's safety and welfare. The setting was asked to ensure that children under two have a separate base area and to ensure that the heater in the sleeping area is safe. A separate base area has now been provided and the heater has been replaced, thus improving children's safety. The setting was also asked to make sure that group activities are appropriately planned to provide opportunities for children to explore and play independently. Play opportunities have now been increased and improved staff deployment means that staff are always available to support children in their chosen activity, thus improving their daily play and development opportunities.

With regard to the provision of funded early education, the setting was asked to include all activities in planning, ensuring they are linked to the six areas of learning. Planning has been revised to encompass a broader range of learning outcomes within each activity. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and are able to recognise the connections with this curriculum, ensuring that children are offered a balanced range of activities. However, a further recommendation has been set to ensure that activity plans clearly show how they link to the six areas of learning. The setting was asked to increase children's awareness of the different purposes of writing and provide regular opportunities for children to operate simple equipment. There are now more opportunities for mark-making during daily play and children are encouraged to write their own name on pictures and to describe their work. Information and communication technology equipment has been increased to include a wider range. These changes have improved children's learning and understanding in these areas.

The setting was asked to improve the information provided to parents and to develop ways for parents to be involved in their child's learning. Information regarding the Foundation Stage and the 'Birth to three matters' framework is now included in the parents' information pack. Staff produce displays to illustrate ways in which play links to children's learning. There are also information sessions for parents, which cover specific topics. Therefore, parents have appropriate information and are able to continue their child's learning at home. Finally, the setting was asked to develop staff appraisals. Staff meet with the manager to discuss their

strengths and weaknesses and this information is used to inform training needs. Staff also have more opportunities to work within different areas of the setting to broaden their experience. This has a positive impact on children's wellbeing and learning.

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

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 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):

- update the procedure regarding safeguarding children and ensure that it contains procedures to follow in the event of an allegation being made against a staff member or volunteer.

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 planning of activities so that these show clearly how they relate to the areas of learning and show sufficient details regarding resources, group sizes and extension or adaptation of the activities to meet the learning needs of individual children.

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