

The Teddy Bear Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	221542
Inspection date	27 November 2007
Inspector	Heidi Falconer

Setting Address	Huntingdonshire Regional College, California Road, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE29 1BL
Telephone number	01480 379228
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Registered person	The Teddy Bear Nursery
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?

The Teddy Bear Nursery opened in 1988. It operates from a purpose built mobile building on the grounds of Huntingdon Regional College in Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire. A maximum of 82 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.45 to 16.15 during school term times. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 46 children aged from six months to under five years on roll. Of these, 10 children receive funding for early education. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs 12 members of staff. Of these, 11, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn about the importance of good hygiene practices through everyday routines. For example, as older children help to prepare snacks they wash their hands and wear disposable aprons. When children look at their hands and say 'I don't need to wash my hands, they are clean' practitioners explain to the children that it is not possible to see germs. Younger children learn to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Practitioners develop these practices when the children are young, washing babies and toddlers hands before meals.

Good procedures are in place to sustain good levels of hygiene throughout the nursery. For example, nappy changing mats are cleaned with an anti-bacterial spray after each use. This helps to reduce the risk of cross-infection. Children receive appropriate care if they are ill or have an accident whilst at the nursery. A high number of staff hold current first aid qualifications and understand the procedures to follow if children have accidents or require medication.

Children enjoy a range of healthy and nutritious snacks which comply with their dietary requirements. Each week parents are asked to supply one piece of fruit and this is then divided up for the children's daily snacks. Parents provide a packed lunch for their children. Any food brought into the nursery is labelled clearly and stored appropriately. In addition, practitioners meticulously follow food hygiene guidelines when heating up any meals. As a result the food is safe and appetising. Meal times are generally a sociable and relaxed time where children sit together alongside friends and staff. However, at times babies are sat in their highchairs before the food is ready, which results in them becoming restless.

Children benefit from plenty of fresh air and physical activity during daily outdoor play. Young children develop their physical skills as they climb small slides and climb in and out of large cardboard boxes. However, some of the outdoor resources are not well presented and therefore do not engage children's interest. Older children's daily use of resources such as construction toys, threading toys, scissors and puzzles promotes children's small muscle control and their hand-eye co-ordination. However, there are limited resources outdoors which provide them with challenges and extend their physical skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safeguarded because staff have attended child protection training and know the local procedures they must follow should a concern arise about a child. The child protection co-ordinator ensures that procedures are up to date and easily accessible in each room. As a result, in the event of a concern all practitioners know where they can seek help or advice. This practice keeps children safe and ensures that there is not a delay in concerns being reported.

Children are cared for in a well-maintained and child-centred environment. The building is well designed to give children of different ages separate room bases which are spacious. All rooms are effectively organised so that children can move around freely and safely. Children have access to a wide range of interesting and well-maintained resources, which are stored in low-level units to allow independent access. However, there are a limited amount of beds provided for children to rest and relax. As a result, the majority of children sleep harnessed in pushchairs which restricts their movement and overall comfort.

Children are kept safe from harm and their risk of accidental injury is minimised. Good procedures are in place to ensure that visitors do not enter the premises unannounced. All visitors are greeted by a member of staff and an intercom entry system keeps the premises secure. A high priority is given to keeping children safe on outings. For example, detailed risk assessments and exact details of the route to be taken are compiled and emergency contact details are taken on all outings.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Babies are happy and settled because staff are caring and give them lots of attention. This increases their well-being and sense of trust which helps them to settle at the nursery. Babies particularly enjoy playing with objects in the 'treasure basket'. This basket gathers together a selection of everyday objects which have been chosen to stimulate their senses. For example, babies rub corrugated card on their cheeks and bang metal spoons. Babies and young children's impulse to communicate is developed as practitioners consistently spend their time talking to the children and responding to their coos and smiles.

Young children happily play together and enjoy experimenting and exploring different materials such as chocolate play dough, orange jelly, soap suds and pasta. Children of this age particularly enjoy imaginative play which is demonstrated as they pretend to make pancakes in the role play area. Children enjoy using props as they sing their favourite songs and rhymes. For example, children select the fish props and initiate singing '1,2,3,4,5 once I caught a fish alive'. Practitioners in the nursery use the 'Birth to three matters' framework effectively to plan activities and assess young children's achievements.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Practitioners have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and they use this knowledge to plan a broad range of activities. As a result children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff work well together and take opportunities to extend children's learning through effective questioning and using additional resources. For example, when children complete an activity to count and match objects with written numbers, practitioners respond to children's interest and extend the activity to counting to 10 and above. Clear records of children's achievements and progress are in place. These clearly show children's next steps in their learning and are used effectively to inform planning. This enables staff to plan for individual children's needs.

Children have many opportunities to develop their imagination through role play. As they use plastic tools they tuck them into their waist bands and frantically bang the play house saying 'we are smashing and bashing'. Children are able to express themselves creatively through different media such as paint, water, play dough, paper and pens.

There are many opportunities for children to talk about themselves, their homes and their families. For example, currently on display are pictures of the children when they were babies. They enjoy showing these pictures and talking about what they are doing. For example, children laugh as they say 'that's me having a bath in the sink'. Children have opportunities to use technology. They use computers with increasing skill and are able to print off their own pictures.

Children's emergent writing skills are being supported well. Children are encouraged to write for a purpose as they write their names on pictures and use pencils and paper in the role play

area. The use of name cards and named placemats assist children in the recognition of their own names. Some children are beginning to recognise letters of the alphabet by shape and sound and this is supported by staff.

Children have many opportunities throughout the session to use mathematics in planned and unplanned activities. For example, as children play in the water tray staff encourage the children to use words such as heavy, light, full and empty. Most children count confidently to 10 and some beyond. Children are able to select activities and resources freely. As a result, they are interested in the activities on offer and persevere to complete tasks.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children under the age of three benefit from the positive partnership staff have developed with their parents. They are welcomed into the nursery by the manager and staff who are always available for an informal chat at the beginning and end of the day. Parents and carers are invited to become involved in nursery life by sharing their ideas through a suggestion box. Practitioners use these suggestions to extend the range of activities available to the children. For example, one parent recently suggested that the setting put out dried rice with the diggers. Parents and carers are given a helpful welcome pack on joining the nursery. This is well written and provides information on the nursery's policies. These include behaviour, child protection, equal opportunities and the education programme.

Partnerships with parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is good. Parents continue to receive a good range of information about topics and suggestions on how they can extend their child's learning at home through display boards, discussions with staff and newsletters. This enables parents to be involved in their children's learning. However, practitioners do not find out about children's educational starting points when they first attend the nursery.

Children begin to appreciate the customs and cultures of others through celebrating festivals such as Eid and Christmas. In addition, parents are encouraged to share information about their cultures and the festivals that they celebrate at home with their children. For example, recently a parent provided photographs of her child in their traditional dress to support a themed activity. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Detailed information is gained from parents about children's individual needs before they start. For example, parents of young babies are asked to complete a general information sheet about their children's routines for sleeps, feeds and dietary needs. This ensures that children benefit from receiving care which is inline with their home routines.

Practitioners work hard to ensure that all children including those who speak English as an additional language and who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported. For example, practitioners learn key words and phrases in children's home languages and use picture cards to ensure that all children are aware of changes in the routine. For example, before they tidy up the children collect and display a card which symbolises the start of tidy up time. In addition, practitioners regularly attend additional training to help them meet children's individual needs.

Children behave well, they learn to share and take turns, to negotiate and work harmoniously together. Children's self-esteem is fostered when staff praise them and recognise their achievements, such as when they help tidy up or share resources with others.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Comprehensive and effective recruitment and induction procedures are in place, which ensure that children are cared for by suitable practitioners who are appropriately vetted. Children's care and learning is enhanced as they are cared for by a committed staff team who work well together. Practitioners are well deployed both indoors and out allowing children to receive appropriate support in their play. As a result they build effective relationships with staff and are confident to try the learning experiences on offer.

All practitioners have ongoing opportunities to attend further training. The knowledge that they gain from these courses is used to continue to improve the provision for the children who attend. All of the legally required documentation and records are in place and are stored securely to ensure that confidentiality is respected. Overall, children needs are met.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The management team have a clear vision for the nursery education and set clear directions for continual improvements. Areas for improvement are successfully identified through the setting's monitoring system. For example, the setting has just started to use an early years and childcare quality framework as a way of evaluating the provision on a regular basis. These improvements enable children to make good progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the nursery was asked to develop a system, which enables children to access drinking water freely and improve children's access to, and use of, books for enjoyment.

The practitioners have reviewed how they make drinking water readily available and systems to allow children to access water freely are now in place. The book areas have been developed to make cosy areas where children access books freely.

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):

- improve the organisation of meal times to ensure that young children are not seated for long lengths of time before their food is served
- provide a suitable range of furniture for children to rest and sleep.

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):

- improve the programme for physical development to ensure that children have regular use of small and large equipment which provides them with sufficient challenge
- develop a system to gather information about children's starting points from parents and use these to plan for children's individual needs.

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