

Beechwood Childcare - Haslucks Green Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	250008
Inspection date	29 November 2007
Inspector	Sharon Waterfall
Setting Address	Haslucks Green School, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley, Solihull, B90 2EJ
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Registered person	Beechwood Childcare Limited
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?

Beechwood Nursery opened in 1992. It is situated on Haslucks Green Junior School site in Shirley. There is adequate parking and access via the school playgrounds. The nursery consists of one converted classroom and a separate porta cabin, each have kitchen and toilet facilities. Both buildings are incorporated within an enclosed garden area.

The children attend the nursery from many parts of Solihull and surrounding areas.

There are currently 42 children from birth to five years on roll. This includes six funded three year olds, currently there are no funded four year olds. The children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those for whom English as an additional language. The nursery is open daily from 07:30 until 18:00 and operates for 51 weeks per year, closing on bank holidays.

Nine staff work with the children, which includes the manager. Over half the staff have an early years qualification to NVQ level 2 or 3. The setting receives support from a teacher mentor from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted adequately through the appropriate hygiene routines in place within the nursery. Children learn these routines through the consistent reinforcement of staff and older children are encouraged to become independent with their personal care. However, some practices lessen the positive impact of these routines in limiting the spread of infection, such as lax cleaning of baby toys, loose curtains and inconsistent labelling of milk feeds. Sensitive nappy changing routines ensures the comfort of the children and respects their individual preferences and needs.

Children's medical needs are well known by staff and appropriate health records are completed and shared with parents. Staff hold first aid certificates and follow requirements when dealing with accidents. Children benefit from a clearly written policy that the setting shares with parents informing them of illnesses that will mean their child should not attend and they will be contacted if their child becomes unwell.

Children enjoy a wide variety of healthy, nutritious meals which are freshly prepared each day off site and transported to the setting. Even young children eat large portions, with older children able to request further helpings. Fresh fruit and vegetables are provided for the children on a daily basis, with milk puddings and brown bread offered and ample opportunities for drinks to keep them hydrated. Older children's independence is supported as they choose when they have snack, though at times appropriate guidance is not provided for younger children using new cutlery. Baby's individual routines are adhered to and valued.

Children benefit from regular outdoor play. The children delight in using spades to dig away the earth to look for worms. In addition they go on walks in the local area and collect natural items which they later use to make collages. Many aspects of the indoor education can be repeated outdoors in appropriate weather such as, chalking, sand and water play. The children enjoy pedalling bikes around the playground and are learning to coordinate their skills and balance as they use two wheeled scooters. The babies also use the outdoor area with toddlers enjoying ride on equipment and younger children being stimulated by the fresh air.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Displays around the whole environment demonstrate a strong sense of belonging for all children. The pre-school room has a wealth of interesting pictures, posters and examples of children's work exhibited. In the baby room many posters, mirrors and photographs are at a low height enabling the children to explore them. These improve the visual appeal of the building and show a value for children's creative endeavours.

Some hazards have been identified and minimised through observations and risk assessments, though some remain as procedures are not always followed consistently. These include children not wearing indoor shoes at all times and staff having hot drinks when in the vicinity of the children. Whilst having drinks staff's interaction with children is limited and the children do not fully benefit from the outdoor activities provided. Effective collection and security measures support children's safety as all visitors sign in/out and are only permitted into the setting by

a staff member. Staff ratios are high ensuring children are well supervised, though they are encouraged to be independent where possible.

Children are aware of safety through the consistent reinforcement of staff and good procedures are in place for outings. A clearly written fire evacuation is displayed and the drill practised by the children. Records completed are evaluated to ensure the ongoing suitability of the procedure.

Children's welfare is promoted as staff have an appropriate understanding of their role and responsibility when protecting children from abuse and neglect. They are aware of the referral procedures and a written policy is in place, which is up to date with the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Young children and babies benefit from a wide variety of activities and play experiences that are interesting, stimulating and enjoyable. They are happy, involved and motivated, supported by staff who have positive interaction with them and encourage continual involvement. Activities are age-appropriate and take into account the developmental needs of the children. They include books, puzzles, sand and water play, messy play such as corn flour and water, sand, pasta and jelly play, art and craft activities. Children enter rooms that are welcoming and bright and their own work is displayed, encouraging their self-esteem and confidence.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have an appropriate understanding of the Foundation Stage and the six learning outcomes. They generally plan a varied curriculum that includes all six areas, though assessment and planning demonstrate that within the mathematical development some aspects are not balanced. Number and counting activities are plentiful but activities that promote calculating, shape and pattern though implemented occasionally through other activities are not as specifically planned and present a gap within the curriculum. The routine encourages children to be independent and to make their own choices. Within this the children access many resources easily and initiate aspects of their own learning as they request activities. Behaviour management is positive and values children's contributions and opinions.

Children are confident learners who are eager to be involved. They ask lots of questions and are eager to answer any asked of them. They become aware of the wider world and diversity through discussion and their involvement of cultural activities such as studying African tribes and jungle life. The children also enjoy talking about their own families, cultures and beliefs. They learn about their community through regular walks in the local area and visits into the school and grounds.

Children's names are displayed and these are used to self-register at circle time. Labels are also in place and displayed around the room making the environment print rich. Through exploring phonics the children are beginning to hear initial letter sounds in familiar words and recognise the letters. They are able to access a graphics are and enjoy mark making, with some children attempting to write their names and forming recognisable letters. Conversation and discussion are constant throughout the day and most children are confident in speaking out within the group.

Children use technology with ease and confidence and use the mouse skilfully to access software and games. They learn about the living world and growth through activities such as collecting and studying natural items from their walks. The children also like to dig for worms in the garden, using tools and know where the best places are to find them.

Through daily routines, such as setting the table for lunch, the children have some opportunities to problem solve and counting activities, demonstrate an developing awareness of number and ability to count up to ten. Within a snow making activity discussion about shape and quantity takes place, but it is sporadic as staff are unsure of the required outcome of the activity. Also children don't always benefit from some spontaneous learning opportunities, such as staff not discussing with them why the water has turned green after the children have used green paper towels to wash their dolls.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Warm and caring relationships are forged between the staff and children. The key person system ensures that a staff member is responsible for over seeing individual children's development through observation and some input into the planning of activities. Staff value children's individuality and respect their input into the setting. Young children's individual routines for eating and sleeping are adhered to and staff work with parents to support changes as the children develop. Staff have an appropriate awareness of the needs of children with learning difficulties and disabilities and work closely with outside agencies and parents to ensure a consistency of care.

Children's awareness of diversity in the world community is enhanced through topics and themes within the educational provision. The children have looked at African culture and have explored a range of artefacts, books and instruments to gain a better understanding. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Children behave well; they are positively praised for good behaviour and achievements. With the younger children this is in the form of verbal praise, attention and clapping. Pre school children in addition have stamps, which are put onto the child's hand and also as a lasting record they are put into books with a comment regarding why they have been rewarded. The children have a great deal of autonomy throughout the sessions and this supports their abilities to be independent and make their own choices.

Partnerships with parents and carers are satisfactory. Parents are limited in their involvement in funded children's learning because they are not part of the process to devise next steps for children's learning. Staff talk to them about how the children are doing but they do not record any information given by parents in their continued development.

Parents speak highly of the staff within the setting are happy with their children's overall development. They gain information about the setting through regular newsletters, a prospectus and verbal communication with staff.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from well qualified staff and an experienced management team, who show their commitment to improving practice by continually attending appropriate training. The

staff work well together as a team, ensuring responsibilities for activities, planning and assessment are shared amongst key staff to provide an interesting learning environment that motivates and excites the children.

Policies, records and procedures are clear and underpin the appropriate practice in promoting positive outcomes for children. However, some documentation has minor accuracy issues missing, which affect management staff's safety in an emergency. Staff develop caring and supportive relationships with children helping them to be happy and content in nursery. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that staff are professional and understand the needs of the children and for continued improvement.

The leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. The management team are dedicated and demonstrate a commitment to improving and adapting the functions of the setting to support and meet the children's and parent's needs. Through sufficient evaluative practices the staff have enhanced children's experiences and implemented all recommendations and most key issues set at the last inspection. Regular meetings support the sharing of information between all staff, with particular reference to discussing children's progress and future learning. Though evaluation and monitoring are in place, the systems are not always effective in ensuring there are no gaps within the educational provision. Staff's knowledge of required outcomes of activities is not always in place and can hinder the learning process for children.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection four recommendations and four key issues were raised to improve the care and education provided to children within the setting. The recommendations related to improving hygiene to prevent the spread of infection, improving storage within the baby bathroom, ensuring children can access resources and books easily and improving the structure of the session and ensuring broken outdoor equipment and the garden gate are suitable for their purpose. Hygiene procedures have been improved since the last inspection and input from the environmental health services have enhanced this, though recommendation remains at this inspection regarding ensuring baby toys are thoroughly cleaned. Cupboards within the baby bathroom have provided more storage for nappy changing essentials. Children access a range of resources and toys easily within the pre school room. Within the baby room children access a range of resources on the carpet put out by staff and from the bottom shelf of a shelving unit. The outdoor are including fences, gates and equipment have been repaired providing a more welcoming and safer environment for the children.

The key issues related to assessing and recording children's progress and sharing information with parents, enabling children to access more resources and materials independently, including writing materials and increasing opportunities to use mathematical language in play and to develop an understanding of addition and subtraction. Assessment and recording of children's progress now takes place and information is used to plan children's next steps in learning. Children certainly have many opportunities to access free writing materials throughout a range of easily accessible resources and activities. This supports children's decision making skills and enables them to initiate learning in activities they enjoy. The children use mathematical language in play such as bigger and smaller and have some opportunities through number rhymes to begin to understand basic addition and subtraction, though a balanced mathematical curriculum is also a recommendation of this inspection.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the 1st April 2004 there have been two complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take action in order to meet the National Standards. In June 2005 concerns were raised relating to National Standards 2 (Organisation) and National Standard 6 (Safety). Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit to investigate concerns regarding a child having left the premises unsupervised and two actions were set to improve standards. In September 2007 concerns were raised regarding issues relating to National Standards 2,4,6 and 7; organisation, physical premises, hygiene and safety. Ofsted investigated by unannounced visit and two actions were set to improve standards. The provider remains registered to provide care.

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 hygiene practices in order to prevent the spread of infection, with particular regard to cleaning baby toys thoroughly and labelling all milk feeds stored in the fridge
- ensure safety practices within the setting are consistently implemented
- ensure management staff attendance records are consistently and accurately kept.

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):

- ensure all cluster areas in the mathematical curriculum are incorporated into activities, planning and children's assessment
- actively involve parents within children's future learning, with regard to progress and assessment
- enhance monitoring and evaluation to ensure all staff have suitable knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and its implementation through the planned curriculum.

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