

Bierton Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	140842
Inspection date	26 September 2007
Inspector	Jane Plested
Setting Address	Bierton Sports Centre, Burcott Lane, Bierton, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, HP22 5AS
Telephone number	07881 931 354
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Registered person	Bierton Playgroup
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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?

Bierton Pre-School operates from the Sports Centre in the village of Bierton, on the outskirts of Aylesbury. The setting serves children living in the local area. Childcare takes place within one large hall. In addition, there are kitchen, cloakroom and toilet facilities plus an attached playing field for outside play.

The pre-school opens five mornings and three afternoons a week, during school term times. Sessions are from 09:30 until 12 noon and 12:30 to 14:45. The setting accommodates 24 children from two years to under five years. There are currently 47 children on roll. This includes 29 children who receive funding for nursery education.

The setting currently supports children with learning disabilities and there are systems in place to support children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs seven staff who work with the children, five of whom have early years qualifications to level 2 or 3. Of these, three staff are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy taking part in a range of activities to support their physical health. They throw and catch balls and bean bags. Children also learn to roll and step in and out of large hoops and to kick large balls to develop ball control. These activities will aid the development of co-ordination skills. Children also have fun playing ring games such as the 'Hokey Cokey', encouraging their ability to learn left from right. At other times, children crawl, jump and clamber in and out of large boxes, supporting the development of larger muscles. During these activities practitioner's help children to development concepts such as spatial awareness. Children develop fine motor control as they become competent in using a wide range of tools such as scissors, cutters, extruders, pencils and spatulas.

The premises are warm, well maintained and clean. They are set out to take account of children's health and safety with plenty of space between the activities. Children begin to learn the importance of good personal hygiene as they are encouraged to wash their hands appropriately. They independently use a wash bowl and towel for these routines, for instance after messy activities and outdoor play. More able children are independent in their toileting and confidently inform staff they have completed these self care tasks by saying "I have washed my hands". This demonstrates children's good understanding of personal hygiene routines.

First aid resources are in place, well organised and checked on a regular basis; consequently, these resources are available in an emergency. Four practitioners hold a current first aid certificate and are therefore confident to manage injuries to children. Procedures for administering medicine are clear. The required written consents and records are in place so that details of accidents to children are available for inspection.

Children's snack time follows a self-service format, so that they can eat when they are ready and this routine does not interrupt their play and learning. The snacks provide good nutritional benefit to children offering items such as fresh and dried fruit. Practitioners encourage children to understand which foods are good for them, and to consider that after eating sweets "we should wash our teeth". This practice will help children make healthy choices. Children can access drinks freely and receive milk or water with their snack so they are well hydrated.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The indoor environment is secure and well maintained, ensuring the children stay safe and well looked after at all times. Children experience a good range of activities and there are plentiful age/stage appropriate play resources. These are set out with children's good access in mind, so they develop independence and have choice. The premises are well organised and the risk of accidental injury is minimised through extensive and systematic risk assessment procedures. This allows children to play in safety, inside the building and good supervision protects them outside.

The pre-school completes evacuation practices each term, ensuring most children and staff have a sound understanding of what to do when the fire alarm rings. The management and staff protect children well, and demonstrate a clear understanding of the procedure to follow in case of child protection concern. However, the child protection statement lacks some detail

on reporting procedures. The setting has a designated child protection officer and staff are encouraged to attend training in this aspect of their work, to ensure their practice is as current as possible. Collection procedures are well thought through and appropriate records are maintained. This good practice will act to safeguard the welfare of children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children are very confident in building relationships with both their peers and a range of adults. For instance, they freely chat to staff at group time and during play activities, or when playing alongside each other at the water tray and in the home corner. Practitioners monitor participation so that all children have a full experience of the activities available. The youngest children receive ample support and encouragement. Children receive effective key worker support during the settling period. Consequently, they remain engaged and secure throughout their time in the setting.

Practitioners continually talk to children to offer reassurance, reinforce success and good behaviour. This excellent practice will build strong feelings of self-worth amongst children.

Activities for younger children are adapted to meet their needs and observational records are maintained and recorded against the different aspects within the Birth to Three Matters framework. These are completed by the child's key worker and provide a clear picture for staff, so they know where these children are in their learning and development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good and as a result, children are making sound progress towards the 'Early Learning Goals'. Practitioners know their key children's needs, stage of development and can explain the next stage for learning of these individuals. Practitioners plan an interesting and safe play and learning environment. All staff contribute to the planning process. Activity plans link to the Foundation Stage Curriculum and planning systems take account of the records of children's development. Key workers use their knowledge to ensure activities are set at the right level for children and provide suggestions for extension. However, the plans and extension ideas are not child specific and therefore, rely on workers knowledge of how to implement them. Children's development is regularly and systematically assessed and procedures for the evaluation of the activities are developing. This will help staff understand when activities are successful in ensuring the planned outcomes for learning.

Children enjoy periods of free play, together with short times of more structured activities in their small groups. This enables them to freely explore the activities available in all curriculum areas and to contribute to group discussion. Practitioners skilfully promote learning during activities such as modelling with dough, sticking and modelling with junk materials and building with bricks. They do this through good questioning and by supporting children in the development of their ideas, for example, by asking questions about furnishings in model houses. They give clear explanations so children can successfully use tools such as dough cutters and rollers. Practitioners develop children's understanding through first hand experiences, such as the development of spatial awareness as they talk about how many children will fit in a large box.

Children are highly confident in their play and in their interactions with adults they meet and are able to find resources they need. For instance, one child collects a chair so she can sit at

the snack table, demonstrating a growing sense of independence. Children concentrate well during group times and planned activities, such as sticking. They play independently with cars for sustained periods and develop complex play scenarios' with cars and imaginative play resources. They show a range of feelings, such as excitement as they play 'jack in the box' using large cardboard boxes. This activity also acts to help children learn to take turns as they wait to climb into a box. Children behave well and are clearly becoming aware of groups rules. Children are beginning to gain an awareness of the wider world through the resources and planned activities and links with Bierton School aid transition.

Children speak confidently and use talk imaginatively to recreate situations and share experiences. For instance, in role play they talk about picnics, have imaginary telephone calls and discuss design ideas for their junk models. Children have plenty of opportunities to learn to recognise their name and those of their peers. However, there are few other labels on familiar resources and equipment within the setting. This limits their ability to become familiar with and start to read a wider range of simple words. The majority of children are very attentive as they listen during the generally well organised story time but few children take advantage of the book corner to read books independently. Group times provide opportunities for children to begin to link sounds with letters in their name but practitioners do not incorporate this element of learning spontaneously during other activities. As a result, children primarily focus on the sounds relating to their name and lack opportunities to expand on this knowledge.

Children have many opportunities to count. All children begin to understand positional language as they enjoy games such as the 'Hokey Cokey'. More able children are beginning to successfully recognise and identify concepts, such as more or less, and use language for weight and measure. Children explore a range of textures as they model with play dough and experiment with sand and water. They confidently use a wide range of tools. This helps children in completing activities like junk modelling successfully, and aids the development of fine motor control. Children construct successfully with wooden blocks building towers spontaneously and with practitioner's support.

Children are encouraged to use their imagination throughout the session and the well resourced role-play area is regularly changed and is supported by a variety of dressing up clothes. They enjoy singing songs, painting and drawing, and playing games. Children know the primary colours and have opportunities to use different painting techniques. They have planned opportunities to use musical instruments, electronic toys, and equipment such as calculators. Practitioners provide planned occasions for children to learn about the natural world and they take link opportunities arising in books to discuss the weather outside. This helps children learn about the outdoor environment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children happily share the resources and play well together in the home corner and sand tray. Children's understanding of the wider world benefits from access to play resources that positively represent a range of cultures. For instance, books, photographs, puzzles and imaginative play resources depict a range of differences. Parents provide good information about their child in order to enable staff to provide good quality care for children. The setting ensures children feel valued by providing a warm welcome, support if distressed, named drawers and by celebrating their birthday. Practitioners provide suitable equipment to enable children to complete tasks successfully. Children with any form of learning disability receive appropriate

support from their key worker and the trained Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator. The setting has successful partnerships with outside agencies to help support such children.

Practitioners maintain a happy and calm atmosphere and children behave well. They are encouraged to develop independence and responsibility. Children are pleased with their own achievements and develop relationships with others. Overall, the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents receive a helpful information pack to support their understanding of what to expect from their child's time at the nursery. Notice boards and newsletters provide on-going information for parents and overall, those spoken to are happy with the care provided. Children's care is set out in the generally well detailed policies and procedures which are accessible within the setting. A complaints policy is in place but lacks some detail on the management of concerns. Parents are encouraged to participate in their child's education by helping during sessions and serving on the committee.

The partnership with parents of children receiving nursery education is satisfactory. Parents have access to some written information about the Foundation Stage Curriculum. Children's parents have opportunity to discuss their child's progress in meetings twice yearly but these are not successful in linking with all parents. This will hamper parents in supporting learning outside the setting. Records do not provide opportunities for parents to make a written contribution or comment on the progress reports they receive relating to their child's individual progress.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting is warm and welcoming with some good displays, toys and furnishings. Children benefit from a well planned daily routine that they and the staff are familiar with and this aids the smooth running of the session. It also helps children feel secure. Staff ratios are high and as a result, children receive plenty of adult support during play or if they are unsettled. This acts to ensure they feel relaxed and are engaged in purposeful activity.

Leadership and management are good. Managers have an awareness of the areas for the setting's future development. Group activities are well managed so that children can concentrate, learn at an appropriate pace and develop relationships. The planning of activities for children is sound. Consequently, children experience a range of activities to support their learning within the Foundation Stage Curriculum. Recording practice on children's progress is systematic, giving good information about children's development. Practitioners are beginning to use this information to inform the planning so that activities support children's learning and a process for the evaluation of activities is developing. There are some systems for sharing information about the setting and children's progress with parents at times but this lacks a pro-active approach.

Staff retention is good and all practitioners are cleared as suitable to work with children. Appointment procedures are appropriate and staff induction is generally good, however, it is less effective for temporary staff. As a result, bank staff are unfamiliar with setting's policies and procedures. The management encourages staff development and as a consequence, staff are supported in completing training. Staff have clear roles and responsibilities. Staff management procedures are developing; as a result staff had recently received an appraisal of

their work. Regular staff meetings and committee meetings take place and a strong partnership is in place to ensure children receive effective care and education.

Records and parental agreements are in place to support the care of children. The required policies and procedures are all in place. However, some detail is missing in the complaints and child protection procedures. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection of the care, the pre-school agreed to ensure that parent helper's have access to written information so that they are fully aware of their role and responsibilities. They also agreed to provide opportunities for children to independently access regular drinks.

So that parent helper's are aware of their role and responsibilities, the setting has on display a clear statement describing these. This will ensure that they feel able to support the care of children. A jug of water is set out to be accessible to children throughout the session, so they can drink freely and remain refreshed.

At the last inspection of early years education, the setting agreed to provide opportunities for children to problem solve, calculate and to ensure they have access to a range of everyday technology. They also agreed to develop planning for individual activities and to use children's development profiles to inform the planning.

Children have access to a range of technological equipment, such as programmable toys, calculators and a computer. This helps them learn to use these types of resources and supports learning across the curriculum. For instance, a child using a calculator asks her friend how old she is, and programmes in the appropriate numeral. She then repeats this with her own age demonstrating her mathematical development. Children are encouraged to count and calculate during their activities, for example, by adding numbers of cups at snack time. The new planning system links to 'stepping stones' for learning. Key worker knowledge and the children's development records inform the planning and ideas for extension of learning. This ensures children are learning at an appropriate pace. However, plans and extension activities are not yet child specific.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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

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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):

- review the detail within the child protection and complaints policies and procedures and ensure temporary staff are fully aware of all the setting's policies and procedures.

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):

- increase labelling of familiar resources and toys within the setting, develop more opportunities for children to link sounds to letters and encourage children to make greater use of the book corner
- further develop systems for the evaluation of the activities and review procedures for more successful sharing of children's learning and development with all parents.

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