

# Busy Bees Pre-school Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	221727
<b>Inspection date</b>	28 September 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Veronica Sharpe
<b>Setting Address</b>	Grange Lane, Littleport, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB6 1HW
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<b>Registered person</b>	The Trustees of Busy Bees Pre-school Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 inadequate – notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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 Busy Bees Pre-School Playgroup was registered in 1992. It operates from a mobile building which is situated in the grounds of Millfield primary school in Littleport, Cambridgeshire. There is an enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday in term time from 08.45 to 11.15 and from 12.15 to 14.45.

There are currently 33 children on roll aged from two years six months to under five years, of these 23 receive funding for early education. Children come from the surrounding area and attend for a variety of sessions. The playgroup supports children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The playgroup employs five staff, all of whom have appropriate early years qualifications. The playgroup is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children learn about personal hygiene through regular routines such as washing their hands before eating. The staff talk to children about those routines and as a result, children understand about the importance of cleanliness to prevent cross-infection. Staff act as good role models, for example, wiping down surfaces before and after snacks to help children to stay healthy.

Children learn about leading healthy lifestyles through everyday, practical experiences. They play in the outdoor area each day where they ride bikes, use scooters and play on a climbing frame. Indoors, children enjoy active songs and games such as 'Sticky kids'. They handle small construction toys competently and confidently use scissors, pencils and glue sticks.

Children eat healthy snacks such as fresh fruit and breads and make some choices as there is a good selection of fruit on offer each day. They sit in small family groups to share their snack, which gives them a chance to socialise with each other. Practical activities, such as cake making or growing cress help children learn where food comes from. Children have few opportunities to develop their independence at meal times as they take no part in food preparation. Water is freely available so children remain well-hydrated and healthy.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's day-to-day safety is promoted well by staff who implement a daily risk assessment and ensure children are constantly supervised. The premises is secure and staff keep a record of visitors. Registers are clear and up-to-date so children and staff are accounted for. Children practise the fire drill regularly and fire prevention equipment is checked so it contributes to children's safety.

The new building used by the children is spacious and welcoming. Staff are beginning to display pictures, posters and photographs to offer a pleasing and stimulating environment. Low-level shelves and storage mean children can access their toys and equipment independently and therefore have some opportunities to make decisions about their play. Resources are plentiful and appropriate for the children's stage of development.

Staff attend child protection training and have a sound understanding of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures, which helps to keep children safe in the setting. However, children's safety is affected by the management committee's failure to ensure appropriate checks have been instigated on committee members.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are happy, confident and enjoy their time at the setting. They arrive with enthusiasm and join in the activities eagerly. They show good relationships with staff and each other and happily join in co-operative games, such as 'dominoes'. Children develop their imaginations, for instance, as they build with a wooden train set and use small world characters to create their own scenarios. All the children enjoy story time, they settle in a group to listen eagerly

to a 'scary' story about things that live 'under the bed' and shout out in excitement as they spot the creatures.

Staff are skilled at planning activities that generally meet the needs of all the children who attend. Craft activities such as painting with conkers and leaves, for example, hold the interest of younger children and allows older and more able children to experiment with colour and texture. Daily energetic exercise, both indoors and out, helps all the children develop an interest in active play, which builds in good habits for the future.

Nursery education:

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children use their imagination in a range of situations such as building with reusable materials or playing in the role play house. They explore their creativity in art and craft, cutting and sticking or painting with their fingers, although some of the activities involve a high level of adult guidance, which occasionally limits children's ability to show their independence.

Children use number names in their play and count groups of items reliably, for example, themselves at circle time. They communicate effectively and confidently speak in front of a group or express their needs to staff. Children discuss their home life and remember important aspects, such as the type of dog they own. They have a well developed sense of their place in the world, they know it is autumn and that this is a time when leaves change colour and fall off the trees. They confidently identify their written names and some can sound the initial letters of familiar words. Their pre-writing skills are developing well and staff encourage them to mark their names, for example on art work. Occasionally, methods used to encourage children's writing skills, such as guiding their hands when using pencils inhibit children's opportunities to explore writing independently.

Staff working with the children have a strong knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and how their planning contributes to children's progress. The written plans for activities are detailed and clearly linked to the stepping stones to ensure that children enjoy a broad and balanced range of learning opportunities over time. Key workers regularly observe children so that they can record their achievements and work as a team to discuss and decide on what children need to do next. The assessments of children's learning are completed frequently so they have a clear view of children's achievements overall. Parents have insufficient opportunities to contribute what they know about their children's activities at home, which potentially limits staff knowledge of what children can do.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children confidently greet key workers and each other upon arrival and leave their parents and carers easily. They share experiences at circle time and talk with enthusiasm about their activities and interests. Adults encourage children to work together co-operatively, for example they learn to share and take turns as they play games like 'dominoes'. Children learn about other countries and lifestyles as they play with a range of equipment that shows positive images of diversity, such as books, puzzles and small world toys. They celebrate festivals such as 'Bonfire Night' and learn about festivals from other cultures like Divali. Resources are well-organised for easy access and are suitable for the age of the children attending. Routines, however, sometimes limit children's ability to make decisions about their play. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are well behaved and play together happily. They understand the rules and remember to use social niceties, such as please and thank you. Staff are skilled in directing children as they play, encouraging high spirits and enthusiasm whilst keeping order and harmony. Effective supervision means unwanted behaviour is quickly spotted and children are gently distracted into more positive activities.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Staff gather information about children's general well-being as they talk with parents and carers, but there is no system in place to collect information about children's learning at home in order to plan effectively for children's next steps. Although parents are aware that records are kept of their children's development, they are not positively encouraged to share in them. However, parents speak positively about the setting and their relationships with staff. They are confident that their children are well cared for and enjoy themselves in sessions. Parents receive useful information about playgroup activities in newsletters and on the notice board in the entrance. Key workers work closely with parents who have children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in order to meet their needs.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is inadequate.

The committee which has the legal responsibility for the safe and legal operation of the setting has not kept Ofsted informed of changes to the individuals who make up the committee. In addition it has failed to ensure that members of the committee complete the necessary vetting procedures that maintain the safety and welfare of the children. The committee shows a poor understanding of the National Standards and the underpinning legislation that enables it to carry out its legal duties, which puts children at risk. Overall children's needs are not met.

All areas of the environment are attractive and provide ample space for children to move around safely. The managers implement robust recruitment procedures, which ensure that staff complete the necessary checks and have suitable experience and qualifications to work with children. The induction programme for staff ensures they know about the procedures for child protection and can implement the daily risk assessments to keep children safe. Staff engage in a range of ongoing training, which enables them to develop their knowledge and skills further. All legally required documentation, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being, is in place and regularly reviewed.

Leadership and management of nursery education are satisfactory. The managers and the staff work well together as a team so they provide effective support and ensure children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff are encouraged to take an active role in planning, delivering and monitoring the Foundation Stage curriculum and as a result they have a sense of ownership and work with confidence and enthusiasm. They have regular opportunities to meet as a team and share good practice. In addition, the pre-school team act on suggestions from the advisory teacher in the local authority to further enhance the provision. However parent observations of what children enjoy and do at home are not yet used to inform planning. As a result, some opportunities for children to develop their independence and learn through everyday routines are missed, which affects their ability to develop to their full potential.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the setting was asked to ensure risk assessments are carried out, particularly those connected with accidents, to devise a policy for what to do if a child is lost

and improve child protection procedures for what to do if allegations are made against a member of staff.

Accidents to children are recorded on confidential sheets, these are signed by parents and filed with children's individual records. Senior staff review the accidents to identify potential hazards and therefore keep children safe. Procedures are in place for what to do if child protection allegations are made against staff, and what to do if a child is lost. These are both accessible to parents in the operational plan and are part of the staff induction procedures. This promotes the safety and welfare of the children.

### **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**

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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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure all persons providing day care submit to checks as prescribed in regulations
- all persons providing day care must demonstrate their suitability by acquiring the necessary knowledge and understanding of the National Standards and relevant legislation
- ensure Ofsted is informed of any changes to the registered person or the person in charge.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

#### **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 children's opportunities to be independent both in their play and in self-care (also applies to care)

- continue to develop systems that encourage parents to be actively involved in their children's learning and development, for example, by sharing progress records effectively and enabling parents to contribute usefully to the records of learning.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)