

Buttercups Community Pre school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	221753
Inspection date	05 December 2007
Inspector	Emma Bright
Setting Address	The Meadow School, High Street, Balsham, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB21 4DJ
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Registered person	The Trustees of Buttercups Community Pre School
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?

Buttercups Community Pre-School is managed by a voluntary management committee, made up of parents of children at the setting. It opened in 1992 and operates from a mobile building in the grounds of the Meadow County Primary School in the village of Balsham. A maximum of 25 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open five days a week during school term times from 09:00 to 12:00 with an additional session on Tuesday from 13:15 until 15:00 for younger children. All children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 32 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 16 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area. The pre-school currently supports a small number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The pre-school employs four staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is currently working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are very well cared for if they become unwell or in the event of an accident because clear and detailed information is gathered from parents and records are in place to make sure that appropriate care is given. For example, additional records are given to parents for any head injury which also contain information on what to look for if their child becomes unwell. Most practitioners hold current first aid certificates and records of accidents are kept and shared with parents and carers. Children benefit from the healthy snacks provided by their parents because they follow the setting's healthy eating policy; children tuck in enthusiastically to fresh fruit and yoghurts and they are beginning to make connections about healthy food being 'good for you' and comment that 'yoghurt makes me nice and healthy'. Children readily help themselves to fresh drinking water throughout the session whenever they need it so that they are well hydrated.

Children demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of good personal hygiene, which they learn through regular routines and sensitive reminders from staff when necessary. For example, children competently wipe their noses and carefully dispose of the tissue in the bin. Children learn about leading a healthy lifestyle through everyday, practical experiences. They develop good physical coordination as they excitedly run after large hoops or pedal their tricycles. Children competently climb large apparatus and go down the slide on their tummies. This helps them to develop good muscle control, feel relaxed and develop a sense of overall well-being. Children develop their small muscular skills and use a good range of tools and utensils to acquire new manipulative skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety in case of fire is given high priority and they are developing awareness of keeping safe. For example, children regularly practise the emergency escape plan and they explain that when the fire alarm goes 'you have to stop and then you go'. This means they all know what to do in an emergency and are familiar with the routine. A wide range of written policies and appropriate procedures are in place such as risk assessments and daily checks further promote children's safety. Children are well protected and kept safe from harm as all practitioners have a clear understanding of their role in child protection. They all attend regular training in child protection to ensure their knowledge is up-to-date and a designated person ensures that any concerns are dealt with effectively, so that children's welfare is fully safeguarded.

Children move freely indoors, accessing equipment and activities independently to follow their own interests. Emphasis is given to making sure that the environment is welcoming and well prepared with a range of activities, which stimulates children's interest and enhances their development. Photographs and children's work decorate the walls and this contributes to their sense of belonging. Resources have been carefully selected to support children's play. They are cleaned and checked regularly to ensure that they remain safe and in good condition. Children's safety is enhanced by good security procedures to restrict access to the setting and prevent them from leaving the premises unaccompanied; practitioners are particularly vigilant in their supervision of children to ensure their safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time in the pre-school; they arrive eagerly, separating happily from their parents and carers, and settling readily into their activities. Practitioners use the 'Birth to three matters' framework as a reference tool to assess the progress of younger children and ensure they make good progress. Although a rich learning environment is available, some activities and routines do not always enable children to fully benefit from it to extend their independent learning. Children play happily together and are developing positive relationships with one another, which contribute to their sense of belonging. They are involved and interested in the good range of activities and resources on offer, which they access to develop their play. Children confidently offer their comments and ideas, which staff treat with respect and this develops their self-esteem. Children benefit from the warm interaction with practitioners and they have formed good relationships with them, which helps the children to settle well and feel secure in their care.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children benefit from practitioners' sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and they know how the activities they provide contribute to children's progress. Planning is in place, which provides a range of interesting activities and experiences that cover all areas of learning. Practitioners monitor children's progress towards the early learning goals so that they can build on what children already know and they plan experiences that help children take the next step in their learning. As a result children are making good progress towards the early learning goals.

Children are confident communicators; they initiate conversations with each other and adults, using a wide range of vocabulary to express their ideas and talk about what they know. Children's early writing skills are developing well as they use marks readily to represent their ideas. They understand that print carries meaning and they attempt to write for different purposes. For example, they make marks on paper which they put in envelopes and put in the post box. Children express their imagination in role play as they re-enact familiar stories. For example, they go on a 'bear hunt' taking with them a watch to 'know what time it is' and binoculars to 'see with' because 'there's trouble in the woods'. However, children have fewer opportunities to express and develop their own ideas because there is an over-reliance on art for the end result and this impinges on children's creativity.

Children's behaviour is good and they take turns, such as when negotiating for resources, readily sharing them with others. They are developing good listening skills as they competently follow simple instructions to carry out small tasks. Children demonstrate pride in their work and excitedly share it with others announcing 'I done it all by my own!' In addition, children readily praise each other's efforts saying 'that's very good. Well done'. Children demonstrate a good understanding of numbers, counting and calculation. They readily use numbers in their play, for example when asked what the time children say 'it's about six o'clock' and they enjoy games of 'What's the time Mr Wolf?' Children use mathematical language to describe capacity and they competently label simple shapes which they look for in everyday objects outdoors. Children have good opportunities to develop their technology skills as they competently use the computer to draw and print off the results.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from good settling in procedures that are based around their individual needs helps to support children in the transition between home and the setting. Parents receive information about the setting so they know about activities and events, and have daily opportunities to discuss their child with practitioners. This helps children to settle and ensures their individual needs continue to be met. All documentation is in place to share information with parents and carers so that they know about the setting's policies and procedures. Appropriate systems are in place to welcome children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. All children have many opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them through a range of well planned activities. The good range of resources that positively represent the children who attend, as well as individuals from the wider community supports their play. Children's behaviour is good. They interact confidently with adults and their peers, learning to consider the needs of others and to work together cooperatively. Practitioners set clear boundaries, which helps children learn to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Children's self-esteem is further enhanced through activities such as baking a cake on their birthday which they proudly take home to share with their families.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of early education is good. Parents receive information about the setting's activities so that they know about their child's day and their child's records are available on a regular basis. Parents know that they can view their child's records at any time and meet regularly with practitioners, which means they are informed of how their child is progressing and developing. However, parents have fewer opportunities to support their child's learning at home. This means that children do not benefit from the sharing of activities with their parents that would further enhance their learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Effective recruitment procedures ensure that practitioners have experience and the necessary qualifications to carry out their role; all practitioners are rigorously vetted to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. The induction procedure and detailed operational plan, with up-to-date information ensures that all members of the team are secure in their knowledge of their roles and responsibilities. Children benefit from practitioners' sound knowledge and understanding of how children learn; their ongoing commitment to further training to update their knowledge and practice and regular meetings enable them to work effectively as a team.

Children benefit from a welcoming and attractive environment where they can move around safely and independently. They are happy and content because practitioners develop caring relationships with them. Practitioners work well together as a team, and demonstrate enthusiasm for creating a learning environment that stimulates and interests all children. Policies, records and most procedures are clear and comprehensive, underpinning the good practice in promoting positive outcomes for children. However, some documentation is incomplete.

The leadership and management of children in receipt of funding for early education is good. The Lead Practitioner is committed to continually developing the setting's practice to ensure that all children have access to high quality learning experiences. Systems are in place to look at the effectiveness of the provision and through this evaluative practice practitioners continue

to enhance children's experiences at the setting. Practitioners ensure that all parents have regular opportunities to discuss how their child is progressing through parents' meetings and good written information. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to: improve documentation; minimise hazards; ensure a named deputy is in place and improve practitioners' knowledge of child protection. All documentation has been updated and made available to parents and all safety issues have been effectively addressed to promote children's safety. A named deputy is in place and able to take charge in the absence of the manager. Practitioners have attended child protection training and are clear about procedures to protect children's welfare. The provider also agreed to ensure a named person took responsibility for coordinating the system to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A named coordinator is in place which means children can be positively supported in the setting.

At the last nursery education inspection the provider agreed to develop the system for planning and assessment and improve the programmes for communication, language, literacy and mathematics. Planning is in place and provides a good range of activities over a period of time so that children access appropriate learning opportunities. Children's assessment records have been developed and continue to evolve which enables practitioners to plan for the next steps in each child's learning. The programmes for communication, language, literacy and mathematics have been improved so that children extend their learning in meaningful contexts and in everyday activities.

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.

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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):

- continue to develop activities and everyday routines so that all children benefit from the rich learning experiences (this also applies to nursery education)

- review and update documentation to ensure that the procedures for complaints and lost or uncollected children are complete.

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):

- continue to improve the programme for creative development so that children can freely explore their imagination and creativity (this also applies to care)
- continue to develop opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's 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