

Bramble Hall Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	253652
Inspection date	18 February 2008
Inspector	Anne Walker
Setting Address	Station Road, Sutterton, Boston, Lincs, PE20 2JH
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Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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?

Bramble Hall Day Nursery Opened in 1996 and is one of two nurseries owned by the same provider. It operates from a converted school building in the centre of Sutterton, a small village just off the A17 between the towns of Boston and Spalding in Lincolnshire. A maximum of 67 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open from 08.30 to 17.30 for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor area.

There are currently 83 children aged from birth to under eight years on roll. Of these, 23 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area, as most of their parents travel to work in the nearby towns. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The nursery employs 13 members of staff. All hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The nursery are taking part in a pilot for the 'Healthy Childcare Project'. This is impacting positively on children's health. The daily routines help children develop good lifelong habits of self-care. They wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating by following the photographic display sited above the sinks. Tissues are available for them to wipe their noses and they know how to dispose of the tissue properly. Children clean their teeth after eating to help prevent early tooth decay. Hygiene around the nursery is maintained appropriately to prevent the spread of infections amongst children. Staff clean areas between changing children's nappies and have access to gloves and aprons. Bedding is organised so that each child has their own and it is washed as necessary. Floors and tables are cleaned before and after children have eaten. There are clear procedures for managing the spread of infection. Parents are informed of these so that they are able to work with the nursery to prevent the spread of illness amongst children.

Children enjoy a wide range of meals that are prepared from fresh ingredients and provide a balanced diet including portions of fruit and vegetables. As part of the 'Healthy Childcare Project' parents contribute ideas for healthy meals and snacks for the menus and children's preferences have been considered through the use of a children's questionnaire. Older children help themselves to drinks of water from a cooling dispenser at any point during the day. They have water or milk with their meals and snacks. Around their snack area are visual displays about healthy eating options and where foods come from so that as they develop children can become more informed about their eating choices. Babies' individual feeding routines are respected and staff work cooperatively with parents to wean children. Dietary needs are clearly recorded and understood by staff so that children's health is safeguarded.

The outdoor play area is used regularly throughout the year and the youngest children also have daily opportunities to be outdoors in the fresh air. There is a good range of equipment that fosters children's physical skills such as the climbing frames of different sizes and the balance beams for older children. Children enjoy the cars and tricycles and show increasing coordination when using them. Balls of various sizes are available and children practise rolling, kicking, throwing and catching them. There is a soft play room indoors which children use each day. It provides opportunities for them to use their bodies freely, for example, jumping with arms outstretched into the ball pit. Babies' mobility is fostered appropriately. The youngest have space to lay on the floor and kick their arms and legs and floor space is organised so that they can crawl safely.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The nursery is organised so that children are looked after in groups according to their developmental level. There are brief times during the day when the nursery comes together. These are managed well, with good staffing levels and the deployment of staff so that children of all ages benefit from being together. Each room is organised according to children's needs, enabling them to move around safely and access their play independently. Babies can crawl or practise newly acquired walking skills, as there is sufficient clear floor space and staff are always on hand to support them and watch over non-mobile babies. Throughout the nursery displays and storage are presented at child height so that children can be safe and as independent as

possible. There are suitable procedures to monitor children as they sleep in order to maintain their welfare. Fire drills are carried out at suitable intervals and enable the older children to become aware of what to do if such an event were to occur and they needed to leave the building quickly. The security of the nursery is given good regard with visitors supervised appropriately. The outdoor area is safely enclosed with notices reminding all parents and visitors of the importance of closing gates securely. Staff ensure that checks on the outdoor area are carried out prior to children going outside so that they can play safely.

The building is generally well maintained and is warm and welcoming for families. Some re-decoration has recently taken place however, peeling paint and some deterioration of brickwork in the children's cloakroom and adjoining corridor may impact on children's health and safety. Play resources and furniture are in good condition and monitored effectively on a daily basis to ensure they remain clean and safe for children to play with. There are sufficient cots, small beds and bedding so that children can rest comfortably when they need to.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as the staff working with children understand their child protection responsibilities. They know who to report their concerns to both within the setting and externally. Information is provided for parents so that they can work cooperatively with the setting to maintain children's best interests.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed when they arrive at nursery so that they are able to leave their parents and settle to play with a member of staff or their friends. Rooms are prepared so that the environment looks interesting and encourages children's curiosity to play and learn. Babies enjoy looking at themselves in the mirror or exploring pop-up toys. Non-mobile babies are moved regularly. They may sit in a chair and stretch out to investigate the play items in front of them or are held by an adult and talked to. Older children enjoy the step by the window and look out, observing the cars and farm vehicles that pass, before returning to their toys in the playroom. Children between two and three years begin to take part in small group activities, such as having a story together or doing a creative activity at a table with others. This helps them build relationships and to begin to play cooperatively, extending their language and games.

The daily routine runs smoothly due to well-organised teams who share responsibility for ensuring that children have varied play opportunities, regular breaks for meals and snacks and are able to have a sleep when they are tired. Mealtimes are relaxed and unhurried with young children given time to enjoy eating and for toddlers to learn to feed themselves. Each day the nursery has a short spell of singing together which children of all ages enjoy, including the babies who listen and watch intently. Older children show pleasure at being with the younger children especially when they see a sibling. After lunch the children aged over two join together for a short time to watch television. Some children enjoy this opportunity to relax and sit quietly but others are more restless. No other activities are available to children in this short period should they wish to do something different, although there are sufficient staff to support them. Overall the nursery atmosphere remains calm and happy for children throughout the day.

Children's development is supported through play and staff plan activities based on their observations and the development records they keep for each child. The range of activities are suitable for the age and range of children in their care. However, they have not fully refined

using their observations to plan play according to children's individual developmental steps, or using interests or experiences that children bring to fully enhance the learning environment.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. All the staff working with this age group have a clear understanding of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. They work as a team to plan interesting activities across the six areas of learning and ensure that children who attend on a part-time basis have the opportunities to access all aspects of learning.

Children have good relationships with their carers because the adults pay good attention to their needs so that they feel safe and acknowledged. As a result children confidently engage with the adults, enjoying their enthusiastic approach, and are motivated to learn. They show curiosity outside, investigating the frosty cobwebs with their magnifying glasses, observing the changes the weather has made and noticing what happens when the adult puts salt on an icy patch of the playground. The children are keen mark-makers using chalks outside, pencils and paint inside. Some of the older children are beginning to form letters, writing familiar words such as their name. Children are able to concentrate during group times, singing together, speaking in the group or listening to others. During the day they demonstrate increasing levels of self-care such as putting clothing on to go outdoors and helping themselves to drinks of water when thirsty. They use a range of construction materials and equipment such as scissors, rolling pins and cutters which fosters their hand to eye coordination and dexterity, in preparation for developing writing skills. At the role play area older children play cooperatively together and begin to use the play materials to develop their ideas. They have access to a good selection of creative materials to express their thoughts, including painting portraits of themselves or using the play dough to form animals.

Regular observations are made and clear records kept to track children's progress towards the early learning goals. However, planning is not yet sufficiently influenced by the good information collated to identify children's individual next steps towards the goals. This means that staff do not always adapt activities or differentiate their level of questioning for children to set appropriate challenges.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The settling-in procedures for children starting nursery provide opportunities for children's individual needs to be discussed. These are recorded clearly and staff ensure they are addressed and parents' wishes respected. The process is repeated as children move between rooms to ensure any transitions are smooth and children and parents continue to feel secure and confident. Daily written information is given to parents of babies so that they know about their day. Children's art work is displayed across the nursery which helps them feel acknowledged and valued. The 'Healthy Childcare Project' has given staff incentives to extend this process by canvassing children's and parents views on aspects of their nursery community. Parents are also contributing to the project, influencing its implementation by working alongside staff on the task force. Effective processes are in place to support children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties so that they access all the setting has to offer alongside their peers. Children learn about the diversity in the world around them through the variety of play materials and the planned activities which help them value peoples' similarities and differences.

Children get on well with each other and their carers. Behaviour management strategies ensure that children learn right from wrong and begin to understand their own emotions and feelings and how these can impact on others. Staff are always on hand to deal with any minor issues that arise, ensuring the atmosphere remains happy and children feel secure. Children contribute to nursery life by tidying toys as staff provide a role model alongside them. Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Helpful information is displayed across the nursery so that parents understand how the nursery is run including current play planning. A yearly induction day helps parents of children receiving nursery education to understand the curriculum guidance that is followed and how it is implemented through play. This ensures that weekly planning has relevance for them. Newsletters offer suggestions of ways parents can support learning on current topics in the home environment, which provides opportunities for children to extend or re-visit newly acquired learning, important in the early years. There are regular formal and informal ways for parents and staff to exchange information about a child's development and parents' knowledge and views are taken account of when planning future activities.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the consistent staff team that are well deployed according to their skills to meet children's needs. Staffing levels are above the minimum requirements so that children have plentiful attention and appropriate care at all times. It also means that the nursery runs smoothly, enabling staff to take breaks with minimum disruption to children. The nursery has a fully qualified work force who are pro-active in developing their service to families and implementing changes in early years practice.

Robust systems are in place to ensure that adults working with children are suitable to do so. Clear induction and appraisal systems collate staff skills and enable them to target training requirements for a forthcoming period. This means that there are always sufficient staff to meet children's needs in all areas, for example, there are currently 12 of the 13 childcare staff who hold a current first aid qualification. Required records are in place and used to ensure children's safety and welfare are maintained. They are updated on a regular basis and stored confidentially to protect children and families' privacy. Overall children's needs are met.

The leadership and management is good. There are clear systems in place to monitor the quality of the nursery education being delivered, including ensuring staff access the training they need to support children's effective learning. Managers have a suitable knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and are able to support the team working directly with children. They spend time in the room and provide feedback for staff that helps them move forward. The planning of activities is overseen by the manager and observed during time spent in the nursery to ensure its appropriateness.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the nursery agreed to: devise an operational plan; improve behaviour management and child protection policies; ensure there is an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice; and ensure that younger children have access to natural resources in their everyday play.

A suitable operational plan has been developed and contains relevant information to explain how the setting runs and how resources are used to meet the needs of the children. The document is readily available to parents and staff. The behaviour management policy now includes how any incidents of bullying will be managed. Details of the member of staff with particular responsibility for co-ordinating behaviour management are displayed around the nursery. The child protection statement has been amended to show more clearly the nursery's responsibility to refer concerns. Parents are informed of this verbally during the induction process and copies of the policy are available in the nursery at all times. A good range of resources and play materials have been purchased that provide positive images for children of themselves and others. In addition the nursery have reviewed and increased the activities to help children become aware of the wider world, such as Caribbean Day. Treasure baskets, and a 'feely wall' at babies' eye level, are amongst a number of ways the nursery has increased the range of natural materials for the younger children. These items are made up of different natural materials and textures for children to explore and complement the broader range of play materials also available.

At the last nursery education inspection the setting agreed to provide opportunities for parents to have active and regular involvement in their child's assessments. Meetings for parents to more formally discuss their child's development and care take place twice a year with the child's key person. The development records can be viewed at any time and parents are able to take them home if they wish. Their comments and suggestions are welcomed and there is space on the records for them to record their observations. As well as displaying the current planning for parents to view, a newsletter is sent home that provides suggestions regarding possible activities that would complement the learning that is taking place at nursery. These steps make positive links for children between different aspects of their lives so that their learning and development is supported effectively.

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 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):

- improve the repair and decoration in the cloakroom and hall area
- review the daily routine for the brief period after lunch to provide children with a wider options of activities.

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 use of observations and assessments in place to assist in planning for children's individual next steps in learning. [this applies to care and education].

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