

Bridges Childcare

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY259780
Inspection date	09 January 2008
Inspector	Josephine Mary Hammick
Setting Address	Old School, Wormbridge, Herefordshire, HR2 9DH
Telephone number	01981 570271
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Registered person	Bridges 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 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?

Bridges Childcare opened in 2002. It operates from premises that were originally the village school, in the village of Wormbridge, Herefordshire. A maximum of 52 children may attend the provision at any one time, which provides care and education for funded three- and four-year-olds, care for babies aged from three months and older children who attend for out of school care. The group is open five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 07:30 until 18:00. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 162 children aged from birth to eight years on roll. Of these, 36 children, comprising 26 three-year-olds and 10 four-year-olds, receive funding for nursery education. The nursery serves the local community. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs 16 staff. All hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority and is a member of The National Day Nurseries Association. The group are working towards a bronze quality assurance award.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy and are generally protected from infection because staff have procedures in place to protect them. For example, tables are wiped prior to being used for snack and meal times and cloths are disposed of after use. There are tick lists in all parts of the premises to ensure domestic hygiene procedures are adhered to. However, although vinyl gloves are worn for all tasks, practitioners' clothing is not protected whilst changing nappies or serving food, and the carpet in the baby room is not cleaned regularly. Consequently, children are at risk from cross-infection in these areas. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through regular routines for washing their hands before snacks and lunch times, after using the toilet and playing outside. They are learning why routines are important through everyday conversations with staff. For example, older children are aware that germs spread if they don't wash their hands thoroughly or wipe the table properly.

Children are well cared for in the event of an accident. There are first aid kits in each room and outside emergency kits strategically placed near all exits. Sufficient staff hold first aid qualifications to enable them to deal with accidents promptly and effectively. Appropriate documentation is kept and shared with parents to safeguard children, including reporting of accidents and administration of medicines.

Children learn about leading a healthy lifestyle through everyday practical experiences. The nursery provides a full menu, which is displayed prominently for all parents or carers to see. They offer three meals a day plus snacks mid-morning and afternoon. At snack time children enjoy fresh fruit and vegetables together with pure fruit juice and milk; breakfast consists of juice, fruit, toast and cereals; lunch is a hot meal consisting of, for example, rice, meat, vegetables, cheese, pasta and potatoes. At tea time children have, for example, sandwiches, jacket potatoes or soup. Menus are varied so that children have many opportunities to experience different tastes and textures. Children are learning to make healthy choices about the foods they eat through discussions with staff and through planned activities.

All children benefit from the strong emphasis on physical development. They enjoy a range of indoor and outdoor activities, which are linked in to the Foundation Stage or to the 'Birth to Three matters' framework, which promote their physical development. For example, they have daily opportunities to play outside using a range of equipment such as bikes, building bricks and climbing frames, balls, bats and sand pits. They are further supported in their learning by practitioners providing topic boxes, for example, a selection of 'windy day equipment', so that children are encouraged to become aware of their surroundings and the natural world. Music and movement sessions ensure that children benefit from opportunities to stretch and let off steam when they can't go outside. The wide provision of resources ensures that activities provide sufficient physical challenges to children of all ages. Children also have opportunities to use cutters, scissors, paintbrushes and other small tools to develop their manipulative skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well-maintained and child-focused environment. Staff prepare the room with an attractive range of appropriate resources before children arrive each day. This creates a stimulating environment for them. Children access a range of developmentally

appropriate toys and equipment, which are regularly cleaned and checked for safety. As a result they play safely and are happily occupied.

Children's safety is enhanced by sound safety procedures which are used to restrict access to the setting. For example, entry is restricted into the nursery by the door being locked and visitors are supervised at all times. Domestic safety measures are good; for example, daily risk assessments are carried out and recorded. Routine procedures include electrical sockets being covered, radiator guards secured and robust fencing around the gardens and parking area. Older children in the out-of-school club enjoy well-planned outings to places such as the Madley Environmental Centre. Pre-school children and babies go for walks in the locality. Full risk assessments are carried out before each visit and a high adult to child ratio is adhered to at all times. This helps children to remain safe. Children's safety in case of fire is promoted. Regular discussions and fire drills help children to learn how they could evacuate the premises safely to protect themselves. Children's welfare is well protected. The group have a written policy on child protection, in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines, and are aware of their duty to protect children. This protects children from harm or neglect.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children are happy to attend, they enjoy their time in the stimulating and well-resourced environment. Children throughout the setting are happy, confident and have built secure relationships with each other and their key worker. Staff provide a good balance of child-initiated and group projects to ensure that children have access to a range of stimulating activities. For example, stories and songs during circle time ensure that play is linked in with the theme; the painting and gluing activities stimulate interest and extend learning in a fun and informal way. The children are keen and motivated by what is available to them and demonstrate a sound understanding of the overall theme.

Children's play and learning is very well supported by staff who have a good understanding of how children learn, making links with the Foundation Stage and 'Birth to three matters' frameworks. Practitioners are warm and caring. They provide cuddles and close contact for children settling-in or who need reassurance. They support the parents intuitively. Staff consistently interact with children to extend their learning and play. Children's confidence and self-esteem are developed through the attention and praise they receive for their achievements. Staff value children's achievements and creations, acknowledging them at circle time, and displaying them attractively on wall displays or including them in their learning journey records.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children enjoy being in the setting. They are enthusiastic about the range of activities provided. They concentrate and persevere well, whether playing alone or when benefiting from interaction with their peers or adults. Children are confident to express opinions or suggest ideas. Staff ensure children have plenty of opportunities for conversation and discussions, while the less articulate children have good support to help them join in. Good use is made of questions to foster children's thinking and inspire curiosity.

Children enjoy stories and rhymes. They look at books freely from the selection available to them, and choose one to take home in their book bags. They listen attentively and contribute well to discussions about features of stories. Excellent use is made of props and visual aids.

Larger format books and 'Story sacks' help children to concentrate and enjoy different aspects of stories. Children sing tunefully and with enthusiasm; rhymes are used imaginatively to reinforce aspects of the topic. Children also enjoy mark-making in different contexts, whether they are forming patterns in sand and paint, drawing or writing their names whilst at the writing table, or on the flip chart at circle time.

Counting and number recognition activities are practical and fun for children. Many count confidently beyond 10. During routines, play activities and discussions, children get plenty of opportunities to consolidate their understanding of one-to-one correspondence. For example, the children enjoy going off with a member of staff to play a number board game incorporating shape, size and colour. They concentrate for long periods and relish the support and stimulation of the adult who has made the game herself in order to stimulate curiosity and inspire learning in a fun way. Children enjoy working out simple number problems, such as how many more cups are needed at each table at snack time. Stories and rhymes are also used well to support children's awareness of simple number operations. Staff encourage children to check their answers so that, for example, they often spontaneously count using their fingers.

Children are inquisitive, keen and interested in how things work. They explore different materials, such as wet and dry sand and clay. They find out how different construction toys and other items fit together. They enjoy using technology, for example, by using the laptop computer. However, opportunities to use technological resources are limited. Consequently, children's learning in this area is affected. Children confidently handle tools such as scissors. Children design and make their own necklaces, threading pasta onto laces in patterns. They construct their own railway line. They choose different pieces of track to see which ones fit and which do not. Children use mathematical language to describe the tracks' appearance and the position of key features.

Children move confidently. During an enjoyable outdoor play session they competently use the windy day equipment, running around performing different actions, stretching up, wiggling and moving in different directions. They talk about how cold the wind is and how it makes us shiver; how they feel out of breath after exercise, and the consequent need for a rest in the warm.

A wide and varied range of collage and creative materials encourage children's imaginative painting and craft work. All children have daily opportunities to draw and paint expressively, trying out different techniques and using colour well. Role play areas are available throughout the session to enable children to fully develop their own ideas. The scenarios that are provided are realistically resourced and promote children's meaningful play.

Practitioners include children in the planning and assessment to effectively promote interest and learning. Children are encouraged to contribute to 'mind maps' at circle time to ensure topics are relevant to them. This ensures that activities are fun, interesting and relevant to children. Staff spend time researching topics to ensure ideas are exciting. During the current topic on winter, children enthusiastically recall their own experiences during discussions and through role play, art and craft work and modelling activities. Plans have clear learning outcomes which are followed through organised, focused activities which stimulate children. All activities are evaluated to reflect practice and to influence further planning and learning. Assessment procedures ensure a clear audit trail of children's progress whilst they attend the pre-school. Parental contributions and early observations help staff to compile an initial profile on each child, but from then on assessments are based on formal observations of children during play and activities. Staff have systems to check children's progress in relation to the stepping stones

and early learning goals; they adapt activities to suit children's differing levels of skill or individual need.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual personalities and needs are well known and respected within the setting. The group seek a wide range of information from parents such as children's special interests, festivals that they celebrate at home and things that are special to the family. This information is used to ensure that children are cared for by staff who work with parents to meet their individual needs. It also ensures that all children are valued and included in the life of the setting. Children's play is supported by a wide range of resources such as books, dressing up outfits and dolls which are aimed at promoting positive images of people from a wide range of cultures. For example, familiar objects are labelled in several languages; there are multilingual welcoming posters and pictures promoting positive images of diversity.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are recognised and well supported by experienced and caring staff. Daily records are kept of children's progress and shared with parents and outside agencies to ensure that the children's changing needs are recognised and can continue to be met. Children behave very well, care for each other and freely share and take turns. For example, when playing at the sand tray, children share different sized containers and take turns using the scoops and jugs. They are developing a good understanding of right and wrong and are able to play happily within clearly set boundaries. Children benefit from sensitive settling-in procedures which are based around their individual needs, to support them in the transition between home and the setting. For example, parents and carers are actively encouraged to stay with their children until they are settled. This helps children to feel secure and confident in the group.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. The well thought out information booklet includes information on the Foundation Stage and the six areas of learning. Photographs and labels on displays help parents and carers to learn about what educational aspects of learning are possible in any activity. Newsletters and notices on the information board keep parents and carers informed about activities or the many social events. Parents are always welcome to view or discuss their child's care or development informally, or formally, through appointments. This enables parents to be involved and enhance their own child's learning.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The premises are well organised and good use is made of the space available. The registered person has a long-term vision in action to further develop the outside play space in line with the 'Forest School' ethos. This links in with their recently acquired 'Eco School' status after some very hard work from the out-of-school group. Practitioners work very well together and demonstrate enthusiasm for creating a learning environment that stimulates children of all ages. This is achieved by regular team meetings and effective line management support. Practitioners are keen to improve their knowledge and understanding of quality childcare and education. This is reflected in their commitment, enthusiasm and motivation to provide a quality service that is warm and welcoming to all. Children are well cared for by suitably qualified staff

who have been appropriately vetted to ensure that they are suitable and have sufficient skills and knowledge to work with children.

Policies and procedures are well thought out, clear, comprehensive and regularly updated. All staff are familiar with their content through effective induction and supervision. This ensures children are well cared for. There is a high emphasis on staff training and working with other professionals, such as those from the local authority. As a result, children benefit from practices which are in line with current ideas and legislation.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is good. There is a strong commitment by the management to support staff to develop provision to promote learning in all areas; they are competent within their roles and have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage. These skills and knowledge support the children's learning and development well.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the provider agreed to review the policies for behaviour management and special needs. Since then, all policies are reviewed and updated on an annual basis, and are in line with current legislation. Children benefit from effective procedures to safeguard their well-being.

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

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 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):

- ensure all areas are regularly cleaned in order to minimise the risk of cross-infection.
This specifically applies to the carpet in the baby room
- prevent the risk of cross-infection at changing and meal times.

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):

- provide more opportunities for children to access technology.

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