

Beehive Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	103783
Inspection date	11 December 2007
Inspector	Beryl Witheridge
Setting Address	c/o Cuxton Community Infant School, Bush Road, Cuxton, Rochester, Kent, ME2 1EY
Telephone number	07906 249545
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Registered person	Beehive Playgroup
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Sessional 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?

Beehive Playgroup opened in 1990 and operates from one room in a mobile classroom in the grounds. It is situated in the village of Cuxton, Rochester, Kent. A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 09:00 to 15:15, Wednesday and Friday 09:00 to 11:45, term time only. There is also out of school care before and after school, 07:45 to 08:45 Breakfast Club and 15:15 to 18:00 After School Club. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 38 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 16 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a local catchment area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs, and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs five staff. Of these, four staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children experience good daily routines to protect their health. For example, children understand the need to wash their hands after using the toilet or before they eat. This is supported by the staff, who sing a song with the children as they do this. Staff ensure that routines, activities and topics enable children to learn about the importance of good hygiene and healthy living; they encourage the children to have independence. The children's skill in managing their personal hygiene is good as a result. The children are protected from infection by the good practice of staff. The record keeping and documentation is good and kept confidential to individual parents. Children are safeguarded by appropriate procedures; most staff hold current first aid certificates and are able to administer first aid in the event of an accident which enables children to receive appropriate treatment in an emergency.

Children benefit from a choice of healthy food and drink at snack times, when they enjoy a variety of fruits or biscuits; for example, crackers, cheese, apple and satsuma, they are also offered a selection of vegetables; the only time they have something sweet is when they have a birthday and then they can have a piece of cake. They independently pour themselves a drink of water from the water cooler when they feel thirsty but staff pour their drinks for them at snack time taking away some of their independence. Staff ensure that all food and drink complies with parental instructions and children's preferences, enabling them to have confidence in the choices offered.

Children are encouraged to learn about healthy lifestyles through planned activities and the routine; for example they have plenty of room to run, use ride on toys and bikes and large apparatus in a well supervised outdoor area. They go outside and take the 'windy day' box, which includes, kites, windmills, scarves, bats and balls, as well as using some outdoor equipment, such as the mini trampoline, pushchairs, a large ball and stilts. They have freedom to run and make good use of the space, which is a secure area for their sole use. They also have opportunities for indoor activities which include, music and movement and use of the school hall with the climbing and balancing equipment, twice a week. Children show bodily awareness and begin to understand the effects exercise has on their bodies as they get warmer as they are running around, even though it is a very cold day. Fine motor development is good because children have many opportunities to use appropriate equipment and tools, such as writing, playdough with tools, 'tap a shape' and real woodwork with tools.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a bright and clean environment. They have access to two rooms and benefit from the free flow play between the two rooms. They move around safely due to the good organisation of resources. Children benefit from good security in the pre-school; the staff ensure there is good supervision when the children arrive and depart and that they are well supervised in the secure outdoor play area. Children are kept safe by systems used to check the equipment and toys and the use of effective cleaning routines as well as a regular written risk assessment. Children arrive happily and immediately engage in the activities.

Children access a range of suitable toys, resources and equipment. The furniture and equipment used helps to promote an accessible and stimulating environment; all equipment is child sized

except the computer table but the chairs are high enough to make it comfortable for the children to use. Activities include items such as books, art and craft materials, construction sets and puzzles and free standing imaginative play equipment such as the home corner and the phone box. Staff plan the programme flexibly so they can accommodate children's requests or choices. Children have free access to most of the toys and equipment.

Children benefit from good security both on and off the premises. Staff ratios are always maintained for local trips, such as the library, but on trips further afield they ask parents to accompany their children and have the staff and committee present as well. The staff have an understanding of the procedures to follow in the event of a fire; the evacuation procedures are carried out termly in conjunction with the school, however, this means that not all children are included in the practice.

Staff have an understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and there is a clear system in place to refer any concerns about child protection to the appropriate agency. All staff have undertaken safeguarding children training. The written policy is in line with the Local safeguarding Children Board procedures. There is also a written procedure to be followed in the event of an accusation against a member of staff, student or volunteer. This provides safeguards for the welfare of children, as does the public liability insurance.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident and secure. They know each other well and play happily together. There is a keyworker system in place which helps them to form good relationships with the staff. This is effective in helping staff to get to know and understand the children and enabling children to build their confidence and self-esteem. They learn from a varied range of planned activities and good quality resources which provide balance and challenge. The organisation of the sessions is good, providing a good balance of individual choices, small group and whole group activities. Children readily participate in whole group times but their listening skills when in a large group are not good.

Children enjoy a variety of activities; some with staff guidance which encourages their confidence to try new activities, such as using the interactive white board, but they are also able to make their own choices about games and activities, which encourages their independence. They concentrate well when making craft items and are able to relax and chat to friends whilst sharing books. Children make good progress because the staff develop a supportive and caring relationship which increase children's sense of trust and helps to develop their confidence and self-esteem.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Children's assessments are regular and frequent and cover their progress in all six areas of the curriculum. The staff ensure that children are assessed, all staff share observations of the children with the keyworker. Children make good progress because the staff use planned and spontaneous opportunities to encourage their learning. Staff are adept at using child initiated play to extend learning opportunities, such as when children have built a dinosaur house they decide that the house is too small and that they have 'too many' dinosaurs and there is not

enough room, so they will have to make it bigger, they build the walls higher to give them more room inside.

Resources are freely available and children are able to move around easily allowing them to initiate their own play; so that children are interested and well motivated.

Children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. They are encouraged to put away resources they use and take themselves to the toilet, developing a sense of responsibility and independence. The staff encourage children to freely discuss their ideas and experiences during activities, which enables them develop their confidence. Children make frequent use of books, enjoying sharing the experience with each other, staff support them by reading stories and asking good questions to support children's understanding of vocabulary and listening skills. Children have free access to mark making facilities so that they can name their work; many of the older and more able children are beginning to recognise and write their names competently. Their recognition of words and letters is well supported by the use of environmental print around the room such as the number line, 'look at what we are doing', 'home corner' and 'book corner'.

Children confidently participate in mathematical activities. They benefit from good support when using mathematical activities, developing their familiarity with counting and numbers. For example, they are beginning to represent numbers in various ways; they sing songs which represent numbers, '1, 2, 3, 4, 5 once I caught a fish'. Children show that they understand size and shape through practical activities such as 'tap a shape' they are able to follow the pictures to make their designs, one child follows the design of a flower including the stem, she is very meticulous and the design is perfect. They talk about the different shapes, a member of staff explains to a child that the shape is a 'semi circle' and that if you put two together it makes a whole circle, the child fits them together and makes a circle.

Children have access to a varied and attractive natural environment when they play outside and they receive good staff support to extend their understanding. For example, children learn about the weather through outdoor play, it is a very cold and windy day and they have discussions with staff about the weather and the wind. Children's fine motor skills are developing well because they benefit from using a selection of varied sizes of pencils, crayons, glue spreaders, scissors and paintbrushes in everyday activities. Children explore the concept of communication with mobile phones, role play tills and the computer and the 'interactive white board'. The white board is a favourite with all children, who independently access it throughout the session.

Children have a lot of opportunities to improve their physical development with access to an outdoor area and use of the school gym as well as music and movement and activity songs. Children particularly enjoy singing action songs and are enthusiastic when performing 'head, shoulders, knees and toes' to a fast tempo, there is much laughter amongst the children when a member of staff 'accidentally' gets the actions wrong. They experience opportunities for imaginative play in the role play area, supported by their use of resources such as the cooking utensils, play cooker and soft toys.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a range of resources reflecting positive images, such as pictures, dressing up clothes, small world figures and books which promote a balanced view of society. Staff take

positive steps to introduce children to different festivals and celebrations throughout the year. Staff are fully aware of the individual needs and preferences of all the children and work hard to cater for these.

Children with learning difficulties or disabilities receive sensitive care. Their needs are carefully assessed and individual education plans can be constructed. These note the next steps in learning to promote the development of the child in partnership with parents and other relevant agencies. There are also good links with the school so that they receive the correct information about the children's needs when they move on to full-time education.

Children play harmoniously together and respond positively to staff. They have good relationships with staff who have clear expectations of behaviour and make these explicit in a calm and supportive way. For example, children are encouraged to treat each other with respect through the use of gentle reminders; staff set the standard by being good role models. The setting fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are given information on the activities and the aims and objectives of the setting but they do not receive clear written information on the Foundation Stage curriculum, the stepping stones or Birth to three matters. All the policies and procedures are available to parents to read in the entrance hall. All relevant information is gathered on the registration form to ensure children are cared for according to parents' wishes. Parents receive regular newsletters and are invited to regular consultations when they have opportunities to discuss their children's progress with the staff, focusing on the records of assessment. Staff welcome all parents and share any relevant information and allowing them to have an input into their child's next steps. This is enhanced by the parents coming into the group and seeing how the children play and learn.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are happy, confident and secure within the pre-school. The management and committee of the group have ensured that the staff caring for the children are suitably qualified to do so. There are five staff employed in the pre-school and all but one hold an early years qualification. Most staff are first aid trained. The committee need to ensure that every member of staff has a current Criminal Records Bureau disclosure to provide the children with a safe environment. The recruitment procedures for employing new staff are rigorous and robust. The staff risk assess constantly and supervise children at all times. The required range of documentation and records are in place, including daily attendance records, which show clear arrival and departure times for children. The registration certificate is clearly displayed and the required records are all stored confidentially and are readily available for inspection. Staff continually implement the policies and procedures to ensure that the children's safety, welfare, care and learning are promoted.

Leadership and management is good. Children are well cared for and the activities provided are planned for using the Foundation Stage, where staff are clearly identifying children's next steps. The overall success of the curriculum is clearly assessed and monitored and is linked to the needs of the children. There is a vision for the well-being of the children through ensuring that the care and education are meeting all the children's needs. There is an induction for new staff and regular appraisals and reviews which identify any relevant training or resources for all staff throughout the year. Staff are motivated through regular staff meetings where they are able to share their thoughts, ideas and opinions openly. The pre-school receives support

from an early years advisory teacher. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the group were asked to ensure the effective storage of toys and resources to prevent them impinging on children's play space.

Toys are now stored in units accessible to children as well as other storage where staff have to get equipment for the children. This does not impinge on their play space.

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 complaint 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 that all children are involved in the emergency evacuation procedures so they know how to protect themselves in an emergency
- ensure that all staff and committee members have all the relevant and up to date checks to ensure the safety of the children

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 parents with clearer information regarding the Foundation Stage, the early learning goals and the stepping stones

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