

Buffer Bears Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	122540
Inspection date	28 March 2008
Inspector	Sue Boylan
Setting Address	Tadworth Court, Tadworth, Surrey, KT20 5RU
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Registered person	Buffer Bear Ltd
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?

Buffer Bears Nursery is one of 26 nurseries run by Buffer Bear Ltd. It opened in 1998 and operates from a single storey, purpose-built building in the grounds of The Children's Trust, Tadworth Court in Surrey. A maximum of 56 children may attend the nursery, on a full or part-time basis, at any one time. The nursery is open from 07:00 to 18:30 all year round, excluding bank holidays. Children share access to two secure, enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 53 children, aged from three months to five years, on roll. Of these, 19 children receive funding for early education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. Older children have opportunities to participate in a weekly French class and 'Fit and Fun', an activity for developing physical skills.

The nursery employs 10 staff to work with the children. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean environment where effective hygiene procedures are in place to protect children's health. For example, staff wear disposable aprons and gloves when changing nappies and serving food. The daily routines provide opportunities for children to learn the importance of personal hygiene, for instance, cleaning their teeth after a meal and washing their hands before eating. However, staff sometimes fail to make sure children's noses are wiped when needed and babies' faces are cleaned after eating.

All staff are first aid trained so children receive appropriate treatment if they have a minor injury. There are 'evacuation bags' kept in all rooms, which contain fully stocked first aid boxes and resources, such as nappies and wipes, which may be required if children have to leave the building quickly. Children are not at risk from cross-infection because staff and parents are aware of the sickness policy and children do not attend if unwell. Guidance is available on quarantine periods and staff record any specific illnesses in the nursery on a weekly chart for parents' information.

Children enjoy varied, nutritious meals that are supplied from the hospital kitchens. They are transported to the nursery in insulated trolleys where staff check the temperature of the food with a probe on arrival. Staff are aware of individual children's dietary requirements and make sure alternative food is available. The food is served on different coloured plates which identify allergy and vegetarian food preferences. Mealtimes are a sociable occasion and children enjoy the opportunity to sit with staff and their friends to eat. Children have access to fresh drinking water from individually labelled cups and bottles throughout the day. Staff ensure babies' milk bottles are not kept for longer than a hour once started.

Staff working with babies are experienced with this age range. They follow babies' individual sleep and feeding routines. This provides continuity of care and contributes to their health and well-being. Staff respond appropriately when babies express their needs both verbally and non-verbally, for example, rubbing their eyes when tired. Staff work hard to settle babies into the environment. They try various ways to calm a baby who is new to the nursery, for instance, talking gently, cuddling and walking around the room so they can observe the moving mobiles.

All children have daily opportunities to be outside in the fresh air. They excitedly put on their coats to go outside in the well equipped garden. They develop confidence in their physical skills as they learn to climb the steps of the slide or ride a sit-on truck. Children enjoy going for a nature walk around the grounds of the hospital, where they see rabbits, guinea pigs and squirrels as they wander along the covered walkways and through the woods.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a secure environment because suitable security measures are taken. Children are unable to leave the nursery unsupervised and visitors cannot enter the building without staff being aware. Children move around freely and independence is encouraged. The nursery is welcoming and staff greet children and parents on arrival. Displays of children's artwork and photographs show staff value the children and their contribution. There is adequate space for

children to play, eat and rest comfortably. The selection of equipment and resources available is in good condition and suitable for the ages of the children attending.

Staff are vigilant in their supervision. There are appropriate safety procedures in place, such as checking sleeping babies at regular intervals and head counts if children are taken off the nursery site. Staff monitor the accident forms to see if children are at risk from re-occurring hazards. Children are familiar with the emergency escape plan, which is practised on a monthly basis. Children are beginning to learn how to keep themselves safe, for example, staff remind them, 'sit down on the chair, you might fall' and 'be careful of the broom, you might hurt someone'. Risk assessments are carried out. If any hazards are identified during the daily check of the premises, staff make sure an action plan is completed and the maintenance team are informed.

Children are protected because staff demonstrate a good understanding of their responsibilities with regard to child protection issues. They attend training and the policy provides updated procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child in their care or an allegation is made against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Babies and toddlers are happy and settled. They are curious and have good opportunities to explore their environment. Children enjoy the comfort of sitting with a member of staff for a cuddle and some reassurance. Children are encouraged to be independent, for example, putting their dirty cup and plate in the sink. Staff are responsive to children's individual needs, for instance, they exchange a plastic bib for a fabric one if the child feels uncomfortable. Children concentrate well when playing with sand and water and enjoy the opportunity to choose their own activity. However, there are times when toys in the toddler rooms are not fully supporting children's play experience. For example, one child tips the resources in the role play area on the floor and then others are not motivated to go in there.

Children love the Friday music session. This provides an opportunity for them to sing and play instruments relating to the chosen theme for the week. This usually extends to more physical games, such as 'okey cokey' and 'heads, shoulders, knees and toes'. There are good opportunities for children to enjoy creating, for example, making pizza, rolling around in shredded paper and 'fluffy painting'. Babies like the feel of the paint as they use their fingers to spread it onto paper. Staff use the Birth to three matters framework in planning and regular observations ensure children's progress and their individual needs are considered at all times.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make steady progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and stepping stones. They plan the curriculum well and make sure all areas of learning are covered during the week. Children's next steps are identified because staff make regular observations as they monitor children's progress. The room is organised so children have access to all toys and resources. Children are encouraged to self select toys and make their own choices throughout the day.

Children's self help skills are promoted because they help to wash up after lunch, put on their coats, pour out drinks and lay the table. Children are building relationships with each other, for example, they jump up and down in excitement when their 'best friend' arrives late in the

morning. Children are beginning to acknowledge how they are feeling, for instance they say 'I'm tired because I didn't get much sleep last night'. They happily engage in conversations with adults and are confident to ask questions.

Children love books and like to spend time lying on the sofa in the quiet corner, browsing through a favourite story. There are good opportunities to make marks and some older children are beginning to form recognisable letters. Children love to use creative materials, for example, painting their arms and hands and proudly showing off the 'tattoo' on their forehead. They are confident to express choices, preferring to play with cardboard boxes and wooden blocks instead of participating in the memory game. Children have access to the computer on a daily basis. They choose their own educational games, follow instructions and use the mouse and keyboard with ease.

Children are beginning to count in sequence and discuss the shapes of objects, but the resources available in the mathematics area are not really taken advantage of. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is enhanced as they watch eggs hatch and then handle the chickens. They love the weekly trip to the Cheyne Centre, which provides interaction and play with a group of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children move with control when running in the garden and like to participate in the parachute game. There is a regular Fit and Fun activity to encourage physical exercise.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are welcomed into the nursery and invited to different social occasions, such as the Mother's and Father's Day tea. A parent representative group meets with staff to help plan events, for example, the 10 year celebration. There is good information available about the setting and the Foundation Stage, and both informal and formal systems ensure there are opportunities for staff to meet with parents to keep them updated on their child's progress.

Children behave well and benefit from the structured but flexible routine. Children's self-esteem is fostered as they are praised and encouraged throughout the day. Children enjoy one another's company and willingly take turns, for example, when waiting to use the computer. They learn important social skills, such as tidying up before going outside and playing nicely with their friends.

Effective procedures are in place to support children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The nursery works closely with parents and outside agencies to ensure children receive appropriate support. Children benefit because staff make sure they are clear about parents' wishes in relation to their child's individual needs. An initial meeting with the key worker provides an opportunity to go through likes, dislikes, routine, allergies and favourite activities. There are some opportunities for children to experience the local community, for example, they go to the greengrocer to purchase fruit for tea and snack. However, activities and resources to reflect the wider world are a little limited. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

There are effective recruitment procedures and staff are suitably vetted. Most staff are qualified and have a good understanding of child development. There is a comprehensive range of policies and procedures which are reviewed regularly. The required documentation is maintained, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being. Children benefit because they are settled into familiar group rooms, and do not move until confident and ready to do so. Staff work closely as a team and are dedicated to providing a caring and friendly environment where children feel secure.

Leadership and management are good. Staff are aware of their roles and have opportunities for external and internal training. There is no formal system in place to evaluate the teaching and learning, although staff sometimes discuss the activities to see if any improvement is required. The manager recognises the nursery's strengths and weaknesses and makes sure staff have opportunities to communicate through regular meetings and one-to-one sessions.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last nursery education inspection the provider agreed to: review the current format for short term planning to ensure it clearly relates to the Foundation Stage curriculum, particularly in the area of mathematical development; ensure that focus activities are clearly recorded; and make sure staff observations are used to identify children's next steps in learning. There has been improvement in the system for planning and staff are able to identify children's next steps in learning through observations. They continue to work on mathematical development and recording focus activities.

At the last care inspection the provider agreed to explore possibilities for rearranging the baby room to provide a calm and quiet area for sleeping babies. There is a room to provide a quiet space for sleeping, but this is currently not in use and babies sleep in their main play room.

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.

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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):

- ensure children's noses and faces are kept clean
- maintain activities and resources in Pandas and Paddington rooms so children's play experience is consistently enhanced
- improve opportunities for children to experience the world around them.

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 further opportunities for children to explore mathematics
- improve the system to evaluate the teaching and 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