

Bees Knees Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	123075
Inspection date	15 November 2007
Inspector	Christine Stimson
Setting Address	12 Priory Lane, Brookside Community Hall, Putney, Putney, SW15 5PQ
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Registered person	Lucy Lindsay
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?

Bee Knees Nursery School opened in 1990. It operates from Brook Side Community Hall, located in the Roehampton area of Wandsworth. The nursery serves the needs of the local community.

The nursery school is registered to care for a maximum of 33 children at any one time and there are currently 26 children aged from two years to under five years on roll; this includes 13 funded three and four year olds. Children may attend a variety of sessions. The nursery currently supports two children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days a week during school terms (33 weeks of the year). Sessions are from 09.30 till 12.30 on Monday - Friday. On Tuesday and Thursday children over the age of three can attend full day sessions from 09.30-15.00. The provision provides various dance, karate, music and drama sessions for children on a weekly basis.

Seven full time and part time staff work directly with the children, of these five hold recognised childcare qualifications to NVQ level 3 or the Montessori equivalent.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is supported as the nursery has effective procedures in place to record any accidents children may have whilst in their care, making sure parents are informed on the day. Staff with first aid qualifications deal with any injuries using items from a well stocked first aid box to assist them. If the accident is more serious, prior consent from parents to take children to hospital in an emergency has been obtained; this enables staff to act in the best interest of the child concerned. However, a book kept to record children's existing injuries is not maintained in a confidential manner.

Children are provided with healthy snacks whilst they are being cared for at the nursery. Cheese and crackers and a variety of fruits are some of the foods children have; snacks are always accompanied by plenty of drinking water. Children's independence is encouraged at this time as children become helpers and hand out snacks and all children attempt to pour their own drinks. Within the room a jug of water and beakers are left for children to help themselves at any time should they feel thirsty.

Children are learning the importance of good hygiene practice whilst at the nursery as staff maintain a routine of washing hands before snack time, after messy play and after visiting the toilet. Children explore the outside area of the nursery where they race up and down the wide path on scooters, cars and tricycles. They access the see-saw, a climbing frame and a slide each day and there is enough space for children to run off energy and play together. Areas of the garden have been planted by the children who enjoy growing flowers. Children's fine motor skills are developed by children having access to paint brushes, scissors, glue sticks and other implements as part of their everyday play.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children safety is supported as the rooms where they play are well maintained and the whole premises are secure and clean. A daily cleaner is employed for this purpose with staff checking all areas prior to children arriving as part of their daily risk assessment. The garden is an attractive, secure and safe place for children to play. Six foot fencing surrounds the perimeter of the playground and the gates are locked to prevent children from leaving unsupervised.

There are sufficient toys, child sized furniture and resources for the children to access. Toys are kept at child height for self-selection and all the resources are maintained in good condition. The range of toys is vast, of good quality and suitable for children's age and stage of development. Children are taught the correct way to handle tools and photos in the nursery show children enjoying an activity of hammering nails into wood pieces to make items from their imaginations.

The nursery has an emergency escape plan, displayed in the rooms, that is practised frequently. This enables children to learn how to leave the building quickly and safely. Other fire fighting measures are in place such as extinguishers, illuminated fire exit signs, a fire blanket and smoke alarms. The nursery undertakes daily risk assessments of areas used by children to ensure there are no hazards that could pose a risk to a child. When children go on outings parents are asked

to accompany them and staff make sure they take mobile phones, a small first aid box and details of children's emergency contacts. This supports children's safety.

Children are protected from harm as some staff have attended child protection training courses and all staff are aware of how to proceed if they have a concern about a child in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children arrive at the nursery happy and eager to participate. Staff know the children well and greet them warmly as they arrive, encouraging them to find their names from the board and asking if they are well. When children leave at the end of the session they are encouraged to shake hands and look into the eyes of staff as they say goodbye. These are good social skills for children to learn. Children are confident in the setting and show high self-esteem. They link up with friends and approach staff to help them in their activities. For example, children are making a tower of bricks that click together. They use chairs to make the tower taller than themselves and ask staff to help when it becomes too tall for them to put on any more bricks. This activity is then turned into a maths exercise, with children using tape measures, counting how many bricks are in the tower and comparing the sizes of staff, each other and the bricks. The fun part comes when they knock them down with a big crash.

Staff make sure the room children play in is an attractive place to be as they set up activities on tables, in the home corner and in trays for children to explore. All resources are kept at child height so children can make a choice, which encourages them to develop independence and confidence and enables children to use their initiative.

Initially in the nursery all children play together in one big hall and the planning of activities is for all the children attending from two to four years. Staff are skilled enough to make sure older and more able children are offered challenge, and activities are adapted for younger or less able children. Mid-morning the children separate into age related groups with the youngest group of children staying in the main hall. This gives them the opportunity to explore without the interference of the older children, who may dominate certain activities. The children over three years divide into two groups for lessons relating to the Foundation stage of learning. They all join up again later, having their snack time and circle times together and playing outside in the fresh air.

The nursery have started a scheme whereby a Busy Bee soft toy is awarded to children for various achievements such as not crying on their first week at school, being kind to one another, toilet training and being helpful. This soft toy is then taken home for the weekend and photos show him on outings at the seaside, in the garden of someone's home, on a river boat trip and asleep in the buggy of a child. The photos are displayed around the foyer for parents and children to see and this has proved a popular activity with the children and their parents.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is good and children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff are skilled at assessments of children's development and progress as they make meaningful observations as children are playing and note their achievements. These are done on named post it notes and put onto a board under the six areas of learning. The key workers then use these observations to make up children's progress reports. However, there is no documentary evidence that these observations are used to inform the weekly planning

of children's next step of development, although all staff know their children well. The challenges set for children are imaginative, promote their learning and are achievable. Staff engage in conversations with children and use language that helps children with their vocabulary. They use carefully framed questions that make children think and are patient enough to wait for children to respond with their answers.

Children are confident to greet each other and staff on arrival and they play well together showing independence when selecting activities for themselves. For example, children wash down the play house together using small brooms, mops, washing up brushes and cloths. This is a spontaneous activity stemming from one child wanting some water and bubbles to wash up some dishes in the home corner. The children all work well together and are engaged in this activity for a long time, taking care to wash every part of the house they see.

Some children are able to link sounds to letters through activities such as the teacher pointing out things in the room and the children telling her what the letter sound is that the article starts with. They also identify letters from a box and place these on an alphabet chart sounding the letter as they take a turn. Children use marks to represent their ideas and older children are adept at writing their names, letters and words copied from staff writing in their work books. Parents are encouraged to extend learning from home by collecting work folders for children to take home to practise their phonic sounds and write simple words. Reference books are kept on the nature table so children can look things up that are either on the table or they have seen on their way into nursery. Children often take themselves into the attractive book corner to relax and look at books.

Children are beginning to have a good understanding of number and size. For example, children are playing with a dice, recognising the number they have thrown and saying whether it was more or less than six. They then count out the relevant number of small play figures from a box and recount these later to discover who has the most. Children have daily opportunities for physical development as they play out in the garden on apparatus and bikes. They learn about foods that keep them healthy and talk to staff about the effect good food has on your body. Visits from dentists, nurses and doctors enable children to become aware of the importance of looking after their own health.

Children are interested in the world around them and have been sponsoring a charity for children who lost their families in the Tsunami. They look at photos and have updates of news about how the children are doing. Closer to home children show interest in growing pots of indoor herbs and growing plants in the garden. They use magnifying glasses to observe changes and to inspect insects in the soil, showing wonder at the beauty of nature. Children have opportunities to use programmable toys and equipment. For example, one child uses a video camera to record what the other children in the nursery are doing. This is then downloaded on the computer so the children can see it the next day.

Children have weekly music lessons delivered by an outside teacher as part of their curriculum. They use musical instruments to tap out sounds and beats and use their feet and hands to tap out beats and make noises relating to the songs. For example, they do repeated patterns indicating a galloping horse and a horse that walks slowly when it is tired. At the start of the music sessions they have the hello song and each child confidently responds to the teacher, singing 'Hello' back to her. Children are confident to stand in front of their peers to recite poems and eagerly talk about events at home. Photos show children experimenting with straws and paint to make bubble pictures and children have regular opportunities to explore volume using small jugs, water wheels and funnels in the water tray.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Parents are kept informed of the activities their children participate in through a daily white board notice detailing the days activities, topics covered and any other relevant information. Regular newsletters are sent to parents, and staff are available for discussions with parents before and after sessions. The nursery seeks parents opinions about the provision by asking them to complete questionnaires and making sure their comments are acted upon. Each parent receives a settling in form a short time after their child has started at the nursery and this asks for feedback on how well they think their child has settled, seeking any comments so they can improve things for future children.

Children play with a range of resources that teach them about diversity. For example, there are dolls representing people from various cultures, disability play figures in the dolls house, a selection of books showing people from around the world and a display of how to count to ten in a number of languages relevant to the children and staff attending. The nursery celebrates the festivals of others such as Diwali, Ramadan and Eid as well as the Christian festivals of Easter and Christmas. Staff within the nursery talk to children about their countries of origin and the traditions and festivals they celebrate. This helps children to further understand about other cultures and diversity. Although the nursery does not currently care for any children with learning or physical difficulties staff have had training in this area and are willing to work alongside parents and other professionals to meet all children's needs. A member of staff with language skills helps children who have English as an additional language to settle into the nursery and to gain confidence in conversational English.

Children are generally well behaved in the nursery and staff encourage their independence and self-care skills as much as possible. For example, children help to tidy away toys prior to playing outside. A bell is rung and all children respond taking responsibility for the areas they are currently playing in. The children are beginning to understand right from wrong as they are made aware of this from staff. Staff lead by example, using good manners and are quickly on top of situations that could get out of hand, like two boys play fighting. They offer explanations to children so they know why they have done something wrong, the consequences of their actions and staff talk to children at circle time about the expectations of the setting. The nursery has a behaviour management policy, but this does not have a procedure to follow in the event of any bullying incidents. Many children show responsibility for managing their own behaviour by not running, doing as they are told when they are told and complying with the routine of the nursery. Evidence throughout the nursery shows children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs are fostered.

The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education funding is good and this contributes to children's well being. Parents receive good quality information about the Foundation stage of learning and are kept well informed about events in the nursery through regular newsletters, the parents notice board, verbal information and letters sent out by management. Parents are encouraged to become involved in their children's learning by sharing any skills they have with the children during the sessions. Parents come in and read to children, take part in art activities, share IT skills and accompany their children on local outings. Regular updates on children's progress are shared with parents both verbally and in the form of a short interviews where their child's progress report is discussed with the key worker and the manager. Parents are aware they can see their children's assessments and development records at any time and work folders are regularly sent home so that parents can extend children learning in partnership with the nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from being cared for by consistent and caring staff, many of whom hold recognised childcare qualifications and who embrace training opportunities to further their career development. A robust recruitment procedure ensures only people who are suitable to work with children are employed.

The leadership and management of the nursery is good. The owner/manager has high expectations of her staff and makes sure the social skills of the children are high on the list of staff's priorities. She is able to delegate responsibilities to others as she has a mature, experienced and consistent staff team who understand their role and responsibilities. These staff plan lessons to ensure high standards are achieved for children. The owner makes sure the nursery is well resourced and encourages staff to embrace training opportunities to further their own development, enhance children's learning and to make sure they are up to date with the latest childcare practice and the frequent changes in regulations. The manager monitors and evaluates the quality of care and education offered by making sure short daily meetings with staff are conducted and any issues relating to children are addressed. All staff are involved in the planning of activities and this is overseen by management. However, the leader has failed to ensure children's written observations are linked to planning so that their next step of development can be identified and planned for.

The premises are well organised both indoors and outdoors to meet children's needs and to maximise play opportunities for children. All the required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and wellbeing is in place, with the exception of a procedure to follow in the event of any bullying incidents and confidentiality being maintained in the existing injuries record book.

Overall, the nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection two recommendations were made to improve the care for children. Since then good progress has been made and the garden area has been made more secure so children cannot leave the premises unsupervised. The nursery now displays their emergency evacuation procedure on the parents notice board and have made signs for all the rooms that illustrate what should be done in a fire. Staff conduct daily risk assessments on areas of the nursery used by children and have implemented a system to record incidents of physical intervention. All these measures support the safety and well being of the children attending.

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):

- make sure records relating to children's existing injuries are maintained in a confidential manner
- devise a procedure to follow in the event of any bullying incidents.

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):

- make sure written observations undertaken on children are linked to planning so that children's next step of development can be identified and planned for.

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