

Busy Bears Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY289743
Inspection date	07 January 2008
Inspector	Janette Elaina Lockwood
Setting Address	Northwick Park Primary School, Third Avenue, Canvey Island, Essex, SS8 9SU
Telephone number	01268 511863
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Registered person	The Governing Body of Northwick Park Primary School
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 satisfactory. 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?

Busy Bears club is managed by the Governing Body of Northwick Park Primary School. It opened in 2003 and operates from three classrooms within Northwick Park Primary School on Canvey Island, Essex. A maximum of 52 children may attend the setting at any one time for a variety of sessions which includes a breakfast and after school club, a holiday club, full day care and sessional care. The setting is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year. The sessions for children receiving nursery education are from 09.00 to 11.30 and from 12.30 to 15.00 term time only. Children have access to secure outdoor play areas.

There are currently 105 children from two to under eight years on roll. Of these, 32 children receive funding for early education. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs 14 members of staff. Of these, 12 hold appropriate early years qualifications and four are working towards qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff take some positive steps to provide a clean and hygienic environment for children such as cleaning down tables with antibacterial cleaner and checking the cleanliness of toilet areas regularly to help keep children healthy. However, staff do not provide children with their own clean bed linen at rest time and some children sleep in buggies which are not always kept clean. As a result, there may be a risk of cross-infection between children.

Staff wash their hands regularly and suitable hand washing routines are encouraged with the children throughout the day. Staff sometimes talk to children about the reasons they should wash their hands so they begin to learn the importance of good hygiene practices for themselves.

Most staff have up to date first aid certificates and some have specific training in managing anaphylactic shock. They know how to complete accident records and inform parents by phone if a child has an accident.

There are care plans for children who have medical conditions and staff will only administer medication with prior written permission. Parents are made aware of the setting's sickness policy and exclusion times. However, as there is no prior written permission from parents to seek emergency advice or treatment, staff may not manage accidents and illness to children in accordance with parents' wishes.

There are good procedures followed for preparing and serving food, with staff covering their hair, wearing aprons and following their basic food hygiene training to minimise any food related illnesses to children. A generally healthy and nutritious diet is provided at lunch time for children as the setting obtains the meals through the attached school kitchens which hold a National Healthy Schools status. As a result, children are well nourished. Staff take children's dietary needs into consideration and ensure the parents are aware of what is on offer via menus displayed. Breakfast is provided by the staff for children who arrive early in the day care or school breakfast club. This is generally sweetened cereals and toast and milk or water. Water is always available to children via water fountains so children learn to recognise and respond to their own thirst and not become dehydrated.

Staff offer worthwhile opportunities for children to develop their physical skills. The younger children have a fully enclosed garden to use daily to practise a variety of skills such as pedalling and steering bikes, collaborating movements together to rock a seesaw or learning to climb ladders on the slide. These activities help children develop their large muscle skills and coordination. Staff talk to children about feeling hot or cold and whether they need their coats on to go in the garden so they start to recognise how their bodies react to the temperature.

Children in the pre-school room also have their own fully enclosed outdoor area where a number of activities take place which staff often plan in advance. This includes using a parachute to learn to negotiate space, practising throwing and catching skills with a ball or using beams to learn to balance. In this way, children learn particular ways to control their bodies.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in two demountable classrooms and have use of a classroom in the school. Each demountable has its own well maintained set of toilets and kitchen areas and are organised effectively for the care of young children ensuring they have plenty of space to play and learn in safety and comfort. All the areas are bright, welcoming and furnished with sturdy child-sized furniture to help children become independent.

Staff take effective steps to make sure the premises are very safe by using socket covers and safety gates and there are safety guards on the doors to prevent accidents to children. Secure systems for the arrival and departure of children and regular risk assessments ensure any hazards to children are minimised to help keep them safe in the setting. The outside areas are designed cleverly with children in mind to offer safe and secure outdoor play spaces for children.

Well maintained fire safety equipment is available, fire notices are displayed prominently and there is a clearly written fire safety policy. In addition, children take part in premises evacuation drills so they begin to understand what they must do in an emergency. Children learn ways in which they can keep safe through circle time discussions and reminders of simple safety rules. The setting has welcomed visits from Fire Safety Officers and the local Police to talk about safety with them so children are effectively learning some ways in which they can keep themselves safe both inside and outside the setting.

The setting has an up to date safeguarding children policy which is consistent with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and includes what to do if any allegations are made against staff. There is a good system for recording any incidents and existing injuries to children and the registered person is highly aware of procedures to follow if there are concerns about children. Staff receive regular safeguarding training and are clear on their responsibilities and as a result, children are safeguarded in the setting.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff provide some opportunities for children aged between two and three years to access a suitable range of play equipment and activities, support them in their play and interact appropriately with them. For example, in matching games, or construction so children can get more out of the activity. The younger children enjoy creating and experimenting with their own symbols and marks in different ways such as using a magnetic marker pad or crayons. Staff sometimes use every day routines and number songs and rhymes to help children begin to understand some mathematical thinking and learn to count.

Staff keep to similar routines so children start to anticipate what comes next in their day giving them a sense of belonging. They attend for a variety of sessions and are joined by the older children for lunch time, which is a happy and sociable time for them. Sleep time is haphazard, some children watch television whilst others try to sleep on soft toys or mats and blankets are available. Children do not remove shoes or clothes whilst they rest. Senior staff agreed to make improvements to these arrangements to ensure children are able to relax properly and be undisturbed.

There are basic weekly plans that list the activities for the day but do not have links to the 'Birth to three matters' framework. In addition, staff carry out few observations on the progress

of children aged between two and three years and so have little information to establish what a child needs to do next. As a result, children may not progress steadily in their development because opportunities to plan effectively for their individual needs may be missed.

Children aged between four and eight years attend a breakfast and after school club where they have access to suitable activities such as table top games, books and comics. Their enjoyment comes through opportunities to be with their friends and take part in the things that interest them most, with some children bringing in things from home to show and share with their friends. When asked, children cannot not think of anything more they would like to be offered at the club and are happy to attend.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff in the pre-school room have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage which is evidenced by a variety of methods used to help children learn through practical and immediate experiences. For example, children might follow instructions from staff to test a range of theories, or work out things for themselves. As a result, children are able to learn well in different ways. Staff are highly aware that children learn at different rates and take this into account in the planning to help build on what children already know and meet their learning needs. Staff plan the curriculum very well to promote progress towards the early learning goals and the inclusion of all children with written plans covering all six areas of learning. These include clearly detailed information about the purpose of the activities and how children will be grouped, what resources are needed and how activities can be adapted to suit children who learn at different rates or who have particular needs. In this way, the teaching and learning is helping all children to progress towards the early learning goals.

Staff skilfully challenge children and expect the most from them, using regular observations and evaluations of the activities to highlight any areas where children can be moved on or the planned activity improved. Staff provide good opportunities for children to think and to demonstrate what they know and understand, for example, during circle time staff ask them if they have anything to tell to the group. As a result, children are becoming confident in speaking aloud to others. Staff use effective methods that help all children to learn effectively by providing a range of free play activities everyday as well as planned projects to target children's particular needs. For example, in a cutting activity there are different types of scissors, including left handed ones, to ensure all children can begin to cut successfully helping them to gain a sense of achievement.

Staff use assessments of children's progress effectively to guide their planning and teaching completing relevant planned and spontaneous observations on each area of learning to build up a picture of what children can do and need to do next. This is monitored by completing and dating the Stepping Stones Stepped booklets which helps identify and plan for any gaps in children's progress so children move steadily towards the early learning goals.

Children develop good personal, social, emotional skills as staff talk to children about activities that will be available at that session and assure children they can make choices which helps them to feel secure. The effective staff support helps children to feel at ease and develop a positive sense of their selves, for example, when helped to spread butter on their crackers at snack time. Children are interested, excited and motivated to learn and some of the more able children persist for longer periods on a particular activity. Staff use relevant teaching methods to help both boys and girls develop their communication, language and literacy well through

providing activities which will interest them in different ways. For example, a large sheet of paper spread right across a table with small cars and crayons encourages the children to draw roads, talk about what they might see and follow the roads with the cars. This helps the children with pencil control and encourages their language skills. Staff provide children with interesting opportunities to develop their mark-making, for example, writing letters to Father Christmas using pictures and words so children begin to understand the importance of writing. Staff use their recent Letters and Sounds training skilfully to help children with their listening skills and begin to sound out some of the letters of their names.

Staff encourage children's mathematical development throughout the sessions using both planned and incidental opportunities to interest them. For example, children accurately count how many people are present in circle time and how many cookies they make in a baking activity. In this way, children are learning about numbers as labels and for counting. In addition, they use number songs and rhymes effectively to work out simple calculation as well as through staff support in general play activities. Children learn about weighing when cooking and use size language such as big and small, more and less and are able to recognise and match shapes.

Staff provide children with imaginative activities to help them develop a knowledge and understanding of the world. For example, taking them on nature walks to collect different things to make a collage helps children begin to learn about weather and gain a simple understanding of the natural world. In contrast, children experiment with technology to find out what it can do for them, using a computer or programming a robot to move in a particular way, for example. Children look at change through baking activities and competently develop their finer physical skills to use tools in mixing ingredients together or to roll and cut out playdough. Children confidently use a range of mark-making tools and enjoy playing with small world toys which helps them develop their manipulative skills and hand-eye coordination.

Staff use a range of planned activities and free play to inspire children's imagination, for example, providing 'black sparkle' sand in a large tray with a space station, astronaut play figures and moon vehicles so children can act out some imagined scenarios. There are plenty of art resources and materials with staff showing children different techniques, for example, using different materials to make a collage or use marbling paint techniques. As a result, children learn to explore colour, texture shape and form in two or three dimensions.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Staff encourage children to talk about their homes and families, for example, comparing how they celebrate Christmas in different ways, helping them recognise that others may think differently. Staff encourage all children to play nicely with one another, sometimes talking about it in circle time. Furthermore, older children are asked to help younger ones in the setting so they learn the importance of helping others. There are planned activities so children can take part in different festivals during the year and as a result, begin to show appreciation of other beliefs.

A range of equipment and resources to reflect equality and diversity is available but not always well used. For example, apart from a welcome poster in different languages, there are few positive images seen to reflect non-stereotypical roles, racial, cultural and religious diversity and disability particularly in the room for younger children. Consequently, the setting does not always reflect our diverse society and children may not recognise that people have similarities and differences.

The setting recognises that some children may have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and welcomes all children. Some staff have been on a 'signing across the day' course and staff said they would put this into practice if they felt that children would benefit from its use. The special needs policy reflects the code of practice and there is a coordinator who devises individual play and learning plans for some children when their needs are identified. They work closely with other professionals in order to access the best care for children and to ensure children make progress.

Staff are able to manage a range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development so children learn to behave generally well. The setting has a calm and relaxed atmosphere and children follow instructions from staff to facilitate this, for example, they sit nicely in a circle and listen to the adult so they can hear what is going on. Staff use only positive methods to manage unwanted behaviour and children respond well to this. They receive praise and encouragement and are urged to take turns and be polite. As a result, children learn good manners and how to play in harmony with one another.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents of children receiving funding are provided with good quality verbal information about the setting and its provision, for example, there are intake meetings before the children commence the pre-school when they are three years. These meetings explain some aspects of the Foundation Stage so parents can get a flavour of how children will be expected to learn through the delivery of the early learning goals and children can be encouraged further at home. Although parents are given this information at the beginning of their child's time in the pre-school, there is less on-going information about what children are learning on a day-to-day basis through notice boards and displays explaining the links between activities and the early learning goals. As a result, parents may not recognise how their children learn through everyday activities and routines.

There are regular open evenings where parents are invited to speak to their child's key worker about their progress and parents are encouraged to share what they know about their children. For example, there is space on children's records and on the planning to record parents' comments about their children. In addition, home to school link books encourage parents to exchange written information with the staff, helping children to play and learn more effectively. Parents are also encouraged to be involved with their child's learning as staff send activity sheets and books home with children so they can share learning some learning activities with their parents at home.

There are settling in policies which staff use to help children to establish themselves in the setting and regular information sharing takes place before and after the sessions when parents and staff regularly speak. This ensures staff and parents are aware of any relevant factors relating to the children to help them care for them according to their needs. Parents share care information with staff through a home link diary and know what their children have been offered during the day for snack. This valuable information helps parents to address any concerns they may have about how their children are cared for.

There is a parents' handbook which details general information about how the setting operates and an open door policy encourages parents to come in and see how their child is settling. The complaint's procedure is up to date and contains the correct contact details for Ofsted so parents are armed with sufficient information to highlight any concerns they may have.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Leadership and management are good. The setting is led effectively by the nursery teacher who has a very good understanding of the Foundation Stage and also oversees the school's nursery class. She ensures the planning is consistent with the school nursery which helps with children's transition into school. The nursery teacher influences the way in which the early years curriculum is delivered by staff through her enthusiasm for teaching and learning. This helps to ensure the teaching of children is consistently good and takes account of current practices to help all children to learn effectively.

The setting assesses its own strengths and weaknesses thoroughly through ensuring any shortfalls are identified and addressed quickly. For example, the provision for children receiving funding has recently moved into its own refurbished classroom so children can learn in an environment which is wholly suited to their needs. There is a very close liaison with the school with continued developments which helps improve the care and education for all children.

The setting monitors and evaluates their provision for nursery education by making very good evaluations of the effectiveness of the Foundation Stage curriculum which helps staff identify improvements to be made. Children's progress records are closely monitored which helps staff to be consistent in the quality of information they gather. As a result, all children are making steady progress towards the early learning goals.

The setting shows commitment to improving the care and education for all its children by staff acting on any identified weaknesses and planning to take account of staff training and new initiatives so children's care is evolved using best practice.

The setting has recruitment and vetting procedures which are consistent with and carried out by the school. This includes checks through the Criminal Records Bureau and health declarations which helps ensure children are cared for by suitable people and therefore kept safe. The setting is organised and uses time, accommodation and resources to provide satisfactory care for children using core members of staff and additional staff from the school to be flexible. Children aged from two to four years are either in the daycare room or the pre-school room or at times may attend both. Older children attend the breakfast, after school and holiday club but are kept separate from the younger ones. Overall children's needs are met.

Records policies and procedures are kept in a satisfactory manner and the operational plan is organised and contains plenty of information about the different aspects of the setting as well as the school and nursery. Consequently, parents are aware of how the setting operates and can use this information to help influence the care their children receive.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was asked to update its policies and procedures relating to recording staff, the lost child policy, emergency treatment, child protection and the complaints procedure.

Most of policies and procedures have been updated which has improved the consistency of care for children. However, there is still no written permission to seek emergency treatment so this remains a recommendation to ensure parents wishes are met and children are cared for properly if they are ill or have an accident.

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 satisfactory. 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):

- minimise the risk of cross-infection to children by ensuring equipment and resources are kept clean and that children do not share
- request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment
- observe and record what children under three years do and use the observations to plan the next steps for the children's play, learning and development
- use the available resources which reflect diversity such as books dolls and role play equipment and display positive images and objects to reflect non-stereotypical roles, racial cultural and religious diversity and disability.

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):

- increase opportunities for parents to gain a greater understanding of what children are learning more regularly in relation to the early learning goals.

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