

Bright Beginnings

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY270365
Inspection date	15 February 2008
Inspector	Lynn Clements / Ann Marie Cozzi
Setting Address	North West Kent College, Oakfield Lane, Dartford, Kent, DA1 2JT
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Registered person	The Governing Body of North West Kent College
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Bright Beginnings Day Nursery opened in 2003. It operates from a purpose built property, on the Dartford Campus of North West Kent College. The setting also operates an out of school and holiday club.

The nursery operates throughout the year and serves the local area. A maximum of 66 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 58 children on roll of these 12 children are in receipt of early education funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a number of children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs a total of 13 members of staff and 12 members of staff hold relevant early years qualifications.

The setting receives support through local authority and additional support is provided by the college.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean and welcoming environment. They are beginning to learn about the importance of hygiene through some of the routines which are in place. This includes, the regular cleaning of tables before and after meal times. Children are encouraged to wash their hands at relevant times which helps to protect them from infections or harmful bacteria. However, the use of a communal towel for children in the baby room and accessible toilet cleaning brushes does not fully protect children from the risk of cross-contamination.

Children needing emergency medical treatment in the event of an accident are assured of benefiting from swift and appropriate help. This is due to staff knowledge of first aid. However, there are weaknesses in the current recording and monitoring of accidents, such as the omission of the signature of the staff member who dealt with the incident and the regular reviewing of accident records to identify any trends or recurring causes of injuries.

Children are able to eat at their own pace during meal times. This helps to contribute to their enjoyment of the nutritious meals and snacks that are prepared for them, such as homemade chicken pie and vegetarian alternatives. Staff ensure that children receive regular drinks.

Children participate in some daily physical exercise during outdoor play. This contributes towards enhancing their physical development, for example, using large play apparatus and wheeled toys which provides climbing, balancing and manoeuvring opportunities. Children also engage in activities such as play dough, sand play and drawing which enable them to further use and develop their skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

On the whole children are cared for in suitable premises. They cannot leave the building unseen, as the main doors are locked and can only be opened from the inside. However, the current risk assessment does not include all areas accessed by children, for example, the outdoor play area. As a consequence, staff are not fully assured that all areas are safe and secure and that children are fully protected from harm. The premises are bright and colourful and the setting is kept at a comfortable temperature. Adequate ventilation ensures the circulation of fresh air.

Children have sufficient and suitable furniture for their needs. There is plenty of clear floor space which enables them to move freely. Resources are at low level wherever possible and children are independent in selecting what they want to play with. They use equipment which is well maintained, safe and suitable for its purpose.

The protection of children is recognised by the setting as being very important and children are safeguarded. This is because all staff are vetted and are aware of what to do in the event they suspect a child is being abused. There is a procedure in place for staff to follow should they be concerned about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are familiar with the routines in place to meet their needs. They approach staff for support and sometimes cuddles. They are able to express their needs or concerns and as a result, they feel secure and are at times able to initiate their own play and extend their learning, making choices about their play. Children have opportunities to experiment and explore various materials and textures as, for example, babies play with jelly using all of their senses; they have fun as they handle, taste and smell it. In the toddler room children enjoy the experience of mixing and handling all the different ingredients as they make Valentine biscuits. They show that they are confident communicators and enjoy engaging with and talking to their peers whilst listening to a story in the book corner and when undertaking group activities. They have fun as they run, jump and climb during outdoor play. Children have opportunities to learn about the local community through regular walks within the college campus and during visits from various emergency services. The planning, observation and evaluation of children's progress is being reviewed to ensure that the progress they are making in the setting can be clearly followed.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Overall, staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and how young children learn through play. On the whole, activities are organised well to promote children's independence and decision-making skills. However, opportunities for them to build on existing self-help skills, for example pouring their own drinks and helping to prepare fruit for their snack, are limited. Staff support children in their play and learning. They are interested in what they say and do, taking time to listen and respond positively to their suggestions and ideas. Children are confident in their relationships with each other and staff as they move freely around the nursery room.

Key-worker staff make regular observations of children which are recorded in assessment records. However, this information is currently not used clearly to plot progress against the stepping stones or to inform future planning. This impacts on the effectiveness of the activities and play opportunities offered, as they are not sufficiently adapted to ensure that all children are challenged appropriately. Information about children's educational development within the nursery is actively shared with parents and carers through daily verbal feedback and visits to the setting where parents and key workers share records together. Staff also take time to prepare activities which children can enjoy at home with their parents. Children are making sound progress towards the early learning goals.

Children enjoy what they do and the majority are able to sustain interest. They complete puzzles or work together to organise and build using blocks and shapes. Children's self-esteem and confidence increase as they share stories from home and proudly seek out others to show them their finished Valentine cards, which they announce they have made for the people in their lives who they love. Children form good relationships with each other and members of staff, as they greet each other on arrival and make room at activities. They learn to share and care for each other.

Children have access to sufficient equipment and resources stored at their level. They become confident communicators seeking out adults to share their ideas. Children are beginning to use writing for a purpose as they write their own greetings in cards or put their own names on their art work. They explore sounds and letters, using simple phonics which help them to develop

skills for later learning. Children join in large group story time. They enjoy using the pictures in the books as clues to the text or joining in repeated refrains during group story times.

Children observe change, noticing what the weather is like or seeing how their plants have grown in their garden. They begin to make sense of the world around them as they explore and investigate information technology. They use the computer and mouse with increasing control, negotiating programmes which help them to consolidate previous learning.

Children use positional language as they play, talking about sitting opposite or next to others. They have some opportunities to build on their calculation skills as they join in simple number rhymes and songs. Children explore repeating patterns as they construct with multicoloured bricks. They enjoy sorting by colour, shape and size. Children explore capacity and quantity as they fill different sized containers with sand.

Children engage in physical activities which help them to develop their confidence and skill. They move around safely, demonstrating a developing spatial awareness as they avoid obstacles or each other. Children develop their fine motor skills as they use single-handed tools and utensils with increasing competence. They are beginning to learn about the importance of physical exercise and how it can help them to stay fit and healthy. Children express their individual creativity through a satisfactory range of craft activities. For example, they freely paint and create pictures. They enjoy experimenting with different textures as they manipulate play dough or splash in water. Children join in role play games, making pretend meals of chicken and strawberries for the staff to enjoy.

Staff work as a team to support learning. They use plenty of praise and encouragement which enables children to develop their confidence and try things out, without fear of failure.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Resources reflecting positive images form a part of children's play and learning experiences. This assists in promoting an appreciation of diversity and helps children to value each other's similarities and differences. There is a member of staff who has completed the relevant training to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are sound strategies in place to support children and their families.

On the whole, children respond well to staff instructions to tidy up. This is in part due to the positive interaction they receive, which is in line with their level of maturity and understanding. For example, when they successfully spoon flour and are praised during a cooking activity they express their delight at the recognition they receive for their achievement. With staff support they are beginning to develop their understanding about emotions, such as being kind or taking turns and sharing with others. For example, a member of staff discusses the use of the computer with two children, she helps them to understand about sharing, as a result, the children happily co-operate with each other and take turns.

Parents and carers receive verbal feedback which is given each day at drop off and pick up times. Notice boards display information about the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Parents and carers receive regular newsletters which provide information on events as well as procedures, such as the security of the outdoor area. The admission pack which is provided for all parents and carers contains information regarding some of the group's policies. However, information available regarding the provision of systems in place to support the development of children

under three years is developing. Parents share information prior to placement regarding children's individual care needs. This helps to promote continuity of care with regard to managing any individual medical or dietary needs.

Partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of early education funding is satisfactory. Parents and carers have access to the planning which is displayed in the nursery room. However, general information about the Foundation Stage and the six early learning goals is limited. Children's records of assessment are maintained by key workers and shared with their parents. In addition, staff take daily opportunities to provide parents and carers with feedback, helping them to share in their children's achievements and learning experiences in the nursery. Information from parents is used by the key workers to help plan activities which the children are interested in exploring.

Children share and help each other. They encourage others to join in their games and make room for them at activities. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from a staff team who have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities. They work closely together to ensure a smooth delivery of routines and on the whole provide a safe and secure environment. Staff have a basic knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and are yet to implement it effectively within the setting. Staff are well deployed which means that children are appropriately supervised and supported. The premises are suitably organised for children to play, eat and rest comfortably.

The setting has in place most of the required legal documents relating to the National Standards, although a few are yet to be updated to include the required information. Although there is a registration system for children and staff it is currently being reviewed to ensure that hours of attendance are always recorded. There is a robust system in place with regard to the recruitment of staff. Overall, children's needs are met.

Leadership and management of early education is satisfactory. The setting is currently run by the two deputies. The provider is seeking to appoint a new manager in the near future. Support is sought from the local authority and there is an area manager who works for the nursery chain, who makes regular visits to the nursery to support the acting management team. Importance is placed on continuing professional development. The deployment of staff is appropriate to meet the needs of the children. The acting manager takes time to monitor practice and ensure that staff provide children with adequate support and play opportunities, which enable them to make progress within the Foundation Stage.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the provider has improved some outcomes for children. Resources are now in place, which promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, to form an integral part of the children's play opportunities. This assists in increasing children's knowledge and understanding about the wider world. Whilst some systems have been implemented to improve open communications with parents and carers, this remains an area for further development and has been taken forward at this inspection.

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):

- develop further steps to prevent the spread of infection; this refers to food safety and hygiene, hand drying methods and children's access to toilet cleaning brushes
- develop further risk assessments of the premises and on outings to promote safety and ensure proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents
- review the quality of observations, planning and assessments in order to follow clearly the progress children make, by using an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- ensure all policies, procedures and records for the safe management of the setting are maintained and reviewed; this refers to the recording of accidents, reviewing of accidents, hours of attendance, parent and carer information and information about the learning opportunities offered (this also applies to nursery education).

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):

- develop the current systems of assessment to ensure that they are clearly based on the Foundation Stage stepping stones; use the information about what children know and can do to inform future planning
- increase opportunities in personal social and emotional development enabling children to build on their existing self-help skills.

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