

Buffer Bear at Castle Hill

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY302223
Inspection date	21 April 2008
Inspector	Rebecca Hurst
Setting Address	Castle Hill Primary School, Dunley Drive, New Addington, Croydon, Surrey, CR0 0RJ
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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 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?

Buffer Bear at Castle Hill is a neighbourhood nursery and has been operating since May 2005. The aim of the nursery is to work closely with local advice and support groups for children and families. The nursery is situated in a purpose-built building with a secure outdoor area in the grounds of Castle Hill Primary School in New Addington, which is a suburb of the London Borough of Croydon.

The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 until 18:00 throughout the year, only closing for bank holidays and staff training days. The nursery offers full day care for children aged three months to six years. Currently 70 children are on roll, 10 places are held for social services and the rest of the places are for other families expressing an interest. The children's hours of attendance vary to suit the needs of each child.

There are currently some children attending who have identified special educational needs. Several children who speak English as an additional language attend. Children are grouped, according to age, into four separate groups. There are 28 children who receive funding for nursery education.

The nursery currently has 16 members of staff. Additional/cover staff are used from the nursery's own bank of supply staff as and when needed. Twelve staff hold early year qualifications and three are working towards early years qualifications. The nursery has support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff follow hygiene procedures which protect children's health and welfare. Children are protected from cross-infection, as they have facilities to wash their hands inside the rooms. They receive a healthy balanced diet that meets their special dietary and religious requirements. As a result children thrive.

Children's acquisition of independence skills is hindered, as they do not always serve themselves their meals or drinks. Children stay hydrated during the day as staff provide fresh drinking water. However, older children's bottles have blurred labels, which means children can drink from the wrong bottle.

Children have daily opportunities to enjoy physical play in the outside areas. Children have access to a range of resources that help to promote their physical development. All medication forms are signed by staff and parents, which helps to ensure that children receive the correct medication and dosage.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff have a sound understanding of child protection and safeguarding children procedures, which contributes to the safety of the children. Children are welcomed into a bright and airy child-orientated centre. Children have their work displayed around the setting at a level they can access. Children's self-esteem is further nurtured as staff also display photos of the children participating in activities around the setting. Children have independent access to an appropriate range of resources.

Parents complete permission slips for their children to use the facilities in the nearby school. Staff complete basic risk assessments on all activities. However, the risk assessments do not give staff a lot of information regarding measures to take to keep children and staff safe. Staff carry out regular fire drills, but these have not been recorded since November 2007. This does not allow for them to be evaluated so that changes can be made if necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff help children settle into the routine of the nursery. Children have access to a range of resources and activities, for example, sensory activities and resources which promote their physical and cognitive development. Staff plan the weekly activities using the Birth to three matters framework. Although staff write detailed observations on the children, they do not always evaluate their progress and fill in the next steps. As a result, planning does not always reflect the progress children are making. Children receive support from the staff through assurance and cuddles. This helps to build their self-esteem.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making satisfactory progress towards the stepping stones. Staff prepare plans which take into account children's different abilities. However, children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are not included in the planning, which limits the progress they can make towards the targets on their individual education plans. Children's starting points are not clearly defined in their assessment files, which restricts the staff's knowledge of what children can and can not achieve when they start in the room.

Children enjoy a sufficient range of activities and resources linked to the Foundation Stage. Opportunities are missed to extend children's learning during free play, as staff do not move around activities to interact with the children. Staff explain the importance of healthy eating and that vegetables make you grow big and strong. Children enjoy growing vegetables and plants in their garden. They learn that vegetables are grown from a seed and that they need care to make them grow. Children's access to information technology resources is limited and, as a result, they are not making sufficient progress in this area. Children concentrate for long periods in the art and craft area, where they are able to use their imagination to create artwork. Consequently, children flourish in this area.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children have access to a sufficient range of resources that reflect diversity and learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children learn about different cultures and festivals at a level they can understand, as a result they are learning about the world around us. Staff are aware of children attending the setting that have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff work with outside agencies, which allows for consistent care of the children. However, staff wait for reports to arrive from outside agencies before they write individual education plans for the children. This hinders the progress the children make towards their targets as staff wait to work with them. All staff have an awareness of behaviour management, and the care the children receive in relation to this is consistent.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents receive information at a level they can understand. Staff write developmental reports every six months, and when the children move rooms. Children benefit from relationships between the staff and their parents. Parents are kept informed about changes to the setting through newsletters and information boards around the setting. Staff invite parents into the setting to talk with the children about their cultures and religions.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Overall the setting meets the needs of the range of children in its care. The setting's policies and procedures are regularly updated by staff at the setting's head office. This ensures they are in line with current legislation. However, accident and incident forms are not always signed by parents. As a result, it is not clear if parents have been told about the accident. All staff have appropriate checks carried out when they start employment. Staff ensure non-vetted people are not left alone with the children, which keeps children safe from harm. All registers are maintained to show arrival and departure times of both staff and children.

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. Staff have a clear appraisal system in place, with supervisions being carried out every six weeks. This ensures the manager can

assess what training staff need to develop their knowledge of childcare. Staff receive in-house training as well as training with the local authority. Staff meet regularly to discuss any changes in legislation and policies and procedures. This ensures staff are kept up-to-date with any changes to working practices. The manager monitors the education programme in the nursery, but inconsistencies in the children's observations and planning have not been picked up. This shows that monitoring practices are not fully effective.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the provider was asked to carry out seven recommendations. The first recommendation was to improve the range and depth of the resources available throughout the nursery to encourage and stimulate the children's play and development both indoors and outdoors. The staff plan for both inside and out and they have a good range of resources. The second recommendation was to review and implement health and safety work practices to ensure that regular risk assessments are undertaken by staff in each room. Staff carry out regular risk assessments for the whole of the setting. The third and fourth recommendations were: to ensure suitable activities and experiences are planned to meet children's developmental needs; to ensure that regular evaluation within the Birth to three matters framework identifies what children's next steps are; and to improve the current system for using observations to identify the next steps for children's learning and development, and use them as an aid to planning for children's individual needs. These are being carried out inconsistently in the rooms. The fifth and sixth recommendations were to increase children's awareness of phonic sounds, organise resources so children can access these easily and independently, and to ensure that children can access a range of mathematical equipment independently. Children are able to access an appropriate range of resources independently and regularly read stories with the staff. The seventh recommendation was to ensure that there are effective systems to monitor and evaluate the education and care that is on offer. This is not being carried out effectively as weaknesses are present in the planning and written assessments of the children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted has received one complaint relating to National Standard 2: Organisation, National Standard 6: Safety, National Standard 7: Health, and National Standard 12: Working in partnership with parents and carers. Concerns were raised that staff may not have been deployed effectively; about the supervision and safety of children; that first aid may not have been administered to a child following an injury; and that the provider may not have responded to a parent's concerns. Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit to the premises, and, as a result of the subsequent investigation, two actions were set. The provider was given one action under National Standard 6: Safety and one action under National Standard 14: Documentation. A satisfactory response to the actions was received from the provider. No further action was taken and the provider remained qualified for registration at the time the investigation was closed.

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 assessments consistently contain next steps and that observations are evaluated (also applies to nursery education)
- devise ways to ensure all children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have written individual education plans
- ensure accident and incident forms are consistently signed by parents

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 children's independence skills during meal times (also applies to care)
- improve resources for information technology
- define children's starting points in their assessment files

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