

Little Bears Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY357840
Inspection date	15 April 2008
Inspector	Linda Cook
Setting Address	Roseberry Cp School, Roseberry Crescent, Great Ayton, MIDDLESBROUGH, Cleveland, TS9 6EP
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Registered person	Little Bears Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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?

Little Bears Pre-school was registered in 2001 but transferred to current premises in 2007. It operates from a self contained mobile classroom on the grounds of Roseberry Primary School in Great Ayton. It is registered for 20 children aged from two to under five years. There is access to outside play adjacent to the pre-school. There are currently 29 children on roll who attend for a variety of sessions and days. Of these there are 18 in receipt of nursery education funding. The pre-school is open from Monday to Friday 9:00 to 11:30 and 12:30 to 15:00 in term time only.

The pre-school supports children with additional educational needs. There are five staff who work directly with the children. Of these four have relevant childcare qualifications. The pre-school is a member of Playgroup Network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children thrive because staff follow appropriate procedures and practices which meet children's physical, nutritional and health needs. Staff help children gain a good understanding of hygiene and why good hygiene routines are important. The children show a good understanding of why they need to wash their hands before snack as they explain that germs would get in their tummy and make them ill. Arrangements for the recording of accidents, the administering of medication and preventing cross infection meet requirements and protect children.

Children enjoy snacks which include healthy options, such as a variety of fruit and a choice of milk or water to drink. They learn about healthy living as they discuss healthy choices and complete associated activities. The children know that fruit is good for them and is more healthy than sweets and chocolate. Staff find out from parents about children's dietary requirements and any specific needs are catered for.

Children develop a positive attitude to being active. They have regular opportunities to enjoy physical activities both indoors and in the outdoor play area when ever weather allows. Children move with increasing control and demonstrate spatial awareness as they find a clear space to complete exercises and action rhymes to a children's exercise tape. They demonstrate an awareness of the effects of exercise on the body as they go to find a drink and declare dancing makes you thirsty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean, welcoming environment, which has good evidence of their play and activity. Space is effectively organised into different areas of play and this enables children to move around freely and safely. Children independently access toys and resources which staff ensure are available to them at their height. All ages of children enjoy playing with a good range of well maintained toys and play equipment, which interest the children and provide sufficient challenge for them.

Children are kept safe as there is an appropriate range of safety measures in place. This includes, fire prevention equipment, a fully secure outdoor play area and the outside door is locked when the session is in progress. Risk assessments are completed covering all aspects of the provision and regular safety checks to keep children free from harm. Children build a good awareness of safety through practising emergency evacuations regularly and develop a good understanding about safety in the setting through the clear explanations given by staff, for example, as they explain it is not appropriate to swing toys about or they will hit somebody and hurt them.

Children are protected from possible abuse or neglect. Staff are aware of the types of abuse and the signs to look for and two staff have attended training on child protection. They have a sound understanding of the procedure to follow should they have concerns and local authority guidelines are kept on file for reference.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children generally settle well at the pre-school due to the effective implementation of the settling-in policy and the clear focus on this by the caring staff. Children who find this more difficult are reassured and well supported. Children are confident when they arrive and most separate well from parents and carers. They find their name card and put it on the board before they eagerly seek out friends and their chosen activity. They develop their independence to a good level as they operate independently in the environment. They spend their time purposefully and remain motivated, interested and involved throughout the whole session. The use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and its incorporation in the planning process ensures young children enjoy a wide range of activities which enable them to build on what they know and can do.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress because staff have a suitable understanding of their needs and provide an interesting range of planned activities and experiences based on the six areas of learning. Key staff plan together and ensure all staff are able to contribute to the planning process. Children's starting points are established through initial assessments which parents are involved in. Because this is a small group the staff know the children well and instinctively use this information to inform future planning. However, the current systems for planning and assessment do not formally identify the individual children's next steps in learning.

The presentation of resources and the individual areas of play generally encourage children's participation and promote choices. However, the limited range of craft resources means children have less opportunities to be spontaneously creative using a variety of mediums, and the Early Years curriculum is not fully reflected in the outdoor learning environment. Effective staff interaction encourages children to persist at some activities and the staff's appropriate questioning supports children to achieve in most areas.

Children are developing good communication skills, they are confident in speaking to others and eager to share their experiences with the staff. They participate in group activities and listen to others. They demonstrate emergent writing skills; they are encouraged to write their name on their work and all children form recognisable letters. They begin to recognise their name in print as part of the arrangements for registration and snack time. They are able to link letter sounds and most children correctly sound the letters of their names. Children have access to a range of books; they handle them well turning pages appropriately and following print from left to right. They enjoy group story time and are eager to join in the telling of their favourite stories. They are able to identify rhyming words and successfully pick out those in the story.

Most children count confidently to five with more-able children counting beyond. They use mathematical language with understanding as they talk about things being bigger and smaller, longer and shorter. They explore capacity in the water tray as they correctly talk about containers being full or empty. However, there are less opportunities in the daily routines to complete simple problem exercises and develop their understanding of more and less.

Children have opportunities to increase their knowledge of the world about them through activities and topics planned by staff. They talk about the weather, monitor the seasons and

how animals and plants grow. They develop a clear sense of time as they discuss what they have been doing at home or where they have been on holiday which they then plot on a map.

Children design structures confidently using a variety of commercial resources and junk modelling materials. They are developing their small manipulative skills as they confidently use scissors, pencils and glue sticks. They can recognise and name many colours and use their imagination well in role play, for example, as they play in the home corner and dress up as doctors and nurses. Children confidently join in with familiar nursery and action rhymes and enjoy following a children's exercise tape.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed by staff who know the children well and good relationships are established helping the children to develop a sense of security and a feeling of belonging. They begin to show an acceptance of others as they learn about the wider world through the planned topics which includes celebrating festivals from their own culture and that of others. For example, the children celebrated the Chinese New Year. They learn about their own community on local trips out, when they visit the local library for story time. Older children visit the local schools, with the pre-school staff, in the term before they leave, helping them to prepare for their next steps in life. Children with additional educational needs and disabilities are welcome. Policies and procedures are in place to ensure they receive appropriate support. There is a dedicated member of staff who has attended training and works with other professionals and parents to ensure the child's needs are recognised and met appropriately.

Children are well behaved and are learning to share and take turns with appropriate support from staff. They listen and carry out simple instructions well, for example, they willingly help to tidy up when asked. They develop a positive self esteem as they receive constant praise and encouragement from staff who are attentive to their needs. As a result children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. The parents of new starters receive written information in the form of a prospectus and welcome pack and they are invited to make pre-start visits with their child. Registration forms are completed by parents to ensure each child's individual needs are known and accommodated. Parents complete a booklet about the child which forms part of their initial assessment. Activity plans are displayed and staff make suggestions on how children's learning can be continued at home and linked to the planned topics. Information is displayed on the Early Years curriculum. Verbal information is exchanged at delivery and collection ensuring parents are informed of their children's progress. Children's assessment files are kept on the premises which parents are welcome to access at any time on request. When the children leave pre-school parents receive their assessment files, a profile map and a written report.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Staff organise their time so that children receive enough support and attention to help them make progress and enjoy their time in the pre-school. They concentrate their energies on helping children have a good time and build secure relationships with them.

Current recruitment procedures ensure children are cared for by staff who are attentive to the needs of the children, are suitably qualified and appropriately vetted. All requirements for documentation and record keeping are in place and meet requirements of the National Standards. These are stored in a locked filing cabinet to maintain confidentiality, however, they are not organised well and staff sometimes have difficulty finding some documentation.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The joint owners of the pre-school are committed and work well together as a team; they attend regular training to update their knowledge and skills and support staff in attending on-going training. All staff have high regard for the well being of the children and ensure policies and procedures work well in practice. The owners have a positive approach to progression, however, there is not an effective self evaluation process in place or a formal system of staff appraisals to monitor the quality of care and education provided.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 complaint 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):

- increase children's access to a range of resources to promote choices and to encourage individual creativity (also applies to nursery education)
- continue to develop outside play opportunities to ensure children have daily access to an outdoor learning environment which reflects the Early Years Curriculum (also applies to nursery education)
- develop a system of self assessment to monitor the effectiveness of the care and education provided (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):

- strengthen the links between planning and assessment to clearly show how individual children's next steps are planned for
- provide opportunities for children to complete simple problem solving exercises in fun and practical ways.

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