

Brightlands Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	101614
Inspection date	16 May 2008
Inspector	Angela Cole
Setting Address	107 St. Georges Road, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL50 3ED
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Registered person	Alison May Cupper
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?

Brightlands Day Nursery opened in March 1997. It is privately owned and operates from the basement of a town house. The nursery is situated close to the town centre of Cheltenham in Gloucestershire. The premises include four activity rooms, a sleep room, a kitchen and facilities for children and staff. There is also an enclosed, outside play area and a semi-circular drive for delivering and collecting children. A maximum of 32 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open all year round, excluding the Christmas week, from Monday to Friday between 08.00 and 18.00.

There are currently 46 children, aged from birth to under five years, on roll. Of these, 17 children receive funding for early education. Children mainly come from within the local community and attend for a variety of sessions. The staff have experience of supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children learning English as an additional language.

The owner-manager employs eight full-time and three part-time members of staff to work with the children. Of these, one has qualified teacher status and eight hold an appropriate early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Babies and children have daily access to the garden for exercise and fresh air and spend considerable time outside, weather permitting. They move with increasing freedom to climb and use rockers and follow simple sequences of movement as they march and clap. They manoeuvre to avoid each other when riding wheeled vehicles and are able to stop appropriately during action songs. Children periodically go on walks, for example, to the park, and sometimes have opportunities to build with larger materials and control small apparatus, including hoops and balls. They use a satisfactory variety of tools with increasing skill as, for example, they draw, use trowels to dig, and cut out shapes.

Children begin to show an understanding of suitable practice with regard to their health and, from a young age, usually persist to wash their hands after toileting. They play in a regularly cleaned environment, but do not help by coming in from the garden wearing outdoor footwear. In the event of children becoming unwell or injuring themselves, staff know how to offer appropriate care, though the accident record is not always signed by the parent to ensure continuity of children's care.

Younger children are regularly offered drinking water from named cups and milk is provided for all at regular meal times. Their individual dietary needs are appropriately met as these are noted and staff check cooking ingredients. The children ask the names of the foods they are eating and enjoy the balanced variety of home-made meals offered. These include different vegetables and fruits, such as strawberries and melon.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in premises where there is an ongoing programme of maintenance and temperature control to ensure their safety and comfort. They feel at home with named pegs and drawers in the entrance and use of familiar base rooms. They have space to experience different play opportunities as staff take groups to different areas indoors and outdoors. Children play with a satisfactory range of toys and equipment that is set out for them. They learn where items are kept in some low-level, labelled storage, though they do not generally access this for themselves. Babies enjoy playing with some natural and household resources when staff make these available. Most toys are suitable for the age and stage of development of the children, though a toddler accessed small items during the inspection until these were removed by a senior member of staff.

The management completes risk assessments for the premises and outings. Staff carry out daily, informal checks to help identify hazards, most of which have been addressed to reduce the danger to children. For example, adults ensure the premises are secure and supervise children closely as they move outdoors down the steps. Children begin to learn to keep themselves safe as they are involved in regular fire practices and know why they must take care on wet decking.

The staff's sound understanding of child protection and of local procedures contribute to safeguarding the children's welfare. All are included in a rolling programme of training in first aid and child protection and are aware of how to put suitable procedures into practice. This

knowledge is underpinned by comprehensive policies in line with the local child protection procedures to support them to take appropriate action in the event of any concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time in the nursery and are happy. They benefit from warm interaction with the small number of staff and helping adults. The under threes are effectively supported as staff have a general understanding of child development to plan suitable activities. Key workers observe their children and complete assessments under the Birth to three matters framework to be informally aware of their future needs. Children of all ages become involved in a range of activities that suitably supports their language, mathematical thinking, imagination and creativity. The babies are stimulated and respond to continuous conversation about their activities, including looking at books and playing with sensory toys, such as shakers. Toddlers explore the garden and begin to use their imagination as they chalk over adult-drawn pictures, play with dolls and investigate dressing-up items including bags. The two-year-olds are eager to play with activities set out, including 'sailing' in a 'boat'. They are happy to respond in group activities, including song times with a wide range of staff-made prompts. They persist with one-to-one support at adult-initiated activities, such as dough play and table games to develop their memory and understanding of sequencing. They begin to gain a sense of the world around them as they explore the garden, learn about eggs and go on walks in the neighbourhood to the park and train station.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make steady progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning in relation to their starting points as staff gain knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Planning covers all areas of learning and, over time, includes a suitable range of activities for children. However, children do not develop independence or concentration as they do not have free access to areas such as the art room, resources are prepared for them, and activities are regularly interrupted by changes in routine. Children show pride in their achievements and are encouraged to display their own work. They have meaningful opportunities to explore their own emotions, such as excitement and apprehension as they seek and carry mini-beasts in the garden.

Systems to observe and assess children's progress are used informally by adults to question children at appropriate levels and to identify targets for individuals over the next few weeks. As a result, staff are aware of children's general levels of communication and literacy. They share appropriate books for reference materials and stories, though children's thinking is not extended by recalling shared stories. From a young age, children learn to recognise letters in their own and others' names, though adults do not routinely challenge them to name their own work or to use writing for their own purposes. Children enjoy thinking about numbers in conversations with staff, for example, as they read number stories or say an adult is 63 years old. They spontaneously add one and take one away as others arrive and in songs such as 'Ten in a bed'. They confidently use some language to describe shape, space and measure, for example, to say who is the 'tallest'.

Children enjoy opportunities and outings planned to extend their understanding of the world. For example, they welcome visitors, including a dentist, and make occasional visits to a supermarket and disused railway. Small groups have fun as they role play 'We're going on a bear hunt' with real mud and long grass. Children handle familiar natural materials and examine

some objects, such as fruits for kebabs. They are aware of everyday technology and use a computer to support their learning. They gain a satisfactory sense of time through routines and group topic work. They sing 'Happy Birthday' to staff and each other, and begin to learn about different festivals, including Diwali. Children have some opportunities to be creative, for example, to draw freely or colour in pre-drawn outlines. They do not independently access a wide range of indoor or outdoor media to respond in their own ways, for example, through art, craft, music or role play. They enjoy a variety of music throughout the week, for example, singing and moving to music as mini-beasts.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children settle well in the nursery so they gain self-esteem. They are cared for in groups with staff whom they know well so their care and developmental needs are effectively met. Children are supported as individuals in close liaison with their parents and other agencies, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. They make some decisions about their play and relate confidently to attentive staff. Everyday tasks, such as tidying, cleaning tables and helping to clear away after meals, give children a sense of responsibility. They are polite in response to the expectations of staff, who consistently support their behaviour through calm distraction and warm encouragement and praise.

From an early age, children become aware of other children and their needs as they meet at different times of the day. Babies develop by watching others playing outside and older children are careful of younger ones as they play more boisterous games. Children learn to share and take turns as they work alongside each other, increasingly join in group activities or develop imaginative play. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is good. Families are provided with clear information about the nursery and curriculum so they are suitably informed about their child's care and education. Parents are well informed about their children's progress in daily conversation, and through diary sheets for the younger ones, so they may support them at home. Staff listen carefully as parents share what they know about their children so they are supported effectively. Systems to include parents' comments in children's assessment to support learning are currently being developed. Families speak highly of the staff and are keen to recommend the nursery to others.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children are cared for by known teams of staff, who are, overall, well qualified and experienced. Recently appointed senior staff are settling into the nursery and robust procedures are in place for appointing new adults and for checking their ongoing suitability to work with children. The required adult-child ratios are always well met so that children feel secure and confident. The accommodation and resources are satisfactorily arranged to support the children's care and learning.

Systems are in place so most records and procedures that contribute to the children's care and well-being are maintained and implemented. These include registration documents that clearly show the staff and children's hours of attendance and a log for any complaint that is set up to include the necessary information. Children's details are stored securely on the premises and staff are aware of how to maintain confidentiality so parents are confident to share any concern.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The nursery's aims are shared with parents and by staff to foster a caring ethos. The management provides a positive approach to staff development through training and by delegating responsibilities. The setting has a sound ability to assess its own strengths and weaknesses. For example, the management is preparing to put radical development plans in place with regard to the organisation of the accommodation and resources. Though no formal system is in place to monitor the overall quality of education, there is regular evaluation of activities and children's responses. The nursery is committed to promoting an inclusive environment in which every child matters.

Improvements since the last inspection

The previous care inspection required the nursery to extend the child protection statement. This now includes procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or a volunteer. This inspection also recommended that the setting developed its lost child policy and arrangements for registration. The policy document now includes the procedures to be taken should a child become lost whilst attending the nursery and staff make sure that the registration arrangements clearly record when children are present. These improvements have suitably developed the arrangements for children's safety.

The last education inspection required the nursery to improve curriculum planning and organisation of the environment and resources. These have both been considered to some extent. Pre-school plans address all areas of learning within the Foundation Stage through activities that are relevant to children's learning needs and which offer enjoyable experiences. The organisation of the environment has been partially addressed by placing some base room resources at the children's level and extending access to the garden. However, children are not challenged to become independent learners to devise in-depth activities of their own choice, responding in their own ways. They do not yet have free access to different areas of the accommodation with a rich variety of, for example, art, craft or outdoor resources to express their own play ideas. This remains an area for development.

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 the 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 the written record of children's accidents is signed by the parent
- ensure that all resources are safe and suitable for the children's age and stage of development.

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):

- consider the routine and resources to maximise children's opportunities to become independent learners and develop challenges to extend children's pre-reading skills and writing for their own purpose
- implement a system for monitoring the effectiveness of the delivery of the nursery education curriculum.

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