

The Blackheath Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY361480
Inspection date	03 July 2008
Inspector	Teresa Evelina Lucas
Setting Address	The Rectory Field, Charlton Road, Blackheath, London, SE3 8SR
Telephone number	020 8305 2526
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Registered person	Bridge Lane Nursery 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 good. 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?

Blackheath Day Nursery is a well established nursery, located in Blackheath in the London Borough of Greenwich. The current provider has been registered since 2007. The nursery is one of four provisions run by Bridge Lane Tutorials Ltd. It is located in the club house of a sports ground close to the Blackheath Standard and is open all year round, Monday to Friday, from 08:00 to 18:00. Children have access to several base rooms and a large outdoor play area. 79 children under five years may attend at any one time. There are currently 91 children on roll, 43 of whom receive funding for nursery education. Children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties and children who speak English as an additional language are fully supported. 22 members of staff work with the children, most of whom hold appropriate childcare qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The effective use of appropriate health and hygiene procedures supports children's health and protects them from illness and the spread of infection. For example, staff ensure that effective hygiene procedures are implemented at all times. The risk of cross-infection is also reduced because linen is changed and washed daily. In addition, cots in the sleep room are individually labelled with babies' names. There is a sick children policy which requests that parents do not bring their children to the nursery if they are ill. However, although systems for recording the administration of medication and accidents are generally satisfactory, a few records are incomplete or inconsistently kept. This is because some entries do not include all necessary parental signatures. First aid boxes are available in all parts of the nursery and most members of staff hold a current first aid qualification. In addition, prior written parental consent is sought for seeking emergency medical treatment. These measures help to ensure that children's welfare is promoted in the event of an accident or emergency.

Children are learning about the importance of good personal care and hygiene because staff encourage them to wash and dry their hands regularly and ensure that liquid soap and a hot air dryer are accessible to them. This helps to promote children's independence and is also reinforced through the use of step-by-step pictorial and written instructions about handwashing. Consequently, children are learning how to keep themselves healthy by avoiding the risk of the spread of infection. Children also wipe their own hands and faces independently using face wipes and dispose of these appropriately at lunchtime.

The nursery operates a free flow system which means that children are able to choose when they want to play outside. As a result, children benefit greatly from the very good opportunities for physical play and exercise, as well as having the option to enjoy the full range of activities across all areas of play and learning outdoors, as well as indoors. Facilities for outdoor play are good and include use of the playing field beyond the nursery premises. This provides children with a wide range of opportunities for vigorous play. For example, they are able to run and jump and use a range of small equipment to develop and practise their physical skills.

Children benefit from the nursery's positive approach to healthy eating and are able to help themselves to healthy snacks, such as a selection of fresh fruit. Labelled beakers and jugs of water are available throughout the day and, as a result, children can help themselves to drinks whenever they feel thirsty. They enjoy a varied nutritious diet that includes three to four portions of fresh fruit and vegetables daily. Meals are home-made from fresh ingredients, for example, children eagerly tuck into appetising meals such as chicken pie with new potatoes and salad, or pasta Bolognese and garlic bread. They are learning about which foods are good for them because staff encourage them to try different foods and explain how certain foods make them healthy and strong. All children's dietary needs are identified and catered for, for example, the cook is aware of children with allergies. Children greatly enjoy their meals which are social occasions when staff sit and eat with them. They happily discuss which foods they like best and most children ask for seconds and thirds!

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment where they can play, rest and relax safely. The environment is well organised in clearly designated areas and is currently used on an open plan basis which means that children are able to explore activities freely. The creative use of posters, charts and displays of children's work helps to enhance the environment and make it child-friendly. Very good accessibility of good quality resources across all areas of play and learning promotes and encourages children's free choice, independence and initiative. Most resources are stored in low level storage units, many of which are clearly labelled. As a result, children can choose them for themselves and greatly enjoy doing so.

Regular risk assessments are used to identify and minimise potential dangers and this helps to ensure that current refurbishments do not pose any safety risks to the children. Staff carry out regular checks on all toys and equipment and this helps to further ensure children's ongoing safety. Appropriate safety precautions are in place, for example, staff enforce safety rules around the use of the climbing frame. The safety of the garden is carefully monitored and, as a result, children can move around the premises safely, confidently and independently. Children's safety is further promoted by staff's good understanding of appropriate supervision levels, for example, during free-flow sessions staff are vigilant in ensuring that appropriate ratios are maintained indoors and outdoors. Steps have been taken to protect children from the risk of fire. These include written fire procedures, regular fire drills and the provision of appropriate fire safety precautions, for example, fire alarms and the availability of a fire blanket.

Effective security procedures, including security cameras, are in place. The use of a visitor's book and ensuring that the nursery office is fully manned at all times helps to ensure children's security while they are on the premises and keep them safe from unvetted persons. Children are beginning to take some responsibility for their own safety because staff frequently remind them to be careful so that they do not hurt themselves and others. Staff explain risks and dangers to children and this helps them to understand the safety implications of their actions for others, as well as themselves.

Staff understand their responsibilities to the children in their care and are aware of the action to take if they are worried that a child may be being abused. For example, they understand that they must contact Children's Services and Ofsted if they have a child protection/safeguarding concern about a child attending the nursery. Consequently, children's welfare is promoted well. There is a written child protection and safeguarding statement and policy in place, which includes the procedures to be followed if there is an allegation against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Great emphasis is placed on children learning through their play and own first-hand experience, discovery and exploration. Children enjoy an extremely varied, balanced range of exciting and interesting activities in a rich, stimulating environment. They are very happy and settle well at the nursery because they are sensitively and lovingly supported by caring and skilled staff. All children, including the very youngest, participate confidently and enthusiastically in the daily routine. Children's individual needs are recognised and acknowledged and children's interests are a focal point when staff plan activities. Activities are well organised and are set up in clearly designated areas. The open-plan layout enables children to engage in activities that interest

and motivate them. Children greatly enjoy moving freely between activities and making independent choices as they mix with children of various ages. Most resources are accessibly stored and this promotes children's independence. A free-flow system between the indoor and outdoor areas provides children with further opportunities to choose, make decisions and use their initiative. Excellent use is made of the outside play area where children of all ages enjoy a wide range of interesting and stimulating activities. Babies are flourishing in a supportive environment where their learning and development is progressing very well. For example, they enjoy an excellent group story time, concentrate extremely well and participate enthusiastically. They show great enjoyment as they sing action songs such as 'Wheels on the bus' and 'Old MacDonald'. The use of toy animals also encourages them to recognise and name the various animals in the song and to make the appropriate animal noises.

Interaction between staff and children is excellent throughout the nursery. Staff talk and listen to children and engage them in frequent chatty conversations. They respond to their interests and ask lots of open-ended questions to make children think and to extend their language development and learning. Children of all ages enjoy excellent opportunities to pursue their own interests, express their opinions, thoughts and feelings and use their imaginations. Children enjoy warm and loving relationships with staff who are affectionate and caring towards them. Staff are very enthusiastic and clearly enjoy playing with the children and getting involved in their activities. Children benefit from an excellent balance of freely chosen activities and those initiated by staff. Staff provide appropriate support and are skilled at judging when intervention is needed. They make frequent use of praise, encouragement and humour in their interactions with children. As a result, children's self-esteem and confidence are extremely well promoted.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Good planning systems are in place and this helps to ensure that children enjoy a varied, balanced range of activities. Staff use the Foundation Stage guidance effectively and, consequently, children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff are involved in planning and plans are effectively shared with parents. Plans consist of long, medium and short term plans. They include daily focused activities, clearly identified learning intentions, child-initiated as well as adult-initiated activities. Evaluations are done and then used to inform future planning for individual children. There is a weekly focus on named children and this ensures that all children's progress is monitored effectively and the next steps in individual children's learning are clearly identified. Observations are recorded under the six areas of learning and then incorporated into future planning. Good records of children's individual progress and achievements are kept in the form of 'My Learning Journey' books and systems are currently being developed to ensure that these are effectively shared with parents.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is very good. Children are becoming confident because staff value them and frequently use praise and encouragement. Children behave well because staff are good role models and treat them with respect and consideration. Consequently, children share well, work cooperatively with others and frequently show care and consideration for each other. Children's independence is developing well because there are very good opportunities for them to learn to take responsibility for themselves and develop independence, for example, when choosing resources and using toilet facilities. Lunch time provides children with great opportunities to serve themselves as they help themselves to potatoes and salad from large serving dishes. Children also take part in setting the tables and clearing them away, as well as learning to use appropriate cutlery and helping to prepare sandwiches for a teddy bears' picnic.

Children's progress in communication, language and literacy is very good. They enjoy listening to stories and often spontaneously choose to look at books, for example in the outdoor den. Staff are very enthusiastic about books and stories and, as a result, children are developing positive attitudes to reading. Children are learning to speak confidently, one-to-one and to a group. Staff interaction with children is very good and children's language development is progressing well because staff talk and listen to children and ask them open-ended questions to make them think and to extend their vocabulary. Children benefit from good access to a range of writing materials and often mark make and do their own recording during indoor and outdoor activities. They are beginning to recognise letters and sounds and understand that print carries meaning through the good use of labelling in the nursery environment.

Children are making good progress in mathematical development. They benefit from an extensive range of mathematical resources and activities which are readily available to them. Children have frequent opportunities to learn about mathematical concepts of number, shape, size, pattern and sequence. They regularly count objects and correctly name colours. Staff frequently reinforce mathematical concepts through routines and activities, for example, singing number rhymes and songs. Children confidently use mathematical language, for example, they talk about biggest, smallest, bigger than, smaller than, longest, the same and so on. Children are developing good problem-solving skills, for example, children who have made a sign work out the best way to stick their sign on a tree in the nursery garden.

Children benefit from good opportunities to explore their own creativity, for example, painting, chalking and drawing, and can access resources for themselves. There is a good balance between staff-led activities and those they choose for themselves. Children have very good opportunities to express themselves imaginatively, for example, small world play, dressing up, and role play in the home corner. Their play is appropriately supported by an excellent range of props and resources. For example, children enjoy role play and act out the story of 'Goldilocks and the three bears'.

Children's progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world is very good. Children learn about other cultures and religions through activities around celebrations and festivals. This is reflected in planning and supported by a good range of multicultural resources, including books, dolls, puzzles, home corner props and dressing up. Children benefit from good opportunities to build using a range of construction toys and are learning to use simple tools. For example, while playing with water outside, some children decide they need to make a sign to warn people about the wet floor. They explore various ways to attach the sign they make with a member of staff and experiment with these. For example, they fetch some glue, Sellotape and masking tape. They get great satisfaction when they discover for themselves that the masking tape works. Children are learning about technology because they have good access to a computer. Children enjoy good opportunities to learn about the wonders of nature and the environment as they observe eggs hatching into chicks in an incubator, watch tadpoles as they grow and develop from frog spawn and caterpillars as they turn into butterflies. They also benefit from spontaneous opportunities to observe wildlife in the nursery environment. For example, as they play in the field they notice a bird which has landed on the grass a short distance away and talk about what he might be looking for as he pecks the ground, such as worms or insects. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is further enhanced through outings in the local community, for example, to the library.

Children's physical development is progressing well because they have good opportunities to join in physical play in the outdoor enclosed area and the playing field beyond, where they are able to exercise their bodies and practise a range of physical skills. Planning incorporates

physical activities. Children also benefit from a range of activities that help to develop their fine motor skills and dexterity through using a variety of tools and resources that they can access for themselves.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

There are effective systems in place for identifying children's individual needs and interests. Consequently, staff get to know the children very well and are able to provide appropriate care and support for them. Children are clearly comfortable in their surroundings, settle well and happily participate in nursery routines and activities. They enjoy strong relationships with staff and this helps to promote their confidence and self-esteem. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are learning to value and respect each other as they learn about festivals and celebrations and about others in the community. For example, the mother of a member of staff recently bought in some African costumes and both staff and children greatly enjoyed dressing up in these and finding out about aspects of African culture, such as learning some African words. Diversity is acknowledged and promoted through the use of a good range of multicultural resources, including books, dolls, puzzles, play figures, home corner props, posters and photographs. Staff demonstrate an inclusive approach to children's play and all children enjoy equal access to all activities and resources. There are good systems in place for identifying and supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There is a special educational needs policy in place and there is a named Special Educational Needs Coordinator on the staff team. Staff are aware of the importance of very close liaison with parents, for example, if making a referral. The nursery provides appropriate support for children who have English as an additional language.

Children's behaviour is extremely good because staff provide positive role models for them by treating them with respect at all times. Staff maintain a consistent approach towards behaviour management, both in the strategies used and in their expectations of children's behaviour. Consequently, children are learning right from wrong and are becoming self-disciplined. Staff effectively promote good behaviour through the frequent use of praise and positive language. Children play cooperatively, are learning to share and take turns. They show care and concern for others, for example, they help each other during activities.

The partnership with parents is good. Staff are approachable and friendly and clearly understand the benefits of good partnerships with parents. Parents are welcomed into the nursery and can talk to staff and the manager when they bring and collect their child. Systems are in place to share information with parents. These include notice boards, a parents' newsletter and daily record sheets for babies. Children's progress records are also readily available, though effective systems to share this information effectively with parents are not yet fully developed. As a result, not all parents are fully aware of how to access their children's progress records, for example, the 'My Learning Journey' folders. Parents provide positive feedback about the nursery. For example, they comment on how friendly and approachable staff are, how happy their children are to come to nursery and on the good range of activities on offer. They also comment on how pleased they are that the building is undergoing refurbishment. Parents receive good quality verbal and written information about what their children are learning at nursery, such as information about themes their children will be working on. This includes lists of songs, stories, rhymes and recipes that parents can use to share and support their children's

learning. Parents are also invited to participate in nursery events such as Sports Day and Fun Day.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children benefit from a welcoming, child-friendly environment where they have access to a balanced and stimulating range of challenging activities. Space is creatively and imaginatively used in clearly designated areas. A free-flow session means that children can enjoy all activities indoors or outdoors. This helps to promote children's physical health and encourages them to make decisions and independent choices. Children are looked after by a caring, competent and committed staff team who are enthusiastic in their approach. Good ratios are maintained throughout the day, including when children are using the outside play area. Interaction between adults and children is very good and this helps children gain in confidence and self-esteem.

Sound recruitment procedures ensure that all necessary checks are carried out to establish that all staff are suitable to work with children, for example, a Criminal Records Bureau check. Children are never left with unvetted persons. A clear management structure is in place and staff have clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Most members of staff hold appropriate childcare qualifications and are experienced in childcare.

Appropriate documentation is in place, for example, attendance, accident and medication records and is stored confidentially. However, some accident and medication records are incomplete and the system for recording staff attendance is unclear. The nursery's operational plan includes policies and procedures relating to all areas of the nursery's operation. These include all policies required by the National Standards, for example, a complaints policy and complaints log and the procedure to follow if a child is uncollected or becomes lost.

Leadership and management is good because the effective nursery education programme ensures that children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Planning is good and there are sound systems in place to evaluate children's progress and achievements. Evaluations are appropriately and consistently used to plan the next steps in individual children's learning. The nursery manager and owners monitor and evaluate the nursery education programme on an ongoing basis through observations and by overseeing planning and children's progress records.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable: this is the first inspection since registration.

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 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 good. 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):

- make sure that all accident and medication records are complete and are clearly and consistently kept, for example, ensure that they contain all necessary parental signatures
- ensure that there is a clear system for recording staff attendance.

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):

- further develop systems for informing parents about their children's progress.

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