

Busy Bees Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	253689
Inspection date	11/08/2009
Inspector	Anne Barnsley
Setting address	21 - 23 Portland Street, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, LN5 7JZ
Telephone number	01522 575640
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

Busy Bees Nursery opened in 1994 and is privately owned. It operates from two adapted end of terrace houses near to the centre of Lincoln. The pre-school unit has the use of four rooms, with associated toilet and kitchen facilities, on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area at the rear of the building. The nursery serves the immediate locality and also the surrounding towns and villages. Access is either by climbing up a few steps or down a few steps depending on which room is being visited. Parking is limited outside the nursery to a maximum of one hour, however there are unrestricted parking spaces in nearby streets. The nursery opens five days a week from 8:00am until 6:00pm all year round.

The nursery is registered for 42 children in the early years age group and is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary part of the Childcare Register. There are currently 54 children on roll. Children attend a variety of sessions. There are currently no children with additional needs and four children for whom English is their second language.

The nursery owner works in the setting on a daily basis. Six of the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 3. A further three staff are working towards a level three. The staff use teaching methods attributed to the High/Scope active learning approach to the early years curriculum. The setting receives support from the local authority and is affiliated to the Lincoln Day Nurseries Association.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of provision is outstanding and meets the needs of all children to an exceptionally high standard. Children make rapid progress towards the early learning goals because the staff have extensive knowledge about how each child learns. All children are fully included, valued and respected for their individuality. The partnership with parents and other professionals is excellent. The leadership is strong with the majority of systems thoroughly implemented. Self-evaluation is highly reflective and contributes significantly to the setting's commitment to making continuous improvements.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- developing the system further for staff to participate in regular appraisals.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

This is a highly reflective setting with a clear vision for achieving excellence. The owner and staff team are fully committed to the children and families they serve.

They are a cohesive, motivated and enthusiastic team that drive improvements forward through continuous self-evaluation. The extensive changes they have made to the setting since the last inspection are commendable and provide all children with rich and memorable learning experiences that contribute significantly to a healthy, happy childhood. All recommendations that were raised at the last inspection have been fully met with the expectations exceeded through the setting's own improvement plan and clear vision. All observations, assessments and planning focus entirely on children's individual needs and provide parents with extremely clear examples of how their child is progressing. The systems that are in place to achieve this are simple, clear and highly effective. Children have individual learning journeys, which are presented so well that they bring the record of the child's interests and the progress they make to life. Children's work is displayed in the form of a story wall with explanations and observations that are extremely interesting and informative. These paint a vivid picture of how activities come about from the children's ideas and how the activities evolve and develop further to fulfil children's curiosity. They are presented to a very high standard that respects and values the children. Further to this, laminated stories of specific activities that children initiate are kept as exemplars of the high quality of learning that takes place in the nursery. They fully demonstrate the value that staff place on respecting children's choices and meeting their needs. Two such examples of this are the 'Spider Man' and the 'Snow' activity; although there are many more.

Children are safeguarded because staff are fully committed to their duty of care to protect children and prioritise their safety. Two designated staff have completed safeguarding training and all other staff are currently booked to do likewise. Security and safety measures keep children safe and all adults who work with children are vetted for their suitability. Recruitment and induction procedures are rigorous and regular meetings ensure that staff have their training needs met. An appraisal system has yet to be finalised although this is underway. In spite of this, all staff have a pro-active approach towards training and all are completing courses and extending their qualifications to higher levels. A training matrix is used and ensures that staff have a diverse range of skills and knowledge, which in turn, they cascade to other staff. In addition to this, all staff attend an annual training and team-building day. This is organised as a focus-learning-day mixed with fun to show the owner's appreciation to the staff's commitment and dedication. The owner shows staff great respect and all staff remark on how happy they are working in this setting. Relationships are very good and staff dynamics are excellent. They work extremely well together and are highly organised and efficient. As a result they create a harmonious environment that is relaxed and conducive to developing young children's security, confidence and learning.

The partnership with parents and other professionals involved in the care and learning of children is excellent. Strong links are in place with schools that children will attend and teachers are invited to the nursery to meet the children. Ten schools with a wide geographical area act as feeder schools and it is therefore difficult for children to visit all of these. The owner visits these instead and takes photographs to make story books for the children. These are used during general conversation times and in conjunction with the 'school basket' to help children with their transition to school. Excellent information is both gathered from parents and shared with parents to ensure that the changing or developing needs of children

continue to be met. Parents have excellent opportunities to contribute to their child's care and learning through home-link books, parent evenings and daily chats with staff. Their views and ideas are actively sought through questionnaires, suggestion books, and through the conversations that occur daily. Feedback and suggestions from parents are highly regarded and acted on, for example, looking into the possibility of having a Saturday mother and toddler group. Parents are invited to annual family-fun-days each year and these are highly represented. Last year, forty families came to a picnic day and despite the atrocious weather, they all stayed and camped out in the nursery and had a wonderful day. This year, families came to the opening of the new outdoor area and spent time playing in the sand with the children and joining in with fun activities. This high attendance speaks eloquently of the success of the setting.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Since the last inspection, the nursery environment has been totally transformed into an incredibly rich, enabling environment that is highly conducive to learning. Through the setting's intensive participation in the 'beginning with babies' pilot, they have built on their High Scope approach to learning and completely redesigned the whole nursery for all age groups. This has had the most positive affect on the outcomes for children. Focus was placed on children's attachment and separation processes and how to make this an easier and more natural experience for them. Children now learn in a home-from-home environment where each age group has access to a whole floor. The original playrooms have been removed and replaced with a living room, kitchen and bedroom. Furniture is domestic furniture that children have in their own homes, with carpets, sofas, welsh dressers, wooden cupboards, wooden fire surrounds, family photos, lamps and safe ornaments. The rooms are called by names that children use at home to provide children with continuity in their language through familiarity. Labelling of furniture has been removed as this does not occur in a child's home and staff no longer wear uniforms. All children access a wide range of high quality resources that are stored in wicker baskets and in ways that enhance the home environment. The nursery has been redecorated throughout and all primary coloured paint and murals have been removed and replaced with soft muted colours that compliment each other. The entrance hall resembles that of a domestic premises with framed pictures of the children, heater guards, mirrors and ornaments, all of which are made of natural wood and set the scene for the rest of the nursery. This transformation has proved so successful that it is therefore worthy of mention that the setting is being used as an exemplar to other settings who want to sign up to the project.

Children of all ages thrive in this nursery and make rapid progress in all areas of learning. The quality of learning that takes place is exceptional and is highly inclusive. Children are cared for by staff who interact sensitively and respect children's growing independence. They show children the highest level of respect and fully focus on children's interests to promote purposeful learning experiences. As a result, children are secure, confident and extremely relaxed. The level of calm in this nursery is a major strength and occurs, not only through the influence of the environment, but because the children are so engrossed in what they are doing.

Children really play with the resources as opposed to simply using them in play.

All children, starting from the babies, make their own choices and help themselves to resources, initiative activities and play with their choice of friends. There are lots of natural and real resources to play with such as real food, boxes, stones, shells, compost, wooden toys, kitchen utensils, sand, and real bricks, amongst many others. Babies move around between their kitchen and living room exploring and investigating. They play with large cardboard boxes peeping inside them, pushing them along and climbing in them. Other babies play in the tactile tray with cereal, plastic forks, spoons and containers. One baby has endless fun transporting cereal, fork by fork, across the room to empty each fork-full into one of the cardboard boxes. The babies also like to use some manufactured toys such as electronic, press-button toys which they operate independently to enjoy the sounds that occur. Children in the toddler room are incredibly independent and use the CD player in their living room, selecting their choices of music and dancing and singing together without prompt from staff. They have great fun interacting with friends, laughing and telling funny stories. When it is time to go outside they all get their sun hats and discuss the different T-shirts they are wearing such as flowers and beads, stripes and spots. In the pre-school room, children have in-depth conversations with staff and each other while they have lunch together. All children contribute to conversations or chat amongst themselves as a highly sociable group.

Outdoors, the learning environment is truly amazing and provides children with experiences of awe and wonder that are magical in childhood. Children are so industrious in all areas of the nursery, but outdoors this is extended even further. The outdoor area has been designed as a beach environment with a large wooden pirate ship, which for an inner city nursery provides the initial magic. Beach huts are dotted around the area and all serve different areas of learning. There is a decking area, which is called the bandstand and is used extremely well by children for musical instruments, dance, creative activities and books. Children have growing areas with tools and dig, plant and nurture plants and vegetables. They use a large cart to transport toys and each other around the area. There is a large sand pit with seating around the edges and protection from the sun with a large canopy. Children help themselves to tools and equipment and use these in creative ways, such as building a cave for Spider Man with real bricks and milk crates. Children have all been provided with rain suits and wellies so that they can play outside in different types of weather and learn through these experiences.

Children's welfare is extremely well promoted. They learn about their health and keeping themselves safe and are extremely well behaved and receptive. Children are well nourished, having breakfast, regular healthy snacks, excellent hot cooked meals and light afternoon tea. Close consultation with parents ensures that children's dietary needs are met and that parents' wishes are respected. All children eat at tables as a social group with staff. Food is served at tables which are set out attractively with table clothes and fresh flowers. Babies eat at a specially designed, low circular wooden table and all have 'Bumbo Seats' as opposed to high chairs to enable them to sit together as a family and promote their social learning from a very young age. Babies have a lovely bedroom to sleep in with soft music playing to create a soothing atmosphere. Toddlers who still

require a sleep have camp beds set out for them in their living room. All the things children learn in this nursery fully fosters their security, safety and well-being and develops the skills they need to promote their future economic well-being.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	1
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	1

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:

Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:

Met