



Busy Bees Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	115342
Inspection date	12 January 2006
Inspector	Mandy Mooney

Setting Address	Methodist Church Hall, Church Road, Bexleyheath, Kent, DA7 4DD
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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?

Busy Bee's Pre-school opened in 1965. It operates in the Methodist Church Hall in Bexleyheath. The pre-school has use of the main hall and three additional smaller rooms, all of which are located on the ground floor. There is a small paved, fully enclosed play area for outdoor play. The pre-school is well established in the community and serves families from the surrounding residential area.

The group opens on 5 mornings each week during school term times. Sessions are

from 09.15 to 12.00. There are currently 17 children on roll. This includes 10 funded 3 and 4 year olds. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

The staff team comprises a manager and a deputy, both of whom hold a recognised childcare qualification. Three additional members of staff work with the children. One holds a recognised childcare qualification, while the remaining two members of staff are unqualified. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is safeguarded by staff who have put in place suitable hygiene routines, for example, cleaning tables after use and through being vigilant about having effective hygiene routines in the toilet area. Children are aware of the need to wash their hands after using the toilet however, the routine for washing hands before snacks is not consistently reinforced. Satisfactory arrangements are in place to exclude children with infectious illnesses and to care for children who become unwell during the session.

Children are provided with a variety of snacks and drinks at refreshment time. This includes, savoury and sweet snacks and a range of fresh fruit and vegetables. This contributes to children gaining a sound understanding of the benefits of keeping healthy. Staff demonstrate appropriate practices when preparing snacks however, as they have limited knowledge of the food hygiene regulations, it is not apparent that these are applied in practice.

Children have daily opportunities to take part in a range of planned physical play activities, either in the large hall or in the small outside play area. This includes taking part in obstacle courses, where children learn about the effect exercise has on their bodies. For example, after running, feeling their heart and noticing it is beating faster. Children are able to use and manipulate a range of small toys, tools and equipment with growing skill and confidence.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children experience a well organised, light and airy environment that is in appropriate condition, which gives them comfortable accommodation areas for their care and play. They have access to a sufficient range of safe, age appropriate toys and resources.

Children are kept safe by staff who are aware of security. A member of staff stands by the main front door until all children are in and then the door is secured. Visitors provide identification and sign the visitors record however, this is not completely effective as they are not necessarily asked to sign it as soon as they arrive. Children

are collected by named persons. Staff are aware of the health and safety requirements, such as regular fire drills and children are encouraged to take responsibility in regards to keeping themselves and others safe. For example, by tidying up at the end of the session. Staff remind children of safety rules whilst they play, for example, when using the climbing frame, where children know that only four children can go on at once otherwise it becomes too busy.

Children's safety is safeguarded through the efficient use of documentation and staff are aware of their responsibilities, such as ensuring emergencies are planned for as far as possible. Staff have a sufficient understanding of, and are confident about dealing with child protection issues.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

All children arrive happy and eager to participate. New children are well supported by staff and as a result, settle quickly. Children have good relationships with staff who sit with them and encourage their play. Children are happy and enjoy playing with their friends, particularly during the imaginative role play. All children participate well during snack times where they sit together and enjoy pleasant conversations. Children are familiar with the daily routine and move freely around the room, making choices about their play. Activity tables are presented in an attractive way, which encourages children to approach them and to take part in what is available. Staff use the Birth to three matters framework as a guide for planning for the younger children and although this is its early stages, staff demonstrate a positive approach to implementing this as effectively as possible to ensure the needs of the younger are fully met.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals and this is reflected in the observations carried out by staff and used to influence planning. All staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. However, the planning does not reflect how activities and opportunities are changed or adapted for the older or more able children attending. Staff have recently started evaluating the provision however, this is in the early stages and consequently has little impact on the provision as yet. Although children enjoy taking part in a variety of opportunities in both small and large groups, on occasions, some activities are aimed at only the four-year-olds, for no apparent reason and this sometimes results on other children who are able to take part missing out. There are a sufficient range of resources, which supports children's learning across all areas.

Children generally show good levels of concentration and involvement in activities. They interact co-operatively within groups, share and take turns. Children's behaviour and consideration of others is good. They are developing independence, for example, with toileting. There are some missed opportunities, for example, for selecting their coats to go out as the pegs are too high for them to reach. Children select and use books appropriately and enjoy stories in the larger group, a current favourite is 'Billy's Goat Gruff', where the children are fully interactive with the story.

They are able to use language effectively, for example, expressing and negotiating imaginative ideas within role play. Children can recognise their name from their work tray however, opportunities to practice this are inconsistent, for example, children's names are not on their coat pegs and the system for children to choose their names when they come into the group is not fully implemented. They have opportunities for mark making, to attempt writing and form recognisable letters. Children are gaining ability with numbers and follow simple patterns. They are using simple mathematical language and have knowledge of space, shapes and measurement. However, children are not always supported in extending their learning. Children have developing ability to use information technology, including a computer and hand held programmable toys, which supports their learning in other areas. They select materials to design, join and shape. Children are developing some awareness of other people, for example, through the use of the range of books and resources to reflect a positive image of the different people and through celebrating different festivals. However, local outings and visits and visitors into the group are few, which limits opportunities for them to find out about their immediate local community. Children study living things and patterns of change, such as planting bulbs and monitoring how they are growing. There are a variety of resources, which help children to develop physically. Children use different tools with good control to make changes to materials and to scribe, form and construct. They engage in healthy practices, including healthy eating and physical exercise. Children are able to move confidently around each other, showing good balance and spatial awareness. They enjoy singing, they can recall familiar songs and associated actions. Children are aware of changes to colours and they can explore and use this through a variety of mediums. They use a variety of role-play settings to enact their imagined experiences and they also express their imagination with activities and resources which include painting, modelling, water and drawing.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are made welcome and are respected as individuals; they select from the resources and play materials and make independent choices in their play. Children engage in some activities that develop their awareness of people from the wider community, such as celebrating Diwali and the Chinese New Year. This is reinforced as children have access to a good selection of resources to represent positive images of diversity. Opportunities for children to learn about their more immediate community are few, as visits outside of the pre-school and visitors in are infrequent. Children are well behaved and polite in response to staff and have an appropriate awareness of their expectations. They respond well to reminders to care for each other and their environment. They take turns and show concern for others. This positive approach helps children's attitudes to others and fosters their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The pre-school welcomes children with additional needs and the system in place for supporting children is effective in both identifying needs and also providing appropriate support to children and promoting inclusion. There is a named special needs coordinator, who is familiar with the Special Educational Needs Code of

Practice and the procedures for accessing external support as necessary.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Children benefit from the positive relationships that staff have with the parents. Children settle well because staff work closely with parents to ensure that sufficient time is afforded for settling according to each individual child's needs. Part of the induction includes sharing policies and procedures with parents. Effective methods of daily communication strengthens links between home and the pre-school and gives children appropriate levels of continuity of care. Children benefit from staff and parents sharing information on their progress and the activity programme which encourages parents to support their children's learning at home and to be involved in the curriculum however, plans are not routinely displayed for parents to access freely. Regular planned individual meetings between a child's key worker and parent ensures parents have a forum to discuss any issues relating to their child.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by an experienced and appropriately qualified group of staff. Sufficient systems for recruiting and induction ensure staff and volunteers are aware of what is expected of them within the group. However, the current procedure for ensuring suitability of those working with children is not rigorous enough and consequently does not meet current regulations. Contingency arrangements and staff's use of policies, procedures and documentation are generally effective in keeping children safe and healthy. This includes the procedure to follow if a parent has a complaint. Although there is a complaint procedure and record in place, the information contained does not currently comply with the recent changes in regulations. On occasions records to support safety are not completed in a prompt manner or contain required information, for example, visitors do not always sign into the premises on arrival and as the actual times of arrival and departure of staff and children are not recorded.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The staff team demonstrate a positive approach to improving the quality of care and education for children. They work closely with the advisory teacher to improve the quality of nursery education and many improvements have been since the last inspection. However, children experience some limitations to their educational programme as planning does not fully take account of their level of development to ensure the grouping of children is appropriate and to provide for the more able or older child. Most staff have appropriate qualifications or are working towards qualification and have sufficient knowledge of the Curriculum Guidance for the foundation stage. On occasions, children are not fully supported in extending their knowledge and ability, which results in some missed opportunities for children's learning. The setting has implemented the Birth to three matters framework, which gives children under 3 years experience of an appropriate programme of activities and experiences, with planning linked to observations. The setting meets the needs of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last Care inspection the use of space and deployment of staff has been reviewed and improved and the hall is arranged into different areas to maximise the space and variety available to the children. The planning of activities now involves all staff and ensures there is a variety of activities and opportunities based on the needs of the children attending. A review of furniture and equipment means that the children have access to a sufficient range of well maintained resources and although the tables have not been replaced, they have been covered to make them more attractive and appealing to children. Safety standards have improved, as all staff have attended appropriate child protection training and demonstrate a sound understanding of their responsibility in regards to protecting children. The kitchen is inaccessible to children by the use of a hook and children only use the kitchen for cooking activities when directly supervised by staff. The manager remains the only staff member holding a current first aid certificate, as the other staff member who was also qualified has recently left however, as children are not taken out as part of the regular routine and an additional person is available to call if necessary, this is considered sufficient. All other staff are waiting to attend a recognised training program. Staff have attended a workshop to refresh themselves on the different strategies for managing children's behaviour. Strategies used to manage children's behaviour are considered entirely appropriate. Staff are calm and patient with the children and children learn right from wrong as staff are consistent in the management of their behaviour. Good behaviour is well acknowledged and this has a positive impact on the children.

Much improvement has been made in the planning and assessment. All staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and are actively involved in planning. This is linked to the six areas of learning and based on observations carried out by staff. The opportunities provided are sufficient in meeting the needs of the children however, further development is required in ensuring appropriate challenge is offered to the older or more able children. The room is well organised and staff deployed effectively and as a result children are kept occupied and behaviour is appropriate.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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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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 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 staff are aware of and comply with food hygiene regulations
- further improve record keeping, paying particular attention to recording the times of arrival and departure of staff and children and ensuring visitors sign in to the premises on arrival
- improve the procedure for assessing the suitability of those who work with children
- review and improve the complaint procedure and complaint record to ensure these contain the required information in line with current regulations

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):

- review the system for planning to reflect differentiation in activities to offer sufficient challenge to older or more able children. Further develop the system for evaluating learning and play opportunities to ensure the information gained is used to improve/adapt future planning
- review the grouping of children to ensure the opportunities provided are based on children's individual levels of understanding, ability and interests

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