



Zig Zags

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY297624
Inspection date	12 October 2005
Inspector	Valerie Button
Setting Address	Brook Vale, Bradiford, Barnstaple, Devon, EX31 4AW
Telephone number	01271 325010
E-mail	
Registered person	Zig Zags
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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?

Zig Zags Nursery has two co-owners: one is the registered person for the nursery and the other is the manager of the provision; both have qualified teacher status.

The nursery was first registered in 2005. The premises used are the ground floor of a semi-detached house in Bradiford, Barnstaple. This is organised on an open-plan basis and provides three rooms for children's play and learning, and kitchen and toilet facilities. The front garden area is used for outdoor activities.

The nursery is registered to care for 16 children from 2 to 8 years old, also offering after-school and holiday care for children. It is open from 08:30 to 17:30, Monday to Friday, throughout the year. On one afternoon each week the nursery children visit Pilton House to use the grounds.

Parents and toddlers may attend on Monday afternoons. An After School Club is offered, though currently, no over 5 year olds attend after school. A Holiday Club operates during school holidays.

Currently a total of 20 children, aged from 2 to 5 years old, attend. This group includes those with special educational needs and 13 of the 3 and 4 year olds are funded for their nursery education. There are no children currently attending for whom English is an additional language.

In addition to the two co-owners, eight other staff work at the nursery; all work on a part-time basis; some only work on an occasional basis, of these one member of staff has qualified teacher status, two staff hold qualifications at Level 3 and two others are working towards Level 2 qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning the importance of healthy eating. Children enjoy healthy food and drinks. Meal times are good social occasions for children. They are learning a great deal about their bodies and medical treatment, through their use of the well resourced hospital role-play area and the good, well presented information available to them. Children benefit enormously from good teaching; for example, to learn the names of various vegetables or to use role-play and songs to extend their understanding of how these are grown.

Children's health is safeguarded by the maintenance of suitably equipped first aid boxes and because staff have first aid qualifications. However, one child's file lacks a signed permission slip for staff to seek emergency first aid and treatment. This compromises the child's health in an emergency situation. Good attention is given to the maintenance of other necessary records and documentation to support the children's health and welfare; for example, information on food allergies is clearly recorded. Accident and medication records are effectively and efficiently completed. Younger children's nappy changing is hygienically and suitably managed. Premises and equipment are all scrupulously clean, thus reducing children's risk of cross infection.

Children develop their small movement skills very well; for example, by handling and manipulating a range of tactile objects or through the use of a good variety of 'mark making' materials. Children benefit from a range of carefully planned activities to foster their physical development at every session. At every session they enjoy a group activity, such as moving to music. Limitations of space and distance from open play spaces make it more difficult for children to enjoy energetic large physical

activities. Though maximum use is made of the nursery's indoor and outdoor spaces, it is difficult to provide challenging climbing and balancing activities for children on the nursery site. The outside play space is very well used by the children for learning in all curriculum areas; for example they enjoy using the wheeled toys, the sand tray, hoops and bean bags. They enjoy and observe the thriving plants & have used a variety of decorative materials to enhance their play space, such as those to decorate the gate, or the scarecrow. The nursery has just begun a weekly, afternoon visit to more spacious grounds. However, not all children are present to benefit from this. Outings to local playing fields and; for example, the zoo, are enjoyed with the older children who attend during school holidays.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is supported by well implemented procedures. Risk assessments identify any areas of concern regarding the fabric of the building and these are efficiently addressed. Children enjoy a safe environment in newly renovated, well organised premises. All areas, both indoors and out are arranged in an extremely stimulating way for children.

Children enjoy using a range of safe, well organised resources and equipment. Resources are readily accessible to children; for example, fact and fiction books are both very well used; role-play areas are attractively presented and very well used by the children to support their learning. Additional resources, such as those for art and craft activities, are brought to the premises for older children to use when attending during the school holidays.

Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised by the diligent supervision of the staff. Children have a good understanding of safe practices, such as those to ensure safety when they play outside. Necessary safety measures are carefully explained to them. The outside gate is securely bolted, both inside the garden and from the outside, so that children are unable to leave the premises unattended. A safety gate prevents their access to the kitchen. However, the entrance door to the nursery, which is the kitchen door, is not kept locked. Not all adults arriving ring the doorbell. Adults may enter the premises unnoticed and this poses a risk to children.

Good policies and procedures, and staff's good understanding of child protection issues ensures that children are safe and well protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children attending work and play well together. An excellent range of activities is planned and provided for the under 3 year olds attending. This is based on the 'Birth to Three Matters' guidance documents and provides rich, sensory experiences to support children's learning and development. For group times, such as story telling, younger children are grouped separately from the older children. This means that

both groups benefit from stories and listening experiences that are well matched to their stages of development. When older children join the nursery, for example, for holiday care, again they sometimes, appropriately, interact together with the younger children, but there are separate plans of activities for the school-aged children.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. There are many outstanding aspects in the education of the young children attending the nursery. Children benefit enormously from the planning and provision of a stunning, sensory learning environment; for example, visual displays of information and the children's work are excellent; the children have excellent opportunities to respond to experiences by sight, touch and feel. Children's own artistic responses are shown very high value. Staff support children carefully to talk about their work and extend their skills. This results in displays which show children producing art work of a very high standard. There is an extremely strong emphasis on children learning through play and all staff observed are skilled at interacting with children and questioning them, in order to extend their learning. Children enjoy their learning and make very good use of the stimulating materials provided for them. They respond well to plenty of praise and encouragement. They benefit from a balanced programme, with excellent opportunities for free play and learning; for example, through role-play activities or very appropriate, adult led activities when they are asked to complete more specific tasks. Children are able to recall previous learning; for example, about Autumn leaves or how to ensure they use construction materials to make 'an enclosure' that is stable and secure. Particularly good use is made of books. Children demonstrate very good levels of skills and understanding in their use of books, many being able to relate the story or 'read' familiar parts of the text. High quality displays include books used to support factual information; for example, about the human body, or harvest in this and other countries. Children enjoy using 'the props' provided to enhance their enjoyment of fiction books. Mathematical language and learning is incorporated very well into the ongoing programme; for example, in the children's use of books or when they investigate the properties of Autumn leaves, counting them and discussing size and shape.

Good quality plans support the staff team in delivering the curriculum to children, though evaluation of the success of plans in achieving intended learning outcomes is lacking. Children benefit a great deal from the extremely imaginative activities planned to foster their development. A system is in place to ensure that all children attending participate in activities to provide experiences in all six areas of learning. There are some written comments on every child's attainment and progress. Very good systems are developing to monitor the children's attainment and progress: these include carefully annotated collections of children's work, photographs, useful observational notes and some assessments based on the stepping stones to the early learning goals. However, systems are still developing, for example, a key worker system is not yet in operation; there is no initial assessment made of children's development when they first begin to attend. Children's next steps of learning are not identified, in order to ensure their ongoing progress over the stepping stones to the early learning goals and to inform the staff team.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from skilled behaviour management. Very good strategies exist to plan and provide specific programmes to support children with their behaviour when they have special needs. Staff provide good role-models who show genuine interest in children and their families. Children are offered plenty of praise and encouragement and good explanations. Efficient organisation, and the provision of a stimulating environment to engage the children's interest, means that children respond enthusiastically and behave well throughout, both individually and as part of a group. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is clearly fostered. They are encouraged to consider and care for others. There is much within the learning environment to inspire awe and wonder, and stimulate their feelings, and they are encouraged to communicate these.

All children play happily together, with no obviously stereotypical play; for example, boys make extremely good use of role play kitchen areas and the provision of a 'steam' iron which lights up and makes a satisfying hissing noise, currently results in all the children being eager to role-play ironing! Children learn about other races and cultures because activities, books and resources are very well provided for them, as part of ongoing project work and as part of day to day resources.

The partnership with parents is good. There are useful, friendly exchanges of information between parents and carers and staff when they are at the nursery. Children benefit from the interest of parents in their activities. 'Contact books', where both staff and parents record information about the children's activities mean that children's continuity of care is well supported. These books include copies of plans for the month's activities. Information on the staff team and which members of staff are working at sessions is not readily accessible to parents; for example, on display at the nursery or in the Operational Plan. However, parents are given this information verbally.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children enjoy a well managed environment. Toys and equipment are left set out and ready for children on the previous evening. Resources are easily accessed by the children. Sessions run smoothly, with both children and staff securely aware of expectations. Children's care and welfare is supported by documentation which is mostly well maintained and up to date. The staff team all work on a part-time basis. Children are occasionally cared for by an adult who is less well known to them. A key worker system has yet to be established, so far the manager has been the key person for every child attending. There is not a clearly named deputy to take charge in the absence of the manager.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is good and often inspirational. Staff benefit from the dissemination of the co-owners' teaching skills

and experience. This is evident from the skills they are developing in their teaching; the quality of children's learning is very good as a result of this. Much hard work has been undertaken to establish the nursery. There are many effective documents in place to support the children's care and wellbeing, and very good systems to support staff training and development. The manager is an extremely skilled and experienced practitioner, with excellent knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage Curriculum. She is key to the success of the education programme.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable - first inspection since registration.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted.

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 the premises are kept secure
- develop consistency in the staff team and establish a key worker system; ensure that there is a named deputy to take charge in the absence of the manager; ensure that parents have easy access to information on staffing arrangements

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):

- evaluate the success of plans in achieving intended learning; consistently apply the systems for recording the children's achievements and progress; identify next steps of learning for children
- identify ways of providing all children with regular opportunities for energetic and challenging climbing and balancing activities, in order to develop their large physical skills.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk