



Brookvale Neighbourhood Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY280215
Inspection date	07 November 2005
Inspector	Suzette Butcher
Setting Address	Northwich Road, Brookvale, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 6BZ
Telephone number	01928 790144
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Registered person	Pre-School Learning Alliance
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Crèche

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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Brookvale Neighbourhood Nursery and Crèche opened in 2004 and are managed by the Pre-School Learning Alliance. They operate from the crèche and three main nursery areas in Brookvale Children's Centre in Runcorn, Cheshire. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year. The crèche is

open from 09.30 to 11.30 and 12.30 to 14.30 for 51 weeks of the year to support families attending the Surestart Centre. Children share access to fully enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 68 children aged from 0 to 5 years on roll in the nursery. Of these, 14 children receive funding for nursery education. The crèche provides care for no more than 26 children at any one time. The settings support a number of children with special needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 13 members of staff, of whom, 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. The crèche employs three members of staff who all hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are encouraged to understand the importance of following basic routines as they gradually become responsible for their own health and hygiene routines. Each child learns to brush their own teeth, use their own face cloth and manage their own personal care with praise and encouragement from staff. Children's health is generally protected as appropriate procedures are in place to reduce risks such as recording accidents or administering first aid. There are adequate procedures in place to reduce the risk of cross contamination and infections as most areas are kept clean and identified nappy changing routines are followed by all staff. Children with additional health needs are supported by staff's current knowledge of first aid and relevant training.

Opportunities for physical exercise both indoors and outdoors enable children to develop confidence as they learn to use their bodies in different ways and move with control. Young babies enjoy crawling through a tunnel and older children experiment with bats and balls or explore opportunities together in the soft play room. Fine motor skills are developed as children manipulate different materials and consistencies such as playdoh or mixing paints together.

Healthy and nutritious options are available for snacks and meals with a selection of fresh fruit and vegetables and other healthy items identified on pre-planned menus. Children are offered sufficient variety to encourage a satisfactory understanding of healthy eating for young children. Individual dietary needs are clearly identified and followed and parents are informed of their child's diet in a daily record. Water coolers are accessible to older children to enable them to help themselves to fresh drinking water at any time. Younger children are offered drinks of water on a regular basis to promote a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children are generally secure in the bright, purpose built environment where locks and intercom systems protect children from unknown visitors. However, children are not always safe within the nursery as staff do not assess and minimise all risks to protect children. Children move freely around the play areas but at times they are not appropriately supervised in potentially dangerous situations such as when children are playing on a large climbing frame indoors. The nursery environment is not organised to meet the needs of all children as there are many nooks and corners where children can play out of sight and few cosy areas where children can feel safe and comfortable. Young babies who are exploring and learning to crawl are not offered a safe area to test out their skills away from active, boisterous children. Children learn about keeping themselves safe when they practise emergency escape procedures or walk together when moving to a different room.

The crèche provides a safe haven for children as their safety is given a high priority and risks are regularly assessed and minimised through staff vigilance. Children enjoy freely exploring a wide range of well organised resources and activities with appropriate support from staff.

Children are able to choose from a range of good quality, safe resources that are available throughout nursery. Toys and resources are stored in low level clear drawers and accessible units with labels and pictures to help children to identify the contents. There are resources made from different materials such as wood, wicker and natural materials to enable children to experience different textures and consistencies.

Staff have a sound understanding of child protection issues and recognise their responsibility to protect children. Families are supported and protected by the required appropriate policies and procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is inadequate.

Children make limited progress in all areas of development as there are insufficient and inadequate planning and recording systems in place. Birth to three matters framework has recently been introduced and is being developed as staff attend relevant training. Nevertheless, opportunities for children of all ages are restricted because there are no current procedures in place to create an effective planning, observation and assessment cycle to underpin and organise children's learning. Staff do not regularly identify, record and review every child's current level of understanding to enable them to build on what children already know and plan the next steps for individual children's play and learning. Activities are not effectively evaluated to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses to inform future plans.

Most children lack confidence and are generally aimless, restless and disinterested as they are rarely presented with new challenges and stimulating opportunities. Early

communication skills are not consistently developed or encouraged through signs, gestures and facial expressions because staff do not have a clear understanding of how children's speech and language develops as they interact with adults and other children from an early stage. Babies and young children have few opportunities to freely explore and experiment with different textures, sounds, smells and tastes as they learn to process and respond to sensory, tactile information. Pretend play opportunities are available in house play and older children play imaginatively on their own or alongside another child with brief interactions. Children do become involved in an activity and engage with familiar staff in small groups where they are comfortable and relaxed as they explore shapes and colours or listen to a story. Staff listen and respond to children's comments when they have time but they do not effectively ask questions to extend children's understanding or introduce new ideas to maximise learning opportunities. Children's work, photographs and personal achievements are not evidently displayed or celebrated within the nursery to build up each child's self-esteem and develop a sense of identity and belonging.

Children in the crèche make good progress as they have fun exploring and making their own choices from a range of interesting and challenging opportunities. They are offered a good balance of free play and adult supervised activities as they develop confidence and strong motivation to learn and progress. Clear and effective planning systems support children's learning and are based on Birth to three matters framework. Every child's current level of achievement is established and recorded and the next steps for individual children's learning identified. This is recorded on a pictorial chart to inform and share with parents and offer ideas and activities that they can help with at home. As a result, an ongoing profile of each child's achievements is built up and provides a valuable record as children master skills and progress along the developmental milestones.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning in the nursery is inadequate. Children make limited progress towards the early learning goals because activities are not effectively planned in advance to meet the needs of children within the Foundation Stage. Planning systems are currently under review with ongoing advice from the support teacher in the Children's Centre. Staff have some knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals but they lack confidence and are confused about how they implement and monitor learning experiences to promote a positive and enjoyable experience for young children. Activities are not effectively planned in advance or evaluated after to improve the quality of learning for children.

Children enjoy investigating and exploring the world around them as they find a worm when they dig in the soil. They concentrate well as they unscrew or take clocks and hairdryers apart and try to put them back together although connections with other experiences in children's learning are not adequately introduced or explored. Children are encouraged to count and name shapes in everyday situations such as counting two breadsticks for snack or matching the round shapes but opportunities to introduce simple calculations or comparisons are not followed through effectively. Opportunities are available to promote and extend children's physical development both indoors in a soft play room and in outdoor play areas. Children enjoy mixing paints and comment on the changing colours. They create pictures using paint or

coloured pens and have opportunities to experiment with mark making. They play imaginatively as they bath and dress the doll or make dinner in the home corner.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally well behaved and usually respond positively to the quiet, consistent approach from staff. However, children become restless and bored when they are not offered appropriate opportunities and challenges and disruptive behaviours occur. Minor disagreements are dealt with in a way that is appropriate to children's age and stage of development. Children are all encouraged to share, take turns and play together cooperatively as they build an imaginative structure of bricks or create shapes with playdoh. Every child is offered praise and encouragement on a regular basis by staff to promote their confidence and self-esteem. Children have access to a range of resources, play opportunities and activities which reflect diversity and acknowledge cultural differences. They are encouraged to develop an awareness of different cultures and beliefs in activities relating to different countries.

An inclusive environment ensures that children with additional needs are involved in all nursery areas. Individual strengths and weaknesses are identified and recorded for children with special needs and progress is reviewed on a regular basis. The special educational needs coordinator works in partnership with parents and appropriate support agencies to help children to make positive progress. Overall, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents and carers have open access to the setting and are encouraged to take and collect their child from their own nursery area. Information about each child's well-being is shared on a daily basis in informal chats and in a written record in the daily diary. However, continuity is not maintained due to staff changes and parents comment on the lack of stability and negative impact on the overall quality of care for their child. Parents are invited to discuss their child's progress on open evenings and information is displayed on Birth to three matters and the early learning goals.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Staffing levels within the nursery are organised to ensure that they are within the required ratios at all times with agency staff in place when required. However, staff are not effectively deployed within the nursery setting which means that children do not always have an appropriate level of attention and support. Staff are well qualified and attend relevant courses to continue their own professional development. Nevertheless, the staff do not work together effectively as a team due to the rapid turnover of staff. This has significant impact on the whole organisation of the nursery. Staff are generally unhappy and demoralised because their contribution is not valued and they are unsure of their roles and responsibilities. Keyworker systems are in place but not adhered to as staff are required to move between age groups to ensure

ratios are maintained. This leads to inconsistency for children and their families and does not promote effective continuity of care for young children. A comprehensive collection of policies and procedures are provided by the Pre-school Learning Alliance to meet all legal requirements and covers any eventuality. Records are stored to protect confidentiality but not always accessible or maintained effectively to promote positive outcomes for children. There is a complaints procedure in place for parents although it is not fully implemented.

The crèche is also provided by the Pre-school Learning Alliance but has a different management structure in place. There is a stable team of three well qualified members who understand their roles and responsibilities and work well together to promote good quality care for children and their families. All required policies and procedures are in place and effectively organised to meet the needs of individual children.

The quality of leadership and management is inadequate. There is no clear vision or direction in place to steer the work of the setting and as a result staff are insecure and the inadequate leadership does not create an atmosphere of mutual respect between practitioners. Some areas for improvement have been identified and advice obtained from support agencies but there is no clear programme in place to monitor and evaluate progress towards improvement throughout the nursery. Staff members lack confidence in their own skills because management frequently question their abilities and do not offer positive support and guidance for individuals. Staff training and development needs have not been clearly identified or met to promote a thorough understanding of all the principles for good practice in early years education.

Overall, the provision does not meet the needs of all the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration. 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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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- plan and implement the effective deployment of all staff within the premises to ensure the safety, welfare and positive development of children
- implement effective planning, observation and assessment procedures to enable staff to build on what children already know and plan the next steps for individual children's play and learning (also applies to nursery education)
- organise the nursery environment to ensure that it is safe and suitable for the whole range of children.

These actions are set out in a **notice of action to improve** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- increase the staff's knowledge and understanding of the Curriculum Guidance for the foundation stage to improve the quality of planning and teaching.
- implement a management programme to positively motivate staff and build a committed team to improve the quality of teaching and learning (also applies to care).

These actions are set out in a **notice of action to improve** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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