



Buffer Bear at St Richard's

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY286112
Inspection date	25 November 2005
Inspector	Christine Clint
Setting Address	Spitalfields Lane, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 6SE
Telephone number	01243 536778
E-mail	
Registered person	Buffer Bear 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?

Buffer Bear at St Richard's Day Nursery opened as part of the Buffer Bear group in 2004. The nursery is one of a large national chain of nurseries with a management and support structure. It operates from a purpose built building within the grounds of St. Richard's hospital in Chichester, West Sussex. There are five play rooms, an office and staff facilities. The nursery has its own secure outside play area. The nursery serves the employees of the hospital staff, other National Health Service

trusts and external families.

The setting opens five days a week, throughout the year, from 6.45 until 18.30, apart from bank holidays and two training days a year.

The nursery receives support from the local early years authority and from the management structure of the nursery chain. There is a national quality assurance system in place.

There are currently 75 children on role and 12 children attend, who have funded educational places. The nursery supports children with additional needs.

There are 22 employees, including bank and management staff. The majority of the staff are qualified in child care and early years education. The nursery includes a training programme for all the staff and some staff have extra areas of responsibility within the nursery.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

The children are healthy and good health is fully promoted throughout the nursery. The children are cared for in a very clean and organised environment, which has been entirely purpose-built and planned to meet the children's needs. Environmental health representatives check the kitchen and the setting implements immediate actions to carry out improvements or general maintenance.

The staff follow the well planned daily procedures for care and for feeding the children. By doing so, they protect the children's health. All the staff members and the parents use anti-bacterial spray on their shoes before they enter the baby rooms. The staff continually use anti-bacterial spray on all the tables and the chairs throughout the nursery. There are rotas for the every day cleaning of regularly used equipment and rotas for cleaning toys.

The children learn about hygiene as soon as they are mobile, they are asked to put tissues in the bin and the staff help them. The older children readily use tissues and wipe their own noses, they promptly tell the staff if the tissue box is empty and go with the staff to find a fresh supply. The older children also become responsible for managing their own personal hygiene, they use the toilets independently, they wash their hands and regularly brush their teeth. The staff talk about why the children must wash when they come in from outside play. There is an excellent level of cleanliness and this is supported by the staff, who respond swiftly to the children's needs, especially for nappy changing. The Staff have very hygienic routines, they wear gloves and aprons and have dedicated changing areas.

All the children are able to sleep soundly during the day. The smaller babies sleep in full size cots, within the baby room. They have individual bedding and always use the same cot during the day. The older children comfortably use sleep mats and covers

of their choice.

The children's accidents are very comprehensively recorded and the staff show a thorough knowledge of the procedures. The health and safety policy is part of the well planned staff induction. The staff are confident and directly address situations, they show total awareness of those minor injuries that the children arrive with. The staff highlight any head injury records to the parents, in order to alert them to signs of concern once they are at home. All the accident records are collated monthly, to give an overview of the nurseries' accidents, broken down into different age ranges and rooms. The children's medication records are precise and detailed; the staff follow all the procedures completely. They are well trained in first aid and have first aid kits situated between rooms for easy access.

The children have a very well balanced diet, because the menu is prepared following advice from the hospital dietician. The nursery cook liaises with the staff very frequently and the staff show a high level of awareness regarding the children's individual dietary needs. These are acknowledged and included without fuss and meal times are happy and very social. The children clear away their own cups and plates, they put left over items in the bin and the dirty utensils on the trolley. The staff talk about separating the clean and dirty items, they also give the children a lot of praise and help.

The children gain good skills for physical development, by playing outside regularly during the nursery day. They run and chase each other, they play enthusiastically with balls and they climb and balance on the large wooden boat. The children enjoy growing flowers and vegetables in the garden during the summer. The smaller children have fresh air in colder weather, because they are taken out for regular walks.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The children are entirely safe and secure, they are cared for in purpose built accommodation, where all the areas are dedicated and well utilised. There is a totally welcoming atmosphere for all the children and their parents. The manager and the staff show good individual recognition of all the children and the parents, when they enter and leave the nursery. The parents can easily identify the staff from their well displayed photos and job titles, in the entrance area. There is an excellent level of shared information displayed throughout the nursery. There is a lot of space and the children are grouped in separate rooms according to age. All the rooms for the children lead into each other; this enables the children to gradually spend time in another age group, or the staff can combine age groups at times.

The children have very suitable equipment, according to their age and stage of development. The toddlers can use the low wooden chairs without straps when they eat their meals; they have ample free space to practice walking. The babies can safely learn to roll and crawl on the comfortable floor; they can see their own reflection at a low level. The older children can easily access a wide range of resources, they move freely and independently.

The children currently learn to practice fire drills from their individual rooms and the staff take prepared evacuation bags with them to meet the children's needs. There is an integral fire alarm system and the staff gently introduce the children to a whole nursery fire drill.

The children's safety is thoroughly considered at all times and the nursery has comprehensive procedures to be followed for lost or uncollected children. There is a full risk assessment chart to cover any hazards for the children or the staff, which the staff member responsible for health and safety regularly updates. There is a high level of security and all the parents, staff and visitors entering the building can be easily seen. The outside area is fenced and securely gated. In addition, all the visitors are asked to ensure that the gate is closed.

All the documentation and the procedures for child protection highlight the children's welfare. The nursery strongly emphasises that they are building bonds of trust with the parents, the carers and the children. There are clear policies and full procedures to include how the management would follow up any allegations against the staff. The nursery has support from the experienced management team of the nursery chain and strongly emphasises the importance of confidentiality.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children are very polite, they form strong friendships and they interact well with each other and staff throughout the nursery. The children have good opportunities to mix with each other and to spend time with siblings during the day. The staff fully considers the children's general development and their emotional capabilities, when they move from one stage of the nursery to another.

The babies are very happy, they are clearly encouraged to move, crawl and learn to walk. The staff have an excellent knowledge and understanding of their developmental needs and their progress. They show warmth and total commitment to the babies' needs. The staff are able to explain that certain children are not sure about strangers and they may cry if visitors are too near. They are also very aware of some children who need more physical affection, especially in the toddler and baby sections of the nursery when they first wake up. The staff spend most of their time at floor level, interacting and responding to the babies gestures, facial expressions and sounds. The babies use sign language to express themselves, which the staff teach to all of them; this is continued throughout the nursery. The staff show a high level of concern for the comfort and well being of the babies. They follow their individual routines, which the staff often record on easy to see display boards within each room.

The children roam freely when they are toddling and they play with toys and books at floor level. They have a lot of space for movement and share picture books together. They learn to make animal sounds with the staff and they play musical instruments. The children enjoy meal times and feed themselves well. They have more access to resources as they progress through the nursery, but the staff are not always available to assist or focus on the prepared activities. Some members of the staff show less enthusiasm for being involved with play, although they are very involved with the

children's care and manage all their needs very well, especially helping them to get dressed and comforting them when they wake up.

The children in the older section of the nursery have plenty of choice and can access a variety of play equipment. They are fully encouraged to be independent and they confidently respond to all adults. They show a strong interest in the construction equipment; they readily say what it is called and they name the different coloured pieces of the construction toy. The staff praise them for listening and responding to questions. The children play imaginary games well with each other and dress up as princesses. They carry items to different parts of the room and organise each other through dialogue. They pretend to go swimming and dry themselves on the material from the dressing up clothes. The children eagerly read from pictures and can identify the title of a book. They enjoy spontaneous stories and can reach large format books from the book rack.

The children recognise and name each other from the photos on their place mats; they help the staff to decide who is present and who is not when they prepare for lunch. They take turns to play educational games on the computer and join in with counting and answering questions. The children show interest in the daily routines, although the staff do not always use these opportunities to extend the children's learning and, as the day progresses, some children show less interest in making choices.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The nursery has regular visits from an early years teacher, who evaluates the practice and offers advice. The staff record the children's developmental progress well throughout the nursery. They do so through individual assessments, to show that the children are progressing on appropriate levels of the Foundation Stage curriculum for their age. The staff show a strong knowledge of the ability of their own key children. In addition, they are very aware of the need for the children to have choice and access to a variety of resources. The staff generally wait for the children to take the lead and consciously allow the children's play to have a free flow concept. They only organise the children for routines or outside play. Consequently, some activities that the older children initiate do not last long, because the staff do not readily engage in the children's role play to offer ideas or challenge. Some staff members show spontaneity and interact immediately with the children, but this is rarely extended. The staff sometimes plan the older children's daily activities around themes and topics, but the plans do not fully show how the children will learn. There is no differentiation to show how older, more able children are extended or challenged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children can express their needs from a very early age, because the nursery staff teach the babies to use simple sign language. This has also enabled the children from other cultures to thrive, because they learn to speak English as an additional language. The staff are continuing to learn about the use of visual aids to

assist the children with individual needs. The children are introduced to other cultures through talking about Rangoli patterns and tasting food from other countries, which is cooked and provided on the premises. The children wear dressing up clothes for their imaginary play and pretend to use more unusual cooking items in the play kitchen. The nursery provides audio tapes with information for the parents and the children have taken part in specially organised topics about Italy and Mexico. The children can see images of people from different cultures displayed in the nursery.

The nursery fully supports children with particular needs and there is continual liaison with the parents. The staff work with other agencies to ensure that the plans for play are followed. They show willingness to maintain continuity for any child, in order to ease their progress into full time education.

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Their behaviour is exceptionally good. The staff offer continual praise and high levels of affection towards the children; they give clear explanation and the children totally respond and flourish. The older children show an increasing level of responsibility and care for each other and the resources. There are very few incidents of challenging behaviour and the nursery has clear policies for involving the parents immediately. The staff's bonding and team work give the children a thoroughly good example of behaviour and this is reflected throughout the nursery.

The quality of the partnership with parents is good. The families are totally welcomed in the nursery; the parents and the children frequently stop to talk to the staff in the office as they leave, they acknowledge the open door policy and the willingness of the staff to liaise at all times. The parents also enter the nursery frequently during the day, they spend time in the staff room while their babies are visiting, they unreservedly praise the nursery. The nursery has a detailed procedure for recording all the complaints and log sheets are used for any conversations with the parents about concerns or issues. The nursery follows these issues through with actions, which also recorded. The children benefit because their parents are provided with information in regular newsletters. They can also attend at parent evenings twice a year and they can join the parent representative group. The nursery has carried out a comprehensive parent/carer survey and all the outstanding points have been addressed in an action plan. The children have daily link books, which give the parents detailed information about their day and in which the parents can include messages for the nursery's staff. The parents of the pre-school aged children have little knowledge of their children's development profiles and have not contributed towards their records of progress.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. There are highly organised systems for operating, with clear aims and objectives. There is a comprehensive operational plan with an excellent cross referenced system, to link the policies and procedures with the National Standards. There are very thorough processes for employment and for completing staff clearances. All the staff's

photographs and names are displayed in the entrance foyer, with their job titles, and all the certificates for the qualified staff are also displayed. The manager has sound experience and is entirely aware of the staff not being alone with the children until their suitability is confirmed. There are thorough procedures for recording all attendance for the staff and the children.

All the staff members follow an organised induction training scheme and their position in the nursery is reviewed at regular intervals after employment. The staff are encouraged to learn about the policies of the nursery and they have easy access to all the policies and procedures. The staff's team work is strong and the arrangements for the staff's meetings are continually evolving, because the staff are increasing in number. Each level of the nursery has individual planning meetings and the staff's rotas are organised in advance, to maintain the ratios of adults to children at all times. The nursery has good community links and is supported by the local early years network. They have recently piloted a national quality assurance inspection.

The quality of the leadership and management is good. There is a proactive attitude towards the inspection process and a well prepared, comprehensive self evaluation appraisal.

There is a close bond between the manager and the deputy, who are both aware of each other's strengths and are happy to share areas of responsibility. The manager also has a full support system at the head office of the nursery chain. Both the manager and the deputy promote high standards of care across the nursery. However, they are aware that, as the children progress through the different aged sections of the nursery, there are missed opportunities. The staff do not always interest and involve the children or seek to challenge and extend the children's play.

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 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 further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that parents have access to all written records about their children and can contribute to the development profiles.

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):

- increase staff involvement in children's play to extend their learning and develop the plans for activities to show how children will achieve the learning objective

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