



Brooklands Childcare

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY295898
Inspection date	24 January 2006
Inspector	Angela Rowley
Setting Address	Rose Hill, Wigan Road, Ashton-in-Makerfield, Wigan, Lancashire, WN4 0BS
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Registered person	Brooklands Childcare 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 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?

Brooklands Childcare is privately operated. The nursery was founded in 1999, although registered to the current organisation in 2004. It operates from a converted school building in Bryn, Ashton- in Makerfield and is one of five day care provisions operated by Brooklands Childcare Ltd. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year. A maximum of 90 children may attend the nursery at any one time. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 116 children aged from birth to under 5 years on roll. Of these 30 children receive funding for nursery education. At present there are no children on roll with special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 29 staff. Of these, 23, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is adequately protected. Staff adopt some good practices which help sustain high levels of hygiene at key times. For example, they consistently wear disposable gloves and aprons for nappy changing and they label babies cots and bedding for individual use. However, there are some differences in how well cleaning procedures are implemented which results in poorer housekeeping in some areas of the nursery. Effective policies and procedures relating to health exclusions, medicines, accidents and first aid contribute to keeping children healthy. Children develop early personal independence seeing to their own toileting needs, accessing protective aprons when needed and washing their own hands mostly when prompted by staff. However, soap is not freely accessible to all children. It is inconsistently supplied by staff and therefore, children's learning of good personal hygiene is compromised.

Staff use the Birth to three matters guidance satisfactorily to promote the aspects of a healthy child. Babies' are emotionally well supported. They develop a clear sense of belonging as they enjoy loving interactions and snuggle closely with their consistent key workers.

Children are well nourished. The nursery implements a positive healthy eating policy and children receive a varied diet with the provision of fruit and vegetables each day. Babies diets are effectively managed through close consultation with parents. Older children learn about healthy choices through both planned activities and the provision of healthy snacks such as breadsticks and raisins. Mealtimes are treated as a social occasion with children seated in small groups. Largely they are well supported and develop good self-help skills feeding independently from a very early age. However, older children's mealtimes are often interrupted because of poor organisation. Staff repeatedly leave their group to get lunchtime items which results in a significant deterioration of children's table manners, for example mixing each others drinks.

All children develop good physical skills as they enjoy free movement in clear space. Most enjoy daily outdoor play on a suitable range of equipment although this does not always sufficiently challenge more able children. Babies receive fewer opportunities to access fresh air and sunlight which impacts on the provision of a healthy lifestyle.

Children receive many good opportunities to develop fine motor skill. They skilfully pour drinks from jugs with control, they use small cutters precisely to make play

dough shapes and use scissors to cut out magazine pictures.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in well maintained premises. Most areas are made welcoming to children by attractive displays of their artwork. Babies' areas are particularly appealing with items of interest displayed at all levels. There is a good range of safe and suitable equipment available in most areas of the nursery. It is effectively organised which enables children to make independent choices about their play.

There is an extensive range of clear documentation in place to manage children's safety. Formal risk assessments are completed by a designated Health and Safety person who regularly reviews the premises and the policies. Clear induction systems ensure that new staff are aware of the procedures required to protect children and keep them safe. They are vigilant and they promote safe practices such as reminders to pick up toys and sweep up spilled sand. This increases children's awareness of safety in the setting. However, there are fewer opportunities for children to learn other aspects of keeping safe. Staff miss, for example, key opportunities to teach children about road safety when going out into the community.

Children are well protected from abuse or neglect. Staff have a clear understanding of the nurseries child protection policy and of their responsibilities in the event of any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

There are some differences between the quality of experiences offered to children under three years and those provided for older children. In baby rooms children receive lots of cuddles and have very strong bonds with their key worker which increases their sense of well being. They benefit from consistent routines. They enjoy the textures of natural materials through, for example, treasure baskets, sand, water and spaghetti play which they explore with interest. Babies develop early communication skills through continual interaction with their carers, who value their attempts to communicate. They respond tunefully which encourages dialogue. For example, when a twelve month old is asked 'How are you, are you ok?' She nods and smiles in response. Many staff have embraced the Birth to three matters framework and are using it to provide interesting, first hand experiences linked to the aspects of early development. Children's progress is clearly monitored. It is tracked in assessment records and evidenced in achievement files which are effectively organised to show how progress is being made.

Children in tiddler and toddler rooms are generally confident in their relationships with staff, although the key working system is not as securely implemented. They play happily together and with adults. Staff plan and provide a good range of interesting experiences which help children make good progress in their learning. Children

develop a love of books because staff regularly read interesting stories for them. So much so that toddler children can name the title of the book they want staff to read next.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make suitable progress based on their starting points when they enter pre-school. Planning is thorough and ensures a broad and balanced range of activities are provided; aimed to help children make progress towards the early learning goals. They are well coordinated by the nursery's curriculum planner, although, they are then poorly implemented by staff that do not fully understand how to use them effectively. Some staff are not confident about learning outcomes and therefore they are not fully promoted in all children's activities. Some staff show abilities to link children's achievements to the stepping stones, knowing how to move them on to the next stage. They demonstrate adequate knowledge of the foundation stage curriculum. However, others lack sufficient knowledge and training. This impacts on the quality of teaching as children's learning opportunities are not fully exploited.

There are adequate systems in place which help track children's progress. Staff make some observations of children's achievements and use these to inform their assessments. However, children's progress is hindered because staff do not complete assessments regularly enough. Also, they do not organise achievement records to demonstrate children's progress.

The three separate pre-school rooms are well planned using open access shelving to create separate space. This promotes different areas of learning and enables children to make a wide range of independent choices. However, some of these areas are poorly resourced which restricts children's play.

Children show a strong sense of belonging as they greet each other on arrival. They show their play-dough creations proudly and take good levels of responsibility for their personal care. For example, independently washing their floured hands and hanging up their baking apron. Children are friendly and show concern for younger members of the group. They develop a love of books and listen carefully to stories because staff use the book area well to make story time a close, relaxing experience. They are beginning to recognise familiar sounds of letters and many make good attempts at writing their names recognisably. Children count well by rote and more able children can count identified shapes from a random group. However, they rarely solve simple mathematical problems in everyday activities nor do they spontaneously use writing in random situations.

Children are beginning to develop a sense of time. More able children attempt to describe 'yesterday'. They have some sense of the community as they sometimes visit the local shops or park. They develop good computer skills as some are able to follow a simple programme and maintain good control of the mouse. However, children's exploratory impulses are not sufficiently fulfilled. Some attractive resources are permanently provided for children to explore, although, they show little interest in them. They fulfil their own natural impulses incidentally by, for example, mixing drinks and observing the results.

Children are provided with some good opportunities to use their imagination in art. They freely access the painting easel but do not yet differentiate their marks in paint. Most join in with familiar songs and enjoy using actions. Their creativity is further extended during extra curricula music and movement sessions.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are warmly welcomed into the nursery. Staff are very responsive to the needs of individuals. In many areas of the nursery there are positive images representing both children who attend and the wider community. They learn to respect the ways of others through pre-planned activities linked to different cultural celebrations. Children with special educational needs are well supported. Clear procedures are in place which are effectively implemented by a well informed co-ordinator. Children's individual learning plans, alongside close links with other agencies, help children make good progress and enable them to play a fully integrated part in the provision.

Children's behaviour is generally good. Staff adopt appropriate strategies for promoting positive behaviour. They praise children naturally saying 'good boy' and 'clever girl'. However, it is rarely accompanied by explanations to increase children's understanding of right and wrong. Children do share and negotiate with each other. They wait patiently for a turn on the computer showing an understanding of rules. They use good manners because staff positively role model this behaviour. Therefore, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnerships with parents are good. They are warmly welcomed and secure relationships are evident during relaxed conversations when they drop off and collect their child. Parents of babies receive very useful daily diaries as a supplement to verbal exchanges. This helps ensure continuity of care between nursery and home. A wealth of information including, a detailed prospectus, policies, home activity sheets, displayed activity planning and menu information provides parents with essential details about the provision.

Parents of children receiving nursery education are well informed about the curriculum. Good use of 'activities at home' sheets enhances children's learning around a given theme. Parents evenings are held annually and they are provided with an informative termly progress report. A two way sharing of information within this process however, is not facilitated which hinders a full and accurate assessment of children's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Overall, the needs of the range of children who attend are met. There are however, obvious difficulties caused by ineffective organisation of staffing and space within some areas of the provision. For example, toddler's activities are frequently disrupted

when most other children are escorted through their room to access outside play. In pre-school staff work alone with their key working group. Consequently, children's activities are frequently disrupted when their carer needs to attend to an individual. Children's learning is also compromised because inexperienced staff do not observe and learn from the more effective practice of trained colleagues.

Generally, leadership and management is good. A strong management structure is now in place following a period of change. The new temporary manager is highly knowledgeable about early learning and has implemented some very effective tools used to plan for children's learning. She has quickly evaluated some of the areas where nursery education can be improved. She demonstrates a strong commitment to implementing already established action plans. Effective induction training, an extensive range of working documents, policies and procedures work in practice to keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. Strong recruitment procedures ensure that suitable persons are employed to care for children supported by effective appraisal and supervision systems.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not Applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the nursery's re-registration in November 2004, Ofsted has received one complaint relating to National Standard 7: Health. The complaint related to nappy changing procedures and the spread of infection. We asked the provider to investigate the concerns which were raised in August 2005. The provider demonstrated that suitable procedures were in place. They instigated their own review of how records are retained, to support these procedures. The provider remains qualified for 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 further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- improve children's health by; increasing their opportunities to learn about good hygiene practice, increasing the opportunities for babies to access fresh air and by ensuring that cleaning procedures are properly implemented
- improve staff deployment to ensure that those working alone receive sufficient assistance so that they are more able to effectively support children's care and their learning (also applies to nursery education)
- review the organisation of space to reduce the impact of children travelling through toddler room to access outdoor play

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 staffs knowledge and understanding of the Curriculum Guidance for the foundation stage to improve the quality of teaching and children's learning
- make more use of the outdoor area to enhance children's learning by, for example, providing opportunities to explore and experiment and by increasing opportunities that might physically challenge more able children
- conduct a review of the pre-school environment to ensure that all areas of play and learning are sufficiently resourced.

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