



# Busy Bees Day Nursery at Glenalmond

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123548
<b>Inspection date</b>	20 March 2006
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<b>Registered person</b>	Busy Bees Nurseries Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 Bees Day Nursery opened in 1998. It operates from three floors of a large converted Manor house and is a listed building. It is situated on the outskirts of St Albans, Hertfordshire and is set within its own grounds. The nursery serves the local and wider area.

A maximum of 116 children under the age of 8 years may attend at any one time. Children aged from 3 months to under 5 years attend the nursery and there are

facilities for out of school care for children aged up to 8 years although this is not currently running. The nursery is open each week day all year round and sessions are from 07:30 to 18:30. Children can attend for a variety of sessions.

There are currently 163 children aged from 3 months to 8 years on roll and this includes 19 funded 3 year olds and two funded 4 year olds. The setting currently supports no children with special needs and nine children who speak English as an additional language.

There are 15 part-time and 17 full time staff who work with the children. 17 staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3 including six staff who are near to completing a recognised early years qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from a healthy, balanced diet. They enjoy nutritious meals and snacks with menu's displayed for parents to see. All meals are freshly prepared and cooked on the premises and the menu takes account of children's individual dietary needs. Special dietary requirements are met well. Each child has their own placemat with their photo on and a colour coding system is used. For example, green means it is parents preference the child does not have a particular food and red means the child has a medical allergy. Older children participate fully in mealtimes and enjoy laying the tables, putting out placemats and knives and forks. Younger children enjoy their food and generally have the appropriate plates and cutlery to eat their food. Mealtimes are used as a time for social interaction and a time to encourage good table manners with staff sitting with children while they are eating.

Children participate in a range of physical play activities which contributes to their physical health and fitness. Children are able to develop self-confidence in their physical skills as they use a varied range of indoor and outdoor equipment. Resources allow them to climb, run, jump and balance. Outside play is provided for all children including the babies who have their own garden area. All children benefit from regular opportunities to develop their physical skills in the soft play room and keenly participate in music and movement sessions. Inside, younger children have clear space to practise their crawling and walking skills. Staff encourage their development through the provision of resources which are appropriate for their age and stage of development. Children can rest and sleep according to their needs, however, sleep arrangements for the younger babies do not always allow them to have undisturbed sleep.

Children are cared for in an environment where they learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. Support and guidance from staff helps children to gain a clear understanding of good hygiene practices. Most children understand they must wash their hands after visiting the toilet or before eating and some older children know why they must wash their hands. They all enjoy using the wall soap dispensers which encourages them to wash their hands thoroughly and they are praised by staff

for doing so. Children stay healthy because of good hygiene procedures which helps to prevent the spread of infection. For example, staff always wear disposable gloves and aprons when changing nappies, tables are cleaned with anti-bacterial spray before and after meals and staff are generally consistent in washing their hands.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised because staff are vigilant and use thorough risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. Children benefit from a safe, child friendly environment where they can move around safely and independently and staff have a sound knowledge of health and safety procedures. Appropriate safety precautions are in place such as safety gates, socket covers and regular fire practises. There are effective security systems in place and supervising entry to the nursery is well managed with the outer door locked, a door buzzer, glass viewing panels and signing in for all visitors. This ensures no unauthorised persons enter and that children are not at risk.

All children are able to independently access a varied range of safe, good quality resources and activities. Toys and equipment are developmentally appropriate and sufficiently challenging so children are interested and motivated in their play. Each room is organised to encourage children's independence and to promote their development and learning. For example, low level storage units are used to encourage children to freely access the toys. The trays have written labels alongside pictures of the contents. Resources are well maintained and regularly checked by staff to ensure they are clean and safe. Children are learning how to keep themselves and others safe. Staff skilfully explain safe practices, such as why a child should pick up a dropped toy so another child does not trip and hurt themselves. When walking down the stairs, children know they must walk in a line and hold onto the hand rail.

Children are safeguarded as staff have a sound knowledge of child protection procedures and they give priority to children's safety and welfare. There is a comprehensive child protection policy in place which all staff are fully aware of and know how to implement. This includes recording and reporting procedures and what to do if allegations are made against a member of staff.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel at ease in the nursery environment. They separate from their parents and carers and settle happily at the beginning of the day. A keyworker system is used and staff know their key children and their families well. Staff work in close partnership with parents which results in children being confident in their play. Staff support children well in their play, giving praise and encouragement as appropriate.

Younger children's learning is generally promoted through the staff's knowledge of

child development. Most staff are familiar with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and activities are planned in line with the framework. However, children's progress is not monitored sufficiently as observations of individual children's play and achievements are not regularly taken and assessment books are not always completed. This information is not then used effectively to plan future activities and play experiences to ensure children's individual developmental needs are always met.

Children are able to participate in a range of activities which provide a balance of free play and more structured play opportunities. Children regularly explore texture and creative play through taking part in planned activities such as painting, cornflour play, and sand and water play. For example, they delight in hand and foot painting and enjoy the sensation of the cold paint on their fingers. Children show an interest in books and can be regularly seen sitting in the book corner enjoying the books. They independently look for their favourite story and confidently ask an adult to read it. They listen attentively to the story and discuss the pictures. Children's communication skills are well fostered as staff listen and respond to children's questions while looking at the pictures in the book.

#### Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making steady progress towards the early learning goals and staff offer a range of activities which are generally balanced. However, curriculum planning is limited. Although plans include the six areas of learning, they are not linked to the stepping stones and early learning goals. Plans detail some activities but do not show learning intentions and do not show how activities can be adapted to suit children who learn at different rates. Some activities are evaluated but this information is not used to inform future planning. Assessment records are available but are not always maintained. Plans are not linked to observations or assessments of the children and so it cannot be ensured that children's developmental needs are always catered for. Staff have been working hard to develop planning systems but do not have a secure knowledge or understanding of the Foundation Stage. Staff build trusting relationships with the children. They talk to the children about safety, behaviour within routines and are involved in children's play to promote learning. Children benefit from good quality resources and they are easily accessible and support children's independent learning and exploration, such as the home corner and dressing up materials.

Children arrive happily, quickly settle and engage in activities with friends. Children are aware of boundaries and behavioural expectations, for example, sitting properly on a chair and taking turns. Children show independence skills through being able to confidently access all areas of the environment. For example, going to the toilet on their own or choosing resources to play with. They are keen to help tidy up and enjoy using the dustpan and brush to sweep up the sand off the carpet. Children are regularly praised by staff and children participate eagerly and are excited to learn. Children have regular opportunities to experience music, imaginative play and explore varied materials and media on a daily basis. Children can access sticking, cutting and drawing independently. Children are keen to use their imagination, for example, in art when drawing and during creative play. Some children are able to confidently count to 20. Mathematical concepts are reinforced through books, singing

and counting during their daily routine, for example, at story time. They explore concepts such as quantity and volume through sand and water play.

Children speak clearly and are able to concentrate well until the end of a book. They enjoy stories and understand that print carries meaning. Children are beginning to link sounds to letters, for example, a child recognised the letter 'm' on a necklace and asked if it stood for mummy. Other children in the group then joined in thinking of names that began with the same letter. Children develop skills for emergent writing by using various mark making materials. Children are able to freely access writing materials and enjoy writing letters to post or drawing pictures. Children are becoming familiar with the written word on name pegs and labelling. Children's physical skills are fostered. Outside they show control as they run, climb and jump. Children are able to negotiate skilfully around obstacles and children as they run demonstrate balance and co-ordination as they kick, throw and catch balls. Children have regular access to resources that develop their knowledge of technology. They have access to a computer and use telephones within their play. Children learn about past and present through talking about their families and develop a sense of place through going for walks in the local community.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others is promoted through the activities they take part in. Children develop positive attitudes towards others as they select from the varied range of resources reflecting diversity. Displays and posters throughout the nursery reflect positive images and help children to become aware of the wider society. Children learn about the local community through outings such as to the local supermarket and visitors to the nursery. Children particularly enjoyed a visit from the local fire brigade and were able to try on firemen's helmets and sit in the fire engine.

Children understand responsible behaviour and are beginning to learn right from wrong. They behave considerately and are encouraged by staff to show care and concern, for example, if a child is upset or fallen and hurt themselves. Staff give explanations, encourage children to apologise and set clear boundaries. Children play together well and behaviour is dealt with in ways appropriate to the child's level of understanding. Children are taught to be polite to others and the staff are good role models. Children can be regularly heard saying 'please' and 'thank-you'. Children with English as an additional language are well supported and the setting has systems in place to care for children with special needs. The setting fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from the close relationships that staff have developed with parents and carers. Parents complete questionnaires every three months and findings are evaluated and addressed to ensure children receive good quality care. Parents receive good quality information about the nursery, 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage. Children's needs are met as staff obtain information about their background from parents prior to the child starting

at the nursery. Children's achievements are discussed with parents each day and more formally at parents evenings. Staff encourage parents to be involved in their child's learning. For example, through requests for items from home for themes and topics to support children's learning. Also, a parent liaison group is a new initiative about to start at the nursery with parent representatives invited to sit on a committee. Parents spoken to at inspection praised the nursery and felt the environment was welcoming and stimulating. They spoke positively of staff who they reported were caring and approachable and they felt fully informed of the progress their child was making.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are safeguarded because systems are in place to ensure all staff working with children are suitable to do so. Recruitment procedures ensure children are cared for by staff who have relevant experience, qualifications, knowledge and skills. Appropriate checks are completed on all staff and any persons who have not been vetted would not have unsupervised access to children and all staff are aware of this. Clear induction systems ensure staff are informed of the nursery's policies and procedures and these are generally implemented well. Training needs are identified and addressed immediately through staff appraisals and supervision. However, because of recent staff changes, management acknowledges the need for some staff to increase their knowledge. Pre-school and school room staff are waiting to attend training on the Foundation Stage to ensure they can deliver an effective nursery education curriculum. Also, the special needs co-ordinator has yet to attend a course to ensure appropriate action can be taken when a child is identified or admitted to the provision with special needs. Ratios are always maintained and a keyworker system is in operation.

The leadership and management of the nursery is satisfactory. Children are cared for by staff who are supportive of each other and who work well together as a team. They are guided by the generally effective leadership of the management team who are positive role models and have a clear vision of the needs of the children. Most issues raised at the last inspection have been addressed, however, there are still some areas of weakness which remain outstanding.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the provider was asked to review the provision of books to make them interesting and accessible, to provide more resources to reflect equal opportunities and to review the presentation of children's food by serving helpings on appropriate plates. Children now benefit from books which are developmentally appropriate and their independence skills are promoted as they can easily access the books in all rooms. Books are displayed so they are interesting and inviting to children. Resources to reflect equal opportunities have been increased and children are learning about the wider world through their play. Children develop positive

attitudes towards others as they are able select from the available resources reflecting diversity. The presentation of food to children at snack time and mealtimes has been reviewed. All staff are fully aware that food must be served onto appropriate plates or dishes and overall, this is implemented.

The provider was also asked to ensure parents were fully informed of staff deployment strategies and to ensure a designated member of staff for special needs had suitable training. Parents are kept fully informed of any changes to rooms, such as staff leaving or new staff starting. Children benefit from the strong partnership between the nursery and parents and they work closely together when children are moving up to the next room to ensure children settle well and are happy. Until recently, the nursery had a designated special needs co-ordinator who had received suitable training, however, she has left. Another member of staff has been given the role of SENCO but she has not yet completed a course.

At the last nursery education inspection the provider was asked to expand staff knowledge of the Foundation Stage, develop short term planning to show clear learning intentions and ensure assessments are used to inform planning and to review the provision of activities to provide more challenge for the older and more able children. Steps have been taken to address these issues but because of recent staff changes in the pre-school and the school room, there is still a need for staff to increase their knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Busy Bees have devised their own tracker books using the stepping stones and early learning goals to assess children's progress but these are not generally used to inform planning. Short term planning is in place using the six areas of learning but do not give clear learning intentions linked to the stepping stones or early learning goals. Children benefit from activities and experiences that challenge, although these are not recorded. However, staff are aware that planning and assessment are areas that require development to show how children are learning and progressing.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been three complaints.

In April 2005 Ofsted received a complaint that raised concerns about staff to child ratios and the ability of staff to obtain assistance should they need it during the lunch hour. These concerns relate to National Standards 2 : Organisation and National Standards 12: Working in partnership with parents. Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit and found evidence to substantiate the complaint. The provider was issued with a compliance notice to ensure that sufficient staff are deployed effectively at all times. A further visit was made in May 2005 and Ofsted was satisfied that the provider was meeting the compliance notice. The provider was set three actions to complete under National Standards 2 : Organisation and one under National Standards Actions 12: Working in partnership with parents. All actions have been met and the provider remains qualified for registration.

In September 2005 concerns were raised about staff ratios particularly at the beginning and end of the day. These concerns relate to National Standards 2 : Organisation and National Standards 12: Working in partnership with parents. Ofsted



made an unannounced visit to the provision and as a result set one recommendation under National Standard 12: Working in partnership with parents. The recommendation has been met and the provider remains qualified for registration.

In February 2006 Ofsted received a complaint about a significant event which raised concerns under National Standard 11: Behaviour management. Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit. No evidence was found that the setting breached the National Standards. However, the nursery had only partially followed the correct procedure with the incident which had occurred and had not informed Ofsted of the incident as directed under the National Standards. Therefore actions were set under National Standards 14: Documentation. All actions have been met and 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.

## **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 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):

- review sleep arrangements for children aged under 1 year to allow for undisturbed sleep while still accommodating individual sleep patterns
- ensure children's progress is monitored effectively through the use of written observations and assessments for all children aged under 3 years and use this information to plan their future progress
- ensure special educational needs co-ordinator has full regard to the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs through the completion of a SENCO course

### **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):

- ensure children's progress is monitored effectively through the use of written observations and assessments for children aged 3 years and over and that these are then used to plan their next steps in development and learning
- develop short term planning to be more informative and to include clear learning intentions linked to the stepping stones and early learning goals including how activities can be extended or adapted to suit individual children who learn at different rates.
- develop staff knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage

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