



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 116788

DfES Number: 524391

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 29/03/2004
Inspector Name Christine Cutts

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Buffer Bear Day Nursery
Setting Address 1 Valpy Street
Reading
Berkshire
RG1 1AR

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Buffer Bear Limited 02893177

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Buffer Bear Limited
Address 7 Valpy Street
Reading
Berkshire
RG1 1AR

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

Buffer Bears Nursery is a private full day care provision which is part of a chain of nineteen nurseries nationwide. The nursery provision is set over two floors of a listed building with a small enclosed garden, in Reading Town centre, close to the railway station and bus terminus.

The nursery is open Monday - Friday 7.30am - 6.30pm for 52 weeks of the year excluding bank and public holidays. Breakfast, a cooked lunch, tea, morning and afternoon snacks are offered. Babies formula milk and nappies are also provided. The nursery is registered to provide Full Day care for 84 children under five years of age of these no more than 36 may be under two years. The provision is in receipt of funding for three and four year olds, and receives regular input from an Early Years advisory teacher. Weekly dance sessions are offered from a qualified dance teacher for the three and four year olds.

The nursery is able to support children with special needs. The children are cared for across the groups by qualified and experienced Nursery Nurses and Nursery Assistants, the majority of whom hold a current First Aid certificate. The nursery also employs a cook.

How good is the Day Care?

Buffer Bears Day Nursery provides good quality care for children in a warm and welcoming environment.

The accommodation allows for a wide variety of activities and good resources are made available for the children to choose from. Good use is made of the out-side play area to offer children fresh air and physical play. However, the garden area is in need of attention and this is planned for the near future.

Qualified staff and management work well as a team to support the children's learning. All relevant documentation is in place to enable the pre-school to care for the children, although it lacks minor details in some areas.

Children's health and welfare are well promoted with staff encouraging good health routines. An effective risk assessment process is in place.

High staff ratios enable the staff to spend time getting to know the children and identify the individual needs of the children.

The pre-school has effective special needs and child protection systems in place. Children with special needs are well supported in the group. A good range of resources and planned activities promote children's understanding of others and provides positive images of the diversity in our society.

The children are supported and encouraged in their learning with a good range of planned and unplanned activities to meet the developmental needs of children, covering all areas of learning.

Staff promote equal opportunities well by monitoring children's individual needs and by ensuring that all activities and resources are made available to all children. Children's behaviour is generally good in a lively and busy atmosphere supported by staff who help the children understand the rules of the nursery.

Parents support the nursery and very positive comments received show that they are happy with the care given and the information on their children progress and care.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The previous inspection was a transitional inspection and did not highlight areas of improvement

What is being done well?

- A full induction and training programme for all staff is in place covering many of the requirements of the national standard: Special educational needs (SEN) codes of practice, child protection policies and procedures.
- Effective organisation and high staff levels allow the nursery to offer a very wide range of well planned activities for the children to choose from.
- A very good range of resources are provided by the nursery, which are very much enjoyed by the children who were active and involved in their play.
- Good use is made of the accommodation to offer children a warm and welcoming environment in which to play and learn.
- Effective systems are in place for the identification, monitoring and support of children with special needs.
- Children are developing good independence skills which are well fostered by the nursery.

What needs to be improved?

- Operational plan does not include local staff deployment and grouping of children.
- Behaviour policy does not include procedures for recording incidents of physical intervention.

Outcome of the inspection

Good

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

Provision is acceptable and is of good quality. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

The quality of teaching is generally good with staff having a secure knowledge of the individual children and their progress on the stepping stones. Buffer Bears Day Nursery offer's children a welcoming and stimulating environment in which good use is made of the accommodation and resources to promote children's learning.

Children's behaviour is generally good with staff supporting children to develop an understanding of right and wrong and the rules of the nursery.

Children are well supported in most areas of communication language and literacy, and mathematical development. There are less opportunities for children to explore and investigate and to find out how things work.

Staff praise, encourage and support children's learning and provide good quality activities for children to play with imagination. Staff support children's play well, building on the children's own interests and experiences.

Management and leadership is generally good with staff working well together, the staff team are committed to building good staff relationships. A shared commitment to early years is clearly visible and management and staff are committed to extending their understanding in early years education.

Partnership with parents and carers is very good and parents are actively involved in the life of the play group. Parents are supportive of staff and contribute to topics. Comments received show that parents appreciate the information exchanged on their children's progress.

What is being done well?

- Children are confident, respect others and behave well, following the example and guidelines set down by staff.
- Staff encourage, praise and support children's learning, giving the children the opportunity to persevere and complete tasks.
- Staffs secure knowledge of stepping stones and early learning goals enables them to ensure the accommodation and resources are well used to provide fun activities that promotes learning for, all the children.
- There are effective relationships between the nursery, parents and carers to support children's home/school learning.

What needs to be improved?

- Opportunities for children to explore and experiment with length, weight and capacity in every day situations.
- Children's opportunities to explore and investigate, to ask questions and find out how things work.
- Children's opportunity to recognise initial sounds and experiment with sounds and words.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The group has made some improvement since the last inspection on the key issues raised. Children's recognition of initial sounds is still an area for improvement and continues to be a key issue this inspection. Children now have the opportunity to climb using fixed apparatus and climbing frame and slide and a computer is available for children to use in the Big Bears room.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are active in their learning, are well behaved, show confidence and are developing good independence skills. Staff give children the opportunity to talk about themselves and their experiences individually, building children's self-esteem. The children work well together and co-operate to achieve tasks, they share and take turns and understand the rules of the nursery.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children talk confidently and use language to negotiate and make their feelings understood, building their competence with language through social interactions. Children choose to 'read' to adults and others, their enjoyment of books is encouraged by staff. Children's development in initial sound recognition is less well supported. Opportunities for children to practise emergent writing for a variety of purposes is good and children are developing correct letter formation, writing their names.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children use mathematical language with confidence, they enjoy counting and freely count up to 10 and beyond with adult support, recognise numbers, name shapes. Children enjoy the good practical activities provided by staff to develop mathematical concepts. However opportunities to explore length, capacity and weight are not as well supported. Children use numbers appropriately and are confident in using mathematical language.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children learn about growth and change in the natural world, a sense of place and time are all well supported by staff through topic work. Children's use of technology related equipment is well supported. The nursery support children's understanding of other cultures and beliefs through celebrating festivals and events. Children's opportunities to investigate, explore and ask why and find out how things work are less well supported.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children's physical development is progressing well through participation in a range of activities. They use tools and are developing good pencil control. Children use large apparatus, such as climbing frames and fixed out-door equipment and enjoy activities in dance and movement to music. Children are also encouraged by staff to develop bodily awareness of health.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

There are good opportunities for children to express themselves through a variety of media. Staff allow children the freedom and space to develop involved and imaginative role play. Children express their ideas, thoughts and feelings, explore music and make sounds, use colour and collage and free drawing, use sand and water play, role play.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- extend opportunities for children to explore and experiment with length, weight and capacity in every day situations.
- extend children's opportunities to explore and investigate, to ask questions and find out how things work.
- develop children's opportunity to recognise initial sounds and experiment with sounds and words.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.