



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 319135

DfES Number: 519450

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 19/08/2003

Inspector Name Cilla Burdis

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care

Setting Name Buffer Bear Nursery

Setting Address 1 Neville Street
Newcastle upon Tyne
Tyne and Wear
NE1 5DP

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Buffer Bear Childcare Partnership

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Buffer Bear Childcare Partnership

Address 1 Neville Street
Newcastle upon Tyne
Tyne and Wear
NE1 5DP

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 Bear Nursery provides flexible care and education for pre-school children of families who work and live both in the immediate and surrounding areas of Newcastle. The nursery is one of a national chain of nurseries.

The accommodation is within a building adjoining the site of the central railway station in Newcastle and was formerly owned by the railway company. The nursery is on the first floor and consists of five main rooms used for the four levels of care and education provided for children aged from birth to five years. There is an enclosed, outdoor play area behind the nursery building which children reach by a short, supervised walk.

The nursery operates throughout the year with sessions from 07.30 to 18.00 Monday to Friday. There are currently 79 children on roll including 14 three-year-olds and eight four-year-olds. Funding is received for nine three-year-olds and eight four-year-olds. None of the children attending have special educational needs and no children speak English as an additional language.

There are 20 staff members including the manager and deputy. Cleaning and catering staff are also employed to work on the premises. All but six of the childcare staff are qualified and the six unqualified staff are currently working towards Level 3 qualifications. The manager and deputy are supernumerary but all the other childcare staff work directly with the children. Since the previous inspection, room leaders have been appointed within each room.

The nursery receives advice, support and training from its own company head office as well as from the local authority Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. There is no specific teaching method promoted within the nursery which follows the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage and the early learning goals.

How good is the Day Care?

Buffer Bear nursery provides good quality care for children aged three months to under five years. High priority is given to ensuring that children are safe inside and outside the nursery. All rooms in the nursery are decorated attractively to make them welcoming to children. The environment is used creatively allowing children to have independence in selecting toys and equipment. Staff ensure that the environment is adapted to enable children with special needs to be fully included in activities.

Relevant staff training is encouraged and supported. All the unqualified staff are currently working towards a level three qualification in childcare.

The range of activities in all areas of the nursery is good and will have a positive impact on children's learning. However, it is recommended that resources reflecting positive images of disability are made more accessible. Effective recording systems ensure that staff know children well and are able to monitor development appropriately. The key worker system enables staff to establish consistent and good relationships with children and parents. Staff interact well with the children providing a caring and supportive environment which helps children to settle and develop confidence and self esteem.

Parents are welcomed into the setting and are encouraged to share information about their children. Daily diaries are used in the Baby Bear room and for the first month of attendance in the Koala room. "Special moment" forms are used to record achievements or something interesting a child has said. A parents' group has been set up which liaises with management and ensures that parents are informed of new developments.

What has improved since the last inspection?

There were no actions to address from the last inspection.

What is being done well?

- The setting has developed an effective induction procedure to ensure that staff are well informed of their roles and responsibilities. There is also ongoing support for staff to develop their knowledge and skills through access to training.
- Good use is made of space and resources to provide an attractive, welcoming environment in which children can participate in activities with comfort and independence. The good variety of resources promotes learning in all areas.
- Clear and comprehensive procedures have been produced to effectively inform staff of their roles and responsibilities in ensuring the safety of staff and children at all times. There are effective systems for the safe arrival and collection of children and to ensure that unwanted visitors do not gain access.
- The comprehensive procedures to promote good health and hygiene plus the high number of staff who hold first aid certificates.
- The excellent variety of healthy and nutritious food provided.

- Effective measures to keep staff well-informed of children's individual needs to make sure that they are met fully and appropriately and the good support systems to assist staff when caring for a child who has special needs.
- Positive behaviour management strategies which are implemented well and encourage co-operation, sharing and consideration of others.
- The encouragement given to parents to share their child's achievements and development with staff. Staff welcome and value parents' views and contributions in relation to their child's development and to the development of the nursery itself.
- The clear, comprehensive policies and procedures, which are used to manage the setting well.

What needs to be improved?

- staff awareness of their responsibilities regarding the cleaning of toys and resources;
- resources that reflect positive images of disability;
- knowledge that the Area Child Protection Committee procedures followed in the event of a concern being raised, relate to the area in which the child lives.

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.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
4	Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities regarding the cleaning of resources and toys.
9	Make resources that reflect positive images of disability available to all children on a regular basis.
13	Ensure that the child protection procedures followed are those relating to

	the area in which the child lives.
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INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

Buffer Bear Nursery provides a welcoming atmosphere where children settle quickly and make very good progress towards the early learning goals across all six areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff are enthusiastic, work well together and provide an interesting and challenging curriculum that enables children to learn successfully. Their very good understanding of the early learning goals is used to provide excellent child and adult-initiated activities. The nursery accommodation and use of local amenities provide a stimulating environment both inside and outside. Very good resources are effectively used to develop children's abilities and learning. Ongoing and detailed assessment ensures that each child's needs, interests and abilities are identified; appropriate activities are planned and provided.

Staff have high expectations of all children's behaviour and this has a positive impact on behaviour and relationships within the nursery. Interaction with children is very good, successfully fostering independence in play, learning and personal care. Children with special needs have previously attended the nursery and appropriate procedures are in place to provide effective care and support.

The leadership and management of the nursery is very good. Staff are very aware of their roles and responsibilities and work well together so that the day to day running of the nursery works very well. The manager has a strong commitment to monitoring, developing and improving practices. Staff are encouraged and supported to undertake ongoing training and to contribute to regular staff meetings and reviews.

Partnership with parents is very good. Detailed verbal and written information is provided that tells them about the nursery's organisation and activities and keeps them well informed of their child's achievements and progress. They are actively encouraged to become involved and to share what they know about their child.

What is being done well?

- Children's personal, social and emotional development is very good. They are confident, interested and involved in activities and are independent in their play and personal care. Their social skills and behaviour are very good and their relationships with staff and each other are very positive.
- Staff's positive interaction with children and their solid knowledge of the early learning goals leads to well-planned activities that interest children and progresses their learning.
- Children's use of language for thinking and communication is very good. Staff encourage and take an interest in what children say and children effectively

use language to extend and enhance their play and to express their feelings and ideas.

- Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are provided with comprehensive verbal and written information about the nursery and about their child's activities and progress.
- Strong leadership ensures the effective monitoring and assessment of teaching and learning, so that staff development is well supported, areas for improvement are identified and high standards maintained.

What needs to be improved?

- There are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to the following:
- the extension of opportunities for 4 year olds to recognise and use pattern in everyday activities;
- the continuation of the provision of opportunities for four-year-olds to engage in physical activities of climbing, swinging, running and sliding.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The setting has made very good improvement since the last inspection.

The position of 'room leader' has been created to improve staff's promotion prospects and to provide an additional level of monitoring and assessing practice within each room of the nursery.

Partnership with parents has been further extended by encouraging them to share what they know about their child when they move into the Big Bear Room. They now complete an 'All about me' booklet, giving staff additional information about their child at this stage of their development.

Planned opportunities for children to develop their climbing skills now include regular trips to a local outside area offering children a range of small walls to climb and jump from and a grassy area for running. There is also large climbing apparatus for use indoors and outdoors. The continuation of these opportunities are carried forward as a point for consideration from this inspection.

Children now have regular access to a range of malleable materials including, playdough, cornflour, clay, wet and dry sand.

Children now have regular opportunities to incorporate musical instruments into their creative play and musical instruments are accessible to children within the playrooms.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

They are confident when expressing their needs and ideas and have a high level of independence which extends and enhances their learning in all areas. Their behaviour and relationships with staff and each other are very positive. During play and learning they are interested and involved, work well in groups and independently.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Their use of language for communication and thinking is well developed through songs, stories, questioning, and conversation. They use it effectively to extend and enhance their play and learning. Children confidently engage in developing their writing skills and can recognise familiar words in books and on labelling within the setting.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Most children confidently count beyond ten and recognise some numerals. Good small group activities extend children's understanding of shape and pattern, addition and subtraction, which are often consolidated during other activities, for example, counting songs, jigsaws, construction. All children use positional language in their play, for example, when using water and sand, riding bikes, setting out floormats with cars and animals.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

They learn about the natural world and features of their environment during regular visits to local amenities and from visitors to the setting, for example, the fire officer. They enjoy exploring, investigating and using real tools. Most children competently use the computer, a digital camera, headphones and tape decks. Children confidently and spontaneously talk about people and events in their own lives and are learning about the lives of other people.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

They move within all areas confidently and safely, and skilfully manoeuvre and control wheeled vehicles during outside play. Children are adept at manipulating small items, for example, construction, cutting and sticking tools. They have opportunities to develop their climbing and balancing skills and enjoy taking part in music and movement sessions. Most children are independent when attending to their physical needs for example, use of the toilet, washing hands, fastening clothes.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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They are confident and able to explore and express their ideas and feelings through a wide range of activities such as dressing up and role play, painting, two and three dimensional model making, singing to music and with instruments. Children recognise and use colour and experience using different textures and materials such as wet sand, collage and clay.

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

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very 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

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- Points for consideration only-
- Extend opportunities for four year olds to recognise and use pattern in everyday activities.
- Continue to provide opportunities for four-year-olds to engage in physical activities of climbing, running, swinging and sliding.

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.