



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 115342

DfES Number: 521088

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 24/09/2003
Inspector Name Teresa Evelina Coleman

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care
Setting Name Busy Bees Pre-school
Setting Address Methodist Church Hall
Church Road
Bexleyheath
Kent
DA7 4DD

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Mrs P Godin

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

Busy Bee's Pre-school opened in 1965. It operates in the Methodist Church Hall, Church Road, Bexleyheath. The pre-school has use of the main hall and three additional smaller rooms, all of which are located on the ground floor. There is a small paved, fully enclosed play area for outdoor play. The pre-school is well established in the community and serves families from the surrounding residential area.

There are currently 31 children on roll. Twenty nine children are three-year-olds, 24 of whom are funded. There are two funded four year olds. There are currently no children attending for whom English is an additional language. The pre-school provides support for children with special educational needs.

The group opens on five mornings each week during school term times. Sessions are from 9.15am to 12.00 noon.

The staff team comprises a manager and a deputy, both of whom hold a recognised childcare qualification. Three additional members of staff work with the children. One holds a recognised childcare qualification, while the remaining two members of staff are unqualified.

The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

The quality and standard of day care provided by Busy Bees Pre-School is satisfactory. The group provides a relaxed environment where children can play and learn to interact with others. Staff are warm and caring towards the children.

Children are able to choose freely from the activities provided, however, the layout of activities needs to be reviewed, to ensure that space is used effectively. Staff work well at activities with small groups of children, but are not always aware of children

who need support and direction in other parts of the room. This sometimes results in some children not being meaningfully occupied. Although children's behaviour is generally good, staff sometimes do not notice children who are behaving unacceptably, particularly in the home corner.

Staff demonstrate some understanding of the six areas of children's play and development, but insufficient written planning means that opportunities to enhance development are frequently missed, especially with regard to children's language and mathematical development. This was particularly observed in the home corner and during refreshment time.

Furniture and some equipment is in an old and worn condition. Staff are generally aware of their responsibilities with regard to children's safety, but must ensure that children cannot access the kitchen area.

The pre-school provides parents with some written information in the form of a welcome letter and monthly newsletters. There is also a set of policies and procedures giving more detailed information. Parents are able to obtain a copy on request. Staff have relaxed and friendly relationships with parents. The pre-school operates a key worker system and staff are available to talk to parents on a daily basis. There is no formal method in place, eg open days, for keeping parents informed about their child's development and progress.

All of the necessary documentation is in place, although some minor improvements are needed.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the pre-school manager agreed to ensure that the group's policies and procedures (particularly equal opportunities) were understood and implemented by staff, shared with parents and reviewed on a regular basis. Policies and procedures have been reviewed and updated. Staff seem aware of these, but do not ensure that they are implemented, especially in relation to behaviour management. Parents are informed about the policies and procedures via the welcome letter.

The pre-school manager also agreed to ensure that play equipment is safe, well maintained and meets the varying needs of children. This action is still outstanding, as some of the furniture and equipment is in an old, worn condition, eg tables and chairs. It was also agreed that the group should make available resources which reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability. Some multi-cultural resources were observed during the inspection, although no positive images of disability are available.

The manager agreed to use the group's keyworker system to ensure a two-way exchange of information with parents and to ensure that all staff work with the parents to develop a trusting and supportive partnership. The group has taken steps to achieve this and relationships with parents were observed to be effective.

The manager agreed to ensure that children are supervised at all times. She said

that younger children are always accompanied to the toilet, while older children are encouraged to be independent.

The manager agreed to encourage all staff to attend courses on behaviour management and child protection. These actions are still outstanding.

What is being done well?

- Staff are kind and caring towards the children and children approach them readily.
- Staff make positive efforts to identify and meet children's individual needs by asking parents to complete a child profile when they start at the pre-school.
- Staff welcome parents into the group and maintain relaxed and friendly relationships with them. Information is regularly exchanged on an informal basis and parents are encouraged to participate in the group's activities.

What needs to be improved?

- the operational plan, to ensure that space is used effectively and staff are appropriately deployed throughout the session, so that children's needs are met
- written planning, in order to ensure that children are provided with a varied, balanced, stimulating range of age appropriate activities which reflect all areas of play, development and learning
- the quality of furniture and equipment. Many items including tables and chairs, the sand tray and some home corner equipment are very old and in a worn condition and need replacing
- safety, in relation to a qualified first aider being available on the premises at all times, staff's knowledge of child protection issues, and ensuring children are unable to access the kitchen.
- the management of children's behaviour taking into consideration their age and stage of development

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

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
2	Utilize space effectively and deploy staff appropriately in order to ensure that children's individual needs are met.
3	Draw up written plans and ensure that all children are involved in a broad range of activities which supports their learning across all areas of development.
5	Ensure that toys, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and in good condition.
6	Ensure that children cannot gain access to the kitchen.
7	Develop and implement an action plan detailing how at least one member of staff with a current first aid certificate will be on the premises or on outings at any one time.
11	Develop staff's awareness and understanding of effective ways to manage children's behaviour, taking into account their age and stage of development
13	Develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Children's progress towards the early learning goals is limited by significant weaknesses in the areas of; communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. Children are making generally good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and creative development.

The quality of the teaching has some significant weaknesses. Planning systems are insufficiently linked to the early learning goals. Assessment does not reflect children's abilities, and information gathered through observation is not used to inform planning. Staff are warm and caring in their approach, they praise and support children, especially those who are less confident. Staff recognise and value children's learning by providing a range of practical based activities. Large group activities sometimes lack organisation. Insufficient consideration is given to children's listening and concentration skills, resulting in children becoming distracted. Their behaviour deteriorates and this affects their own learning and that of others.

Leadership and management has some significant weaknesses. There are insufficient systems in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the nursery education. Staff meet to plan future topic work, they do not routinely assess their own strengths and weakness. Staff development and training needs have not been fully identified.

Partnership with parents has some significant weaknesses. Staff communicate verbally with parents, they share information on a daily basis. Parents also receive regular written reports. However, these reports are not based on a formal assessment system and parents generally receive limited information on the educational programme.

What is being done well?

- Children are forming good relationships with their peers, they respond well to adult attention.
- Children are gaining confidence and independence in self-care routines.
- A range of creative activities enables children to freely express their ideas and feelings. They show a sense of pride and achievement in their growing creative abilities.
- Staff are warm and caring, they provide a welcoming environment. Children are supported and encouraged.

What needs to be improved?

- Staff's knowledge of the foundation stage.
- Planning and assessment systems to ensure that children's individual learning needs are recognised, supported and challenged and are reflective of their abilities, especially for the four-year-olds.
- The organisation of the session and management of time to ensure that activities are purposeful and contribute to children's abilities to concentrate and listen, and have a positive impact on their behaviour.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Improvement since the last inspection has been limited. Information for parents about the educational provision, has not been fully implemented on a regular basis. Parents are provided with a summary report at the end of each term and a full written report detailing their child's progress, when the child leaves the setting. A weekly activity plan is displayed on the parent's noticeboard. However, the information is not displayed at eye level and is easily missed.

Staff have made limited progress in creating opportunities for the four-year-olds to work in small groups, where their learning needs can be addressed at a more appropriate level.

Planning and assessment remains insufficiently linked to the six early learning goals. A key issue in this report.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are making generally good progress in this area. They show a sense of pride and achievement in their growing abilities. Children generally relate well to each other, they respond to adult attention. They are gaining confidence and independence in their own self-care. However, children find it difficult to concentrate in large group activities, some children lose interest quickly and their behaviour deteriorates. This impinges on their own learning in other areas and distracts others.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children's progress in this area has significant weaknesses. Children are gaining confidence when speaking during role play and with peers and adults. However, children are unable to concentrate long enough to sufficiently develop their language skills during group activities. Children have few opportunities to write their own name on their work, or practice writing in other areas of play. Children infrequently turn to books for enjoyment, although some children handle books correctly.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children's progress in this area has significant weaknesses. Children use mathematical language during sand play and explore mathematical patterns through craft, puzzles and threading. Children do not always learn as much as they might because activities lack practical reinforcement. Learning in maths is insufficiently reflected in planning. Staff miss opportunities to consolidate and extend children's mathematical knowledge in daily routines and activities.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children's progress in this area has significant weaknesses. Children explore dough and sand, they enjoy constructing railway sets and building with blocks. Children gain knowledge of the world through topic based activities. However, Children have few opportunities to explore technology or gain an awareness of natural materials. Resources and equipment insufficiently challenge children to experiment and investigate, or stimulate curiosity.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children's progress in this area has significant weaknesses. Children handle tools such as glue spreaders and paint brushes with growing skill, developing their fine motor skills. Physical activities tend to be mainly recreational. Planning is insufficiently linked to develop specific skills or challenge children, especially children who are physically active. The layout of the setting impacts on children's ability to freely access and move between some activities.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are making generally good progress in this area. Children are deeply absorbed, as they freely paint and explore and use a variety of textured materials during craft activities. Children involve themselves well in role play, despite lack of adult involvement. Children know some songs, and are generally interested in music and singing.

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

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable but has some significant areas for improvement. Children progress towards the early learning goals is limited by some significant weaknesses. The next inspection will take place in one to two years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- Develop staff's knowledge of the foundation stage, particularly in the areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development.
- Further develop and link planning and assessment to provide a secure framework for the educational programme. Ensure all early learning goals are clearly identified in planning, and children's learning is supported, challenged and reflective of their abilities.
- Review the organisation of the session and the management of time to ensure that activities provide sufficient challenge and opportunity for children to develop concentration and listening skills, and provide a positive impact on their behaviour.

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.