



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 122540

DfES Number: 597371

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	27/10/2004
Inspector Name	Joanne Lindsey Caswell

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Buffer Bears Nursery
Setting Address	Tadworth Court Tadworth Surrey KT20 5RU

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Buffer Bear Nursery 2893177
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Buffer Bear Nursery
Address	Tadworth Court Tadworth Surrey KT20 5RU

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public 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 has been registered since 1998. It is owned by Buffer Bear Ltd, a nationwide nursery company. The nursery operates from within a single storey, purpose-built building in the grounds of The Children's Trust, Tadworth Court, Tadworth, Surrey. Children are cared for in separate age groups. Toilets, hand washing and nappy change facilities are easily accessible from group rooms. Two enclosed garden areas provide separate play areas for children under two years and children over two years, with a large selection of outdoor equipment available.

There are currently 71 children, aged from 6 months to 4 years, on roll. This includes 17 funded three year olds and two funded four year olds. The nursery is experienced in supporting children with special educational needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery is open from 07:00 to 18:30, Monday to Friday, all year round - excluding bank holidays. Children may attend on a full time or part time basis.

A team of 15 staff work with the children. Of these, eight hold a recognised childcare and early years qualification - NVQ Level 2 and 3, NNEB or NAMCW Level 3. The nursery receives support from an advisory teacher employed by Buffer Bear Ltd and also advisors from Surrey Early Years and Childcare Service.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at Buffer Bears Nursery is acceptable and of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development and very good progress in all other areas.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff form close relationships with children and an effective key worker system allows staff to work with children in small groups, offering high levels of individual attention. Staff manage children's behaviour very well and children respond positively to the calm and purposeful atmosphere. Teaching methods are fun and imaginative. Staff have an understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum, although the current format for short term planning does not relate closely to the stepping stones to learning and insufficient evidence is recorded for mathematical development. Although provision is in place for recording focus activities, staff observations are not used fully to inform the planning for children's next steps in learning.

The leadership and management are generally good. The nursery manager is supportive and approachable. Regular team meetings ensure all staff are fully aware of nursery practice. A staff appraisal system is in place to identify training needs and all staff have opportunities to extend their knowledge and skills. Managerial support is offered from Buffer Bears Head Office and an advisory teacher is involved with curriculum planning. Staff deployment is mostly effective.

The partnership with parents is generally good. An informative notice board gives parents an overview on the daily activities and information is available about weekly topics. However, there is little information available for parents to extend children's learning at home. Parents have regular opportunities to discuss their children's individual progress and achievements with staff on a daily basis and during formal key worker meetings.

What is being done well?

- Children are very sociable, confident and happy. They form very good relationships with adults and their peers and show care and consideration for one another.
- Children's communication skills are developing well. They engage in conversation with adults and convey their needs effectively. They listen well during story times and enjoy contributing confidently during group discussion.
- Good provision is in place for children to develop physical skills. A good range of equipment and apparatus enables them to develop both gross motor and fine motor skills, showing good co-ordination.

- Staff develop very good relationships with children and they know them well.
- Children's work is displayed well, allowing children to see their work easily and be proud of their achievements.

What needs to be improved?

- the presentation and accessibility of the book corner
- the opportunities within the daily routine for children to develop their mathematical skills
- the format for curriculum planning, particularly in mathematical development
- the recording of focus activities in order for staff to plan for children's next steps in learning
- the information given to parents to enable them to extend their children's learning at home.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The nursery has made generally good progress in meeting the key issues raised at the last inspection.

One issue raised for improvement concerned the methods for teaching children letter sounds and rhymes. In order to address this, staff have reviewed the programme for teaching letters and phonics to children. The programme for teaching Letterland has been withdrawn on the advice of an advisory teacher. Children are now taught about letter sounds, initial word sounds and rhyming words in songs and poetry and are introduced to the alphabet through daily sound games and letter recognition.

Some improvement has been made in the provision for mathematical development. Children see more visual evidence of number and are encouraged to count and use numbers in play activities, such as a role play shop. There are a number of resources available for children to experiment with a range of concepts such as weight, size, pattern and shape, although the current format of curriculum planning does not reflect this fully. Although staff do encourage children to count in everyday situations, there are still some missed opportunities for staff to extend this, for example, during snack time when the children can count out the cups and plates and practice simple calculation. This area, therefore, still remains a weakness in provision.

Good progress has been made in meeting the third issue raised at the last inspection. Staff have reviewed the deployment of staff within the Big Bear room, in order to make more effective use of group teaching, particularly during activities such as story time and discussion times. A key worker system is in place and staff utilise this to enable them to work with the children in much smaller groups to increase the amount of individual attention given to children. Story times take place in different areas, including the garden, to allow more effective use of small group

work, and in order for staff to challenge children accordingly.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children are confident and sociable and they show care and concern for one another. They are developing an understanding of the needs of others; this is particularly evident when they interact with children from the Cheyne Centre. Children are developing good skills in independence and they have high self-esteem. They are proud of their achievements and enjoy looking at their work on display. Children form good relationships with their peers and co-operate very well.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children talk confidently and enjoy conversation with staff and contribute towards group discussion. They listen attentively and concentrate well. Children are developing a keen interest in books, although the current organisation of the book corner prevents children from accessing books easily. Provision is in place for children to develop their writing skills, particularly during role play, using a good variety of resources.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children's mathematical skills are developing well. They use numbers during play and in some activities, although there are missed opportunities to extend their understanding of number and value during routine activities such as snack time. Creative activities are used to develop children's understanding of the concepts of shape and colour and practical activities are used to encourage children to recognise the concepts of weight and capacity.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children are introduced to a wide range of cultures and customs and are developing an understanding of the wider world as they explore topics such as Travel, Weather and Holidays and learn French. Children are beginning to understand how things work and have access to a good range of electronic toys and Information and Communication Technology, such as the computer and tape recorder. Children enjoy regular environmental activities such as nature trails and gardening.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children move in a variety of ways, such as climbing, crawling and balancing, showing good co-ordination. They manoeuvre wheeled toys competently and negotiate obstacles. Children use a range of tools, such as writing materials, scissors and cutlery and show good dexterity and well-developed manipulative skills. Regular nature walks and the weekly Tot's in Sport programme encourage children's large motor development and co-ordination.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children express themselves freely through art and craft, music and role play. They use a range of resources and media and undertake creative model making. Children enjoy regular musical activities and experience a wide range of different types of music, such as Cajun and Samba music. Children enjoy role play and use a variety of resources and dressing up clothes. Good provision is in place for children to experience sensory 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

- review the current format for short term planning to ensure it clearly relates to the Foundation Stage curriculum, particularly in the area of mathematical development. Ensure that focus activities and any adaptation/extension activities, together with staff deployment, are clearly recorded.
- review the procedures for evaluating targeted activities to ensure that individual children's progress is clearly recorded and that staff observations are used to plan for children's next steps in learning
- review the programme for mathematical development, to ensure it is incorporated into all areas of the nursery routine.

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.