

Buffer Bear Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Setting address

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Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

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Description of the setting

Buffer Bear Nursery in Watford is one of a chain of nurseries opening in 1994. It is situated at the back of Watford Junction train station near the town centre. The nursery premises run from a purpose built single story building. Each of the home rooms have free flow access to the secure garden.

Buffer Bears are registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 55 children. There are currently 40 children on roll. The setting is open between 7.00am and 6.30pm throughout the year, closing for two days training and all Bank Holidays. Children may attend for a variety of sessions including full day care. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who have English as an additional language.

The setting employs 15 staff 12 of these hold early years qualifications to level three and above. The remaining staff are working towards level three qualifications. The nursery is supported by Buffer Bears area manager. They access in-house training and training provided by the local authority early years development team.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff successfully promote the children's welfare and learning. They know the children and their families well responding to their individual needs. Children are cared for in a safe and secure setting that is bright and welcoming. Children's free play is sometimes limited as resources are not deployed effectively. Partnerships with parents are effective in ensuring children are supported both at home and in the setting. Observations and assessments are well established, some of the detail is used effectively in planning for the next steps in the children's learning. The staff team work together to identify areas for improvements and development. The detailed evaluation process supports the setting in maintaining continuous improvements.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- review children's records with regards to their starting points and how the nursery works consistently towards the next steps in their learning
- review resources to ensure they are more readily available, age appropriate and relevant to the interests of the children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is safeguarded. Policies and procedures are readily available and in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board. All staff have attended recent training and are aware of the process to refer any information with regards concerns about a child. Parents are informed by posters and contact details on display in the foyer. A robust recruitment process and records of suitability checks and qualifications ensures all adults on site are suitable to work with children. Risk assessments are well established. Each room and outside areas are continually monitored to minimise potential hazards. The overall safety of the nursery is well managed. A CCTV system ensures staff are fully aware of any visitors to the setting. Parents are asked to maintain the children's safety displaying notices to keep the outer doors and gates closed at all times. The staff team work well together. Regular room and team meetings ensure they share information about the provision and the children, to support their care and learning. An effective evaluation process is in place. Action plans are established at team meetings to focus attention on areas to be developed. Recommendations made at the last inspection have been met in full. This has improved practice and outcomes for children.

Children's health and well-being is promoted. Staff are vigilant with regards to the cloakroom routines, cleanliness of the bathrooms and nappy change areas. Children understand they must wash their hands before meals and snack. They are very familiar with the routines. The older children's independence is fully promoted at this time. Staff monitor the areas and give good verbal support to the children who manage their own personal care routines well. The laundry room is used on a daily basis to ensure toys and equipment is sterilised, clean and well maintained.

Children benefit from a strong partnership with parents. The provided questionnaire enables parents to give their views and feedback to the nursery. The details are shared with the area manager to ensure their comments are acknowledged and implemented where possible. The nursery has an open door policy. Senior staff are available for parents throughout the day. Parents have daily opportunities to share in their children's learning through the Home and Nursery Interest Book. Key persons record the children's achievements from nursery. Parents are encouraged to write about experiences from home. This ensures key staff have a good overview of the children's interests, important events and people at home. Parent evenings, forums and regular newsletters ensure families are well informed about the children's learning and progress. The setting has developed links with the local children's centre. They are aware of the opportunities for local parents to access support for many different aspects of family life. The setting provides an inclusive environment where all children's needs are discussed and met. A comprehensive display shows parents and visitors how the setting is involved in identifying and providing for different abilities and needs.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are settled and happy in the nursery. Staff are attentive and know the children well. Social skills and independence is promoted in accordance with each child's abilities. The pre-school children are confident, they are able to talk freely in group time, taking turns in choosing stories and songs. Children show great delight as they take the lead in the singing and action rhymes.

The days and weeks activities are based on the children's interests. Planning is based on the early learning goals. It is flexible to take into account personal and social skills, a healthy lifestyle and the wider world. The children's achievements are recorded in their folder. Regular observations and review of their progress show they are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Detailed information is sought from parents as the children join the nursery. Information about their home and previous experiences supports staff in providing activities that interest the children. However, some of the starting points that are identified by parents are not followed through. The observations in the children's folder do not show how the nursery consistently supports and develops the children's next steps in their learning. This means that at times there is not a clear view of the children's starting points and overall progress.

Positive behaviour strategies are consistent and children of all stages are beginning to learn to share and take turns. They are becoming aware of the impact of their actions on other children playing nearby. Praise from staff develops the children's self esteem and promotes good behaviour. Children learn about a healthy lifestyle through focused activities and every day routines. Healthy and nutritious meals are cooked on site each day. Children's dietary needs and allergies are well managed. Each child has a personal table mat with the information clearly shown. Children are learning about their own needs and all staff can clearly see the child's individual requirements are met. Children eat well and enjoy the experience that is well supported by staff who sit at the tables with the children to eat their lunch.

Children are cared for in rooms that support their age and stage of learning. The rooms are bright and attractive. However, some of the resources that are set around the nursery are not deployed effectively. In some rooms the resources are not age appropriate, young children struggle to complete complex jigsaw puzzles that are better suited to an older age group. Children's independence and imaginative play is not fully promoted as the resources are limited and do not promote or extend their individual play ideas. Each home room has free flow access to outside. Staff manage this well. Children are encouraged to play outside, they are reminded to put their coats on and take resources as needed to extend and promote their individual play ideas. The resources set out in the garden and covered area provide interesting play in all weathers. The separate garden area for the babies and younger children provide them with a well managed area with age appropriate resources. The confident mobile children may use the climbing apparatus in the main garden. This gives them opportunities to extend their physical skills and explore the larger more challenging area with good support from their carers.

Staff interact with the children, supporting them in new skills such as using scissors. They give clear guidance and help them to understand the importance of taking care when cutting and not to walk around with them. Regular outings in the community to play areas and the library provide children with opportunities to learn about their own personal safety and road safety issues. Their learning is extended with computer games about road safety back at the nursery. Circle time is valuable in developing the children's self esteem and early learning skills. The older children register their names on the board, they are able to take time to talk about their experiences and what they would like to do. Children receive an enjoyable and stimulating experience across all areas of learning.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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