

# Buffer Bear Nursery @ Swindon

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY255698  
**Inspection date** 12/05/2011  
**Inspector** Rachel Edwards

**Setting address** Great Western Hospital, Marlborough Road, SWINDON,  
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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*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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## Description of the setting

Buffer Bear Nursery at the Great Western Hospital was registered in January 2003. It is part of a chain of 30 nurseries owned by Mid-Counties Co-operative. It operates from a single storey, purpose-built building on the site of the Great Western Hospital in Swindon, Wiltshire. The nursery serves the staff of the Primary Care and the National Health Care Trusts and the general public. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register to care for no more than 68 children under eight years at any one time. Currently there are 108 children roll, all of whom are in the early years age range. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery is open weekdays from 6.45am until 7pm, all the year round, except for bank holidays. Currently there are 29 full or part-time members of staff working with the children; of these 20 have early years qualifications at level 3, and four staff hold level 2 qualifications. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

This efficiently organised nursery, with its largely qualified and friendly staff, makes sure that all children are safe, well cared for and make generally good progress in their learning and development. There are particularly rigorous procedures in place to safeguard children. Staff know the children well and they work closely with parents and others to meet each child's individual needs effectively overall. The nursery monitors its own performance closely. It takes account of feedback from staff, parents, children and outside professionals to help build on strengths and take action to improve any identified weaker areas. They have a good capacity for continuing to improve their childcare practice.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend the planning of activities and experiences that continue to build on what children know and can do to ensure that older and more able children are sufficiently challenged, especially in relation to literacy, numeracy and problem solving
- provide more activities and resources that promote diversity and reflect the backgrounds of children attending the nursery
- develop the outside play area so that it can be used all year round and provide more challenging climbing and balancing equipment for the older and

more able children.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Children are kept very safe whilst at the nursery. This is because all staff follow the rigorous procedures put in place to protect children. The premises are very secure, visitors to the nursery are carefully checked and adults' movements within the nursery are closely monitored. Staff are well deployed to supervise the children inside and in the garden. Risk assessments, including daily checks, are used effectively to identify and minimise any hazards. There are robust arrangements for recruiting and checking the suitability of all staff who work with children. All staff receive child protection training and are clear about their role to safeguard children.

Children play and use a wide range of good quality resources. There are sufficient to meet the needs of the children, for example, there are enough cots and sleep mats for all who need to rest or sleep during the day. Children are cared for in rooms for different ages so that they can safely choose for themselves from a wide range of toys that are safe and appropriate. The children, especially the more boisterous, benefit from being able to play outside when they choose. Outdoor activities cover all areas of development, for example, painting on easels, enjoying stories, role play, digging and scooting around on wheeled toys. There is a small climbing frame but this is not challenging enough for the older children to fully develop their physical skills and to experience some level of risk taking. Staff make good use of the available space but in wet weather parts of the garden flood and this restricts its use.

Most children settle quickly and soon become happy, confident members of the group. This is largely due to the effective key person system, where each child has a particular member of staff responsible for their daily care and development. This helps build close relationships and means staff get to know the children and their parents well so that they can continue home routines, for example, for sleep, and plan activities that build on what children already know and can do. Children are encouraged to value differences between themselves and others and to appreciate the wider world, for example, by playing with resources that reflect diversity and celebrating festivals from different cultures. However, these are somewhat limited and do not always reflect the backgrounds of all the children that attend. Despite recent staff changes, the nursery has worked hard to maintain consistency for the children and eases problems by having 'buddies' for each key person. Links with other agencies, such as speech therapists and health visitors are very good so that children benefit from additional help if needed. Most parents work at the on site hospital and come from a wide catchment area. This means that children go on to attend a wide range of primary schools, which makes it difficult for the nursery to build close links with the schools. However, the nursery endeavours to find out as much as it can about the schools and put parents in touch with others whose children are going on to the same school. In this way it helps the children make a smooth transition. Parents are kept well informed about their child's day and the progress they make and all other aspects of the nursery through a variety of

means, such as daily diaries for the youngest children, learning records, meetings, newsletters and most importantly, time to speak to the staff. The nursery is constantly looking to improve its provision, for example, by offering text messages to update parents. Parents' views are sought and acted on, for example, by sending song sheets home so that parents can sing along with their children. This enjoyable activity helps develop children's language skills well.

The nursery effectively reviews its own performance. All the staff are encouraged to contribute to the self evaluation process and they appreciate the way their ideas and comments are taken into account when devising action plans for the nursery, which benefits the children. All the recommendations made at the last inspection have been satisfactorily addressed. The management make full use of the support available to them, for example, from the advisory teacher and child development worker to help train staff and identify priorities for development.

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

Children are happy and settled at the nursery. Staff know them well and give them plenty of individual attention. As a result, children go freely to adults when they need help or comfort, as they are confident of a positive response. Babies enjoy snuggling up on the sofa with their key member of staff for a bottle but are also confident to explore the stimulating space around them. They enjoy sensory experiences, such as crunching through cereal in large floor trays or delighting in the feel of shaving foam, squeezing through their fingers. As the children progress through the nursery, they become increasingly independent, choosing toys and where to play and managing personal skills such the toilet, washing hands and getting dressed by themselves.

Staff conscientiously note what children can do and what interests them. They use this information to plan activities that children enjoy so that they are eager to take part and try new experiences. For example, children enjoy digging and raking in the compost bed and staff extend their learning by encouraging children to look for bugs. They have put up pictures of creatures to look out for and children delight as they find an ant and compare it to the picture. They investigate the natural world in other ways too, such as growing flowers and fruit and vegetables, which they harvest and taste. Children's communication skills are well developed. Staff spend time singing and talking with the children and from the youngest age they are encouraged to listen and differentiate between sounds. Children enjoy sharing books and have fun shouting out the rhyming words in a favourite story and these activities help develop their language and the skills they will need to learn to read. Although most children make good progress in relation to their starting points, older and more able children are not always given sufficient challenge to help them take the next step in their learning. This especially relates to early reading and writing skills and numeracy and problem solving.

Children are nurtured and feel safe due to the caring staff. They learn to keep themselves safe, for example, toddlers carefully negotiate the step to the garden,

whilst older children learn to pedal and scoot at speed, skilfully avoiding collisions. Children behave extremely well. Staff gently but consistently reinforce messages about good behaviour. Children help to decide the 'rules' for their room and staff make up picture boards to help remind them. They soon learn to share and take turns, be kind to each other and help with everyday tasks, such as tidying away toys. Staff encourage children to recognise and talk about different emotions so that they learn to cope with the feelings of anger and frustration that they sometimes experience. Children adopt healthy lifestyles at the nursery. They thoroughly enjoy sharing mealtimes together and older children talk about what the cook might have made today. Balanced, nutritious meals are cooked from basic ingredients on the premises and children are helped to serve themselves. Children know why it is important to wash their hands and older children manage this very well on their own. Staff are very supportive of parents, when it is time to start toilet training their children and they are very successful in achieving this in a stress free way.

## 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

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

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	3

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## Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met