

Building Blocks Nursery Limited

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY246811
Inspection date 07/06/2011
Inspector Lucy Showell

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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

Building Blocks Nursery is one of two privately-run day care facilities owned by Building Blocks Limited and was registered in 2002. It operates from converted domestic premises in the Kingstanding area of Birmingham. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play. The nursery serves children and their families from the local and surrounding areas. The nursery is open five days a week for 51 weeks of the year with the exception of public holidays. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. Children attend a variety of sessions.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 40 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 52 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The nursery has systems in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 14 members of child care staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications at foundation degree level, one of whom is working towards a BA Honours degree. Of the remaining staff, one holds a qualification at level 4, five hold a qualification at level 3, three hold a qualification at level 2 - two of whom are working towards level 3 - and three are working towards level 2. There is also a managing director and director who oversee the running of both nurseries, both of whom hold qualifications at foundation degree level. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Building Blocks Nursery is a welcoming and homely environment where the enthusiastic staff team celebrates the uniqueness of each child. Staff have a clear understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the associated welfare requirements. Their valuable partnership with parents and effective associations with other early years professionals ensure all children's individual needs are inclusively and consistently met. Efficient practice is supported by well-written and informative policies and procedures. Staff demonstrate good capacity for continuous improvement through generally effective methods of self-evaluation and the training programme for staff.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- enable parents to review their children's progress regularly and contribute to their learning and development records
- refine the use of quality improvement processes as the basis of ongoing

internal review, through assessing what the setting offers against robust and challenging quality criteria and showing the impact on the outcomes for children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety is secure. This is because all staff have a competent understanding of safeguarding issues and are clear about their responsibilities to protect children. The safeguarding policy is comprehensive and written in line with Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines. In addition to this, there are clear and robust recruitment procedures including Criminal Record Bureau checks, which ensure all adults working with the children are suitable to do so. Staff check the identity of all visitors on arrival, and their departure is also recorded. This further protects children from persons who have not been vetted. Staff are well deployed throughout the nursery and the key worker system ensures children are safe and receive good levels of support. The staff have clear understanding of their roles and designated staff are knowledgeable and enthusiastic in the implementation of all policies. The professional development of staff is improving, with staff keen to attend training and improve their knowledge and understanding of childcare issues. There is a clear vision shared by the staff at the nursery. They have successfully addressed recommendations raised at their previous inspection and acknowledge and respect all advice given by other early years professionals. They constantly look for ways to further improve the quality of the provision using various self-evaluation systems. Overall there are effective arrangements in place for monitoring the quality of the provision although the different methods and criteria used mean that priorities for improvement are not always clearly identified.

Effective risk assessments are in place, covering all areas accessible to children. This is further supported by a daily visual check, a tick list and monthly accident record audits. This practice ensures that potential hazards to children are identified and minimised. The environment both indoors and outdoors is welcoming and exciting. A good range of toys, resources and equipment helps children to develop new skills which promote their development. Sustainability is secured through the staff's commitment to providing good quality facilities which promote positive outcomes for all children who attend. Recent funding has been used effectively to enhance the outdoor area. Children are able to access the outdoor area in most weathers, sheltering from the rain in the covered area and listening to stories in the gazebo. They also have opportunities to listen to music and wind chimes in the sensory area, build dens from resources in the material stores, dig in the sand, soil and bark areas, or select from the variety of bikes, balls or the climbing frame as they share the space with each other. As a result, children's learning and development is creatively promoted in the outdoor environment.

The nursery does not currently care for children with English as an additional language or special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, staff fully understand the importance of partnership working should the need arise, and are developing links with the local children's centre. They ensure the process of transition to school is positive and that the information shared informs children's

future learning and development well. All documentation, policies and procedures are in place to promote children's welfare. These are regularly updated with the involvement and agreement of parent representatives and staff. Positive relationships are in place between the nursery and parents, ensuring each child's individual needs are well met. Parents receive useful information on all aspects of the nursery through daily discussions, newsletters and at parents' consultations. Opportunities for home-learning are in place which include taking a book home to read with their children. Staff are currently improving links with families by inviting them to 'bring a relative to nursery days'. Parents are very appreciative of staff; they comment on how approachable they are and that the low staff turnover is very reassuring. They nominate staff for an employee of the month award and say they 'would definitely recommend the nursery to anyone!'.

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

Children are cared for well in an environment which is accessible, inclusive and welcoming. The setting has recently achieved an award from Birmingham City Council. This is because the thorough hygiene practices across the nursery help to minimise the risk of spreading infection and promote children's good health. For example, staff wear aprons and gloves when serving food and use an antibacterial spray to clean tables. Children are increasingly aware of the importance of hand washing as they talk to staff about washing off the germs after playing outside. They enjoy freshly prepared meals and snacks which meet their individual dietary requirements. Meals and formula feeds for babies are also prepared according to their stage of development and meet with current guidelines. Mealtimes are social and relaxed occasions, providing children with invaluable learning opportunities. For example, they use increasing independence as they are encouraged or helped to cut up their food. Between bites they talk about healthy foods with staff, comparing the sizes of their carrots and green beans and explaining to each other the benefits of eating well. They have excellent table manners and are well behaved as they take their time to eat and politely ask for second or third helpings.

Children enjoy times to be physically active and also to rest and relax. Staff make good use of the garden on a daily basis to enable children to get lots of fresh air and exercise. Children access a wide range of designated play areas and equipment to improve their physical development. They learn about being safe through regular activities. For example, at circle time, they talk about their recent fire practice and how important it is to listen to the staff and calmly exit the building when they hear the alarm. Children feel secure due to good staff and child ratios which enable them to explore their surroundings safely. Staff plan activities based on children's individual interests, enabling them to make good progress in their learning and development. Clear systems for observation and assessments help to identify children's starting points. However, parents are not given many opportunities to review their children's progress regularly or contribute to their child's learning and development record.

The bright and well-organised spaces and the staff's enthusiastic manner help to

provide a balance of adult-led, freely-chosen and child-led activities. This means children develop confidence and show interest in the experiences on offer. The book corner is furnished with comfy bean bags and a good selection of stories. Here, children sit together sharing stories with staff, turning pages carefully and relating familiar stories to their friends. At regular dance sessions led by an external teacher, children develop their appreciation of different music and relish in the opportunity to be physically exuberant. In each of the rooms there are different role-play activities where children use their imaginations well. For example, they make dinner in the kitchen or serve in the ticket office at the train station, where they point out which platform the train will come to next. In the sand and water trays, children enjoy opportunities to pour and scoop using various equipment and containers while they investigate, compare, estimate and use mathematical language well. The writing area, resourced with freely available papers, pens and pencils, and the print rich environment help children to copy and reference letters and words from around the room. They are also learning to recognise their names as they put items into their named drawers and replace their coats on their own pegs after going outside. Children select different programs on the computer and use the stereo to listen to favourite songs or stories, developing their understanding of technology. Photographs of children's families are displayed in each of the rooms. These increase children's sense of belonging, aid their settling in and promote confidence within the nursery. Children recognise themselves and talk to staff about what they are doing in the pictures. Overall children are happy and stimulated at the nursery. As a result, they are progressing well across all areas of learning and development.

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	2
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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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